

# The Singing Wire



The Newsletter of the Pikes Peak Historical Street Railway Foundation

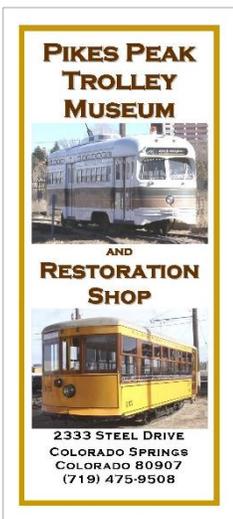
## Our Purpose

The Pikes Peak Historical Street Railway Foundation exists to restore and operate historical street and electric railways in the Colorado Springs area. Our goal is to provide a cultural, historical, and educational experience for the citizens of the Pikes Peak region and southern Colorado.

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## Would You Believe We've Been Discovered by Visitors – from Colorado Springs!

Volunteers here at the Pikes Peak Trolley Museum are always amused to hear museum visitors from Colorado Springs and nearby cities and towns exclaim: "We didn't know there was a trolley museum in Colorado Springs!" One visitor lives only a few blocks away from the roundhouse and didn't know we were here. But lately, that has changed. Volunteer Marti Benson has been busy getting the word out to a number of newspapers and organizations who have featured our museum in their publications, social media, and websites. And, volunteers have set up information tables and handed out flyers at various venues and events to help spread the word. The result has been a surge in museum visitors, which has kept our museum tour guides very, very busy.

- **FAST TV NETWORK** filmed a segment of their debut episode of "Wings Wheels & Rails" at the trolley museum on April 27<sup>th</sup>. John Haney hosts our segment, providing information on the equipment in our collection. We have been promised a DVD of this segment. To see the episode, visit their website: <https://fasttvnetwork.com/>.



- **Life After 50**, a free senior living monthly available at over 200 grocery stores and other locations, was the first to publish a front-page feature on us. Four of our volunteers are *above the fold* on the front page of the July 2019 issue, and we fill pages 4 and 5 in living color! Check out a copy of this issue at the museum.



- The Colorado Springs **Gazette**, not to be outdone, featured us on the front page of its Sunday, August 4, 2019, "LIFE" section with both *above and below the fold photos* and an additional large photo of the interior of the Birney on a subsequent page. The article describes "six little-known museums to check out in the Pikes Peak Region." Leading off those descriptions is the Pikes Peak Trolley Museum!



- Then, on Wednesday, August 7th, the **Woodmen Edition** – a free **Gazette** publication distributed to Briargate, Pine Creek, Rockrimmon, Peregrine and Mountain Shadows residents – showcased the Birney's interior in a front-page photo and featured the "six little-known museums" from Sunday's **Gazette**.



- Throughout the year, volunteers set up information tables and displays at train shows and historical society events. They hand out rack cards, trifolds with more detailed information on the museum, newsletters if people are interested in a topic covered in a particular issue, and "golden tickets" for free admission for children and an accompanying adult. There is also a sign-up sheet for free digital *Singing Wire* newsletters.



- Social media and our website have been a great way for potential visitors to learn about us. Check out our Facebook page co-administered by Marti Benson, Outreach Director, and Jordan Kortsen (<https://www.facebook.com/ridethepast>) and our website maintained by Grant Harrison (<https://coloradospringstrolleys.com>). Trolley lovers are known for their determination to ferret out a good trolley museum. And, we are working hard to improve and expand our museum to keep our local area visitors coming back.

The Singing Wire is published by the Pikes Peak Historical Street Railway Foundation Inc. of Colorado Springs, Colorado, a nonprofit corporation under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

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***The Singing Wire***

This newsletter is produced and published collaboratively by volunteer members of the Pikes Peak Historical Street Railway Foundation. We welcome submittal of articles of interest to the membership. All articles are subject to editing. Mail input to above mailing or email address.

The PPHSRF is a Member of:  
HeritageRail Alliance  
Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce  
Coalition of Pikes Peak Historical Museums  
Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad

## Letter from the President

Seems like a short time ago we were complaining about gallons of propane burned, now we're complaining about gallons of perspiration shed. Dang, it's hot out there!

**Marti Benson**, our Director of Outreach, has done a super job of publicizing the museum in local media and on-line. As a result, the number of visitors is picking up but the Catch 22 here is that summer is also when our limited number of tour guides take a few weeks of much needed vacation. On occasion our restoration staff has had to help guide tours. **Ron Oatney** and his crew have managed the influx of visitors so far, but new volunteers are badly needed. If you know of anyone (including yourself) who could spend at least one day per week as a tour guide, please let us know. Training is free!

Our office computers, printers and operating systems have finally reached the end of their useful life so **Laura Kovac**, our Director of Administration, is purchasing new equipment to support the many tasks essential to managing any organization.

Museum building maintenance and improvements have been on hold pending assurance that our lease would be renewed for the next decade. We've just received a verbal OK so now the race is on to beat the first snowstorm. With a generous grant from **Don Gage**, we are replacing all museum and roundhouse lighting with LED's. Just converting the nine mercury vapor hi-bay fixtures in the roundhouse will save us \$5,612 over the next 10 years at current electric rates. Next will be maintenance on the museum's north stone wall and its four ancient windows.

We have finally received confirmation that our insurance covers the "baggage cart float" we are building and hopefully it will be ready for the Festival of Lights parade on December 7th.

As you read this *Singing Wire*, please appreciate the time and effort that Trolley Museum volunteers pour into each issue. It is a professional and informative publication that is essential to the cohesion of the foundation. Thank You!

This will be my last president's message as I have submitted my resignation effective 15 August. There are many reasons for this decision including health, personal events, a 60-mile commute, an upcoming vacation, and a small herd of needy cows. However, I've also become aware that my Type A personality and strict engineering background are not compatible with leading an all-volunteer organization. I have reached the delicate age where stress without a paycheck no longer makes sense. I would like to continue building and improving museum displays as well as assisting with completion of the Birney restoration.

Working with the museum team has been enlightening and enjoyable, and I value the many friendships that have been made and the projects completed.

I believe the future of an offbeat trolley and railroad museum in Colorado Springs can be very bright.

Wayne Russert

## Note from the Trolley Museum volunteers to Wayne:

Thank you, Wayne, from your fellow Trolley Museum volunteers for the leadership you've provided during the time you have served as president. We look forward to you continuing your volunteer work with us and to seeing you at the museum just as often as you are able to make that 60-mile commute.



## John's History Corner

by John Haney

### Thirty-seven Years of Pikes Peak Trolleys!

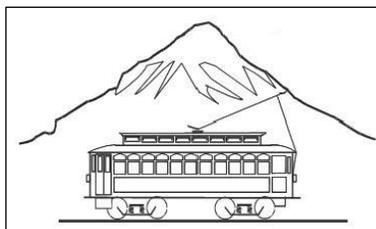
The Pikes Peak Historical Street Railway Foundation was incorporated June 30, 1982, as my book *Pikes Peak Trolleys* neared its publication date. It was the intent of the organizers, including William K. Viekman and myself, to acquire, restore, and operate an authentic Colorado Springs streetcar. This became the mission of the Foundation from the outset, and great effort was made for our purpose to be clear from its name.

To realize this mission, Viekman envisioned a village where retirees could live in a Victorian setting, with an electric streetcar running on a brick street through the center of the village. Such a place would be called Fredricksville, after his close friend and traction fan Fred Richardson, an official of Blount Seafood Company in Rhode Island. Several sites for such a settlement were considered, one of them on a mesa just northeast of Pueblo, Colorado, that would tie into the railroad test track.

A major break for the Foundation came when my friend Rex Dodson told me about a streetcar he had on his property, which he used as a work shed. My interest was clearly noted by Dodson, for not much later he asked me if the Foundation wanted the car, since he was planning to replace it with another structure. We jumped at the chance, since Colorado Springs Car 59 was in quite fine condition. Most of its sides and roof had been covered with asphalt shingling. Only the two ends had deteriorated. The car was ripe for restoration! Donations and in-kind services



made it possible for the car to be moved to Ghost Town, where Foundation supporter Byron Akers offered to store the car under canvas for several years.



Another major break for us came in 1994 with the opportunity to lease the historic, city-owned Rock Island Railroad roundhouse as our car barn, which immediately gave us covered storage for Car 59. Restoration efforts began shortly thereafter. Over the years we have been able to acquire Colorado Springs Car 48, purchase nine ex-Philadelphia SEPTA cars, a Birney and LARy car, stored at the Colorado Railroad Museum, from the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club, plus many parts, rail, ties, poles and other equipment.



Electric catenary was installed at the car barn, and a cleaned and painted SEPTA car, No. 2129, has been operating on 500 feet of track ever since.

On April 1, 1997, the Foundation obtained a franchise from the City of Colorado Springs to operate on city streets. Over the years, several routes have been considered. Discussions to develop a public/private partnership with Mountain Metropolitan Transit to use our franchise have been held. At one time, a group of Colorado Springs businesses and politicians was organized to plan a north-south streetcar route from I-25 and North Nevada Avenue to I-25 and South Tejon Street through downtown Colorado Springs.

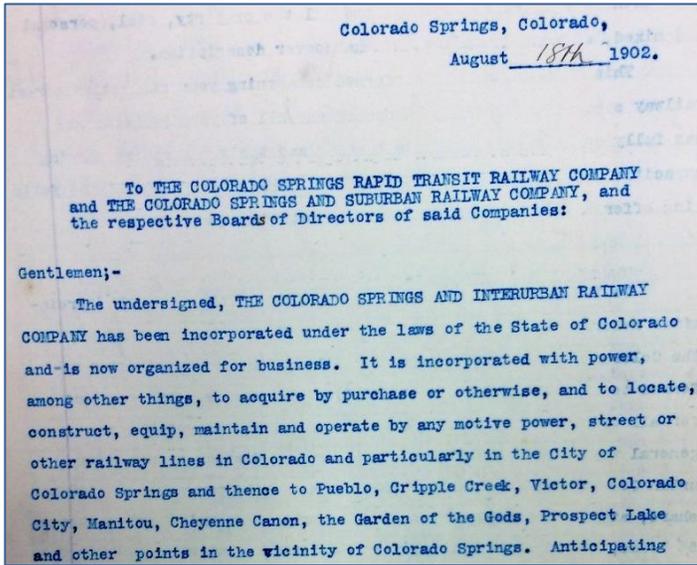
The Foundation has established an excellent museum in the roundhouse and has enjoyed membership in the Association of Railway Museums (ARM) for many years. We were the host museum for the 2008 ARM National Convention in September 2008 in Colorado Springs. ARM is now the Heritage Rail Alliance (HRA) and the Foundation is still a museum member. We now operate as the Pikes Peak Trolley Museum and Restoration Shop.

The car barn grounds have become more attractive and user-friendly over the years, and we have become more known in the community and even internationally, as tour groups from other countries visit our facility.

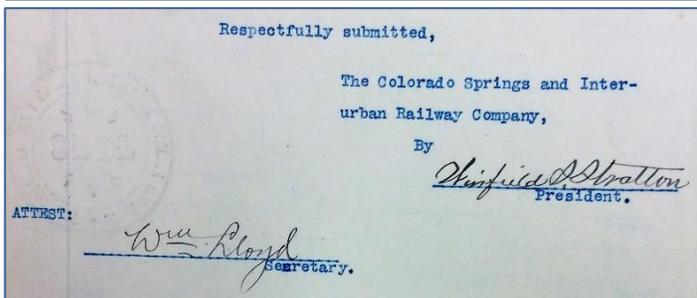
Our future is bright, as we continually find strength from our day-to-day volunteers, our members, and resources coming from the outside. The PPHSRF is strong, and as a member of the Foundation board, I am still very much involved.

***We are well on our way to accomplishing what we set out to do on June 30, 1982 - 37 years ago!***

## A Look Back to August 18<sup>th</sup>, 1902



The intervening pages describe the terms of the purchase of The Colorado Springs Rapid Transit Railway Company (CSRT) and The Colorado Springs and Suburban Railway Company (CSSR) by The Colorado Springs and Interurban Railway Company. Note Stratton's vision to extend service beyond the city of Colorado Springs.



In 1902, with Winfield Scott Stratton as president, the incorporation of the Colorado Springs & Interurban Railway Company (CS&I) was finalized. From then on prior streetcar operations CSRT and CSSR would operate as the CS&I system. New lines and extensions of trackage, a pleasure park, waiting rooms and stations, a fireproof car barn, a fully-equipped maintenance shop, and a new power plant were built. Twenty new 1901 large double-truck Brill cars were ordered. Ten more new double-truck cars were ordered from Laclede, also in 1901. One of these, CS&I No. 59, is under restoration in our car barn. All helped increase both capacity and service, allowing the system to earn good profits. And in 1932, when operations ceased, no one was owed even a penny. Sadly, Stratton died on September 14, 1902, at the age of 54, only one month after the signing.

## Meet the Museum's Volunteers

Volunteers at the Pikes Peak Trolley Museum are what "make the wheels go 'round!'" Projects in and around the museum are as varied as the experience volunteers bring.

Current volunteers actively participating in museum activities or working on projects include, in alphabetical order:

Marti Benson, John Caulfield, John Cusack, Paul Fiebing, Don Gage, Betty and John Haney, Gary Harrison, Grant Harrison, Mike Hogan, Jordan Kortsen\*, Laura Kovac, Regis Larouere, Tom Levy, Dave and Nancy Lippincott, Bob and Mary Manley, Ron Oatney, Wayne and Bonni Russert, Jeff Smith, Tom Tassia, Mike and Sigi Walker. Frank Weed, and John Weed.

\*currently deployed – we look forward to his safe return

These volunteers have been working on:

- The REA baggage cart refurb and parade preparation;
- "G" scale garden railroad clean-up and fence installation;
- Museum HO scale model trolley and railroad layout;
- Interactive station agent's telegraph office;
- Maintaining the newly-installed McClintock Clock;
- Keeping office, financial, and membership records;
- "The Birney" restoration;
- "The Laclede" restoration plans;
- "The Brill" WWII residence exhibit and restoration plans;
- Tour guide training and tour guide shifts;
- Reorganizing and rebuilding shop areas;
- Organizing trolley museum parts and inventory;
- Hooking up electricity in new areas;
- Singing Wire newsletter digital and print publication;
- and much, much more.

**If you see any of our volunteers in and around the car barn, be sure to thank them for all they do!**

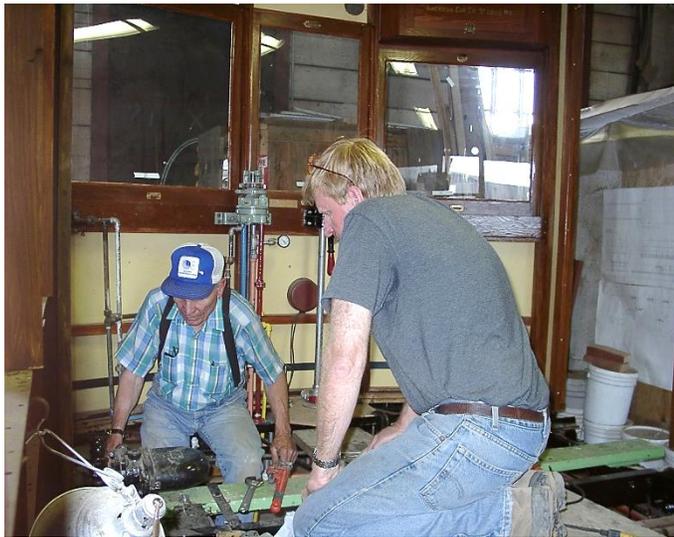


PPTM tour guides in uniform at "Rock Island Railroad's 130th"

**And, if you think you'd like to join our volunteers preserving the history of Colorado Springs trolleys, we'd love to hear from you.**

## The Rolling Spotlight featuring the “Birney Crew”

In this issue, we diverge from our series of articles in which we share photographs and interesting information on historically significant pieces of rolling stock or interesting exhibits to spotlight the volunteers who devoted time, energy, expertise, and ingenuity to the restoration of the trolley museum’s Birney Car No 135, the former Fort Collins Municipal Railway Car No 22.



### “The Birney Crew”

As the final work on the Birney gets closer, it’s appropriate to look back at those who, a decade ago, put in many volunteer hours to rebuild this historic car. Some of those volunteers are no longer with us: Vince Morris and Steve Pelles worked on the car, and Irene Bones brought lunch for the crew.

Pictured on this page are Gary Harrison, who led the effort, Jeff Smith, Neal McElrath, Jim Shaw, and Steve Pelles. Others who worked on the car included Paul Fiebing, Wayne Russert, Mike Walker, and the late Vince Morris.



## Car 470 Restoration Update

by John Eng, Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec

Changes in appearance are happening quickly now. As you may have noticed we are assembling chair seats for



the main seating area. The single seats at each end have been cast and are arriving in September.

We have received many of the brass castings necessary to assemble berths, and this week we received the post mount for the clerestory. Now comes the assembly of a post with all attachments from the clerestory to the seat. Since the last update you will notice that the floor and lower interior are completed. We have a covering on the floor to protect the finish. In preparing the seat frames for assembly many holes were drilled and grinding adjustments were made to insure proper seat movement in the frame.

The roof completion has slowed down our progress in finishing the lower siding and installation of the clerestory windows. The car windows are safety glass in the upper window and the lower opening safety plate laminated. The car doors have been installed and are operational.

The Friends of the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic RR (FoC&TS) work on the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Saturday of the month from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. – join us!

### Engine 168 update:



The engine is undergoing final assembly; pressure vessel tests are complete. The cab and cowcatcher constructed by the COS Friends group have been installed. New boiler insulation is installed, and the metal jacket is being fitted. Behind the engine is the new tender ready and waiting.

## Birney Birthday Bash – a Super Celebration!

On Saturday, May 25<sup>th</sup>, Trolley Museum volunteers and members were joined by a goodly number of visitors to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of our historic 1919 Birney car No. 135, the former Fort Collins Municipal Railway Car 22. No. 22 was the last Birney car to operate in revenue service in North America, eventually finding its way to our museum in 1994 after being on outdoor display at the Colorado Railroad Museum. Purchase of the car from the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club was completed in July 2006.



Volunteers happily provided informative tours, dished up free lunches and birthday cake, and gave trolley rides on PCC Car 2129. The 1919's were really back, with the display of a 1919 fire truck, many early 1900's antique cars, and volunteers in period clothes.



**Thanks to all the volunteers who made this event so special!**

Above photos by Marti Benson, Mike Walker, and unidentified photographers

## Museum Operations and Restoration Updates

### Operations

May 15, 2019 – August 15, 2019

Ron Oatney is the Director of Museum Operations; he welcomes your ideas and participation. The following update details recent activities by volunteers, members, Workfare, and Front Range people.

- **REA Cart:** The cart is being adapted so it can be used in parades and other events publicizing the museum.
- More media activity has resulted in increased attendance at the museum, and the tours have commented on the new additions to the museum: the telegrapher's office, WW2 exhibit, Frank Weed's garden railway, the Brio set-up for little kids, and the new photo-friendly front on the 59 car.
- In the museum, the World War II exhibit has been a success with many positive comments. Children seem to like it as much as older folks.
- The grounds have been weeded and elms cut down. Elms were hauled away by a fellow who needed them to feed his goats.
- The workshop is being put back together as we speak, and the area in front of Car 59 has been cleared out, mostly by John Caulfield.
- We have three wood piles for free pick-up. Antique wood, good wood, and scrap wood. Marti has put the wood on Craig's List.
- We have made some \$\$ selling cabinets, tables, and power tools on Craig's List. Thanks to Marti Benson for listing them.
- Our 10-ton roll-off is filling with iron and steel, achieving two things, junk off the museum property - and \$\$.
- The 2019 Railroad Days in Palmer Lake was a huge success, thanks to John Caulfield, Marti Benson, Wayne Russert, and Mike and Sigi Walker.
- **Tours:** Throughout this quarter, we have had back to back tours of families, small groups, and even busloads of visitors arriving without reservations. Our tour guides have been able to handle it all! This is surely the result of feature articles appearing in area news publications.

### Restoration

May 15, 2019 – August 15, 2019

John Caulfield is the Director of Restoration; he is always looking for volunteers with the kind of skills to restore our historic cars. The following is an update on recent activities.

- **CS&I Car #135:** "The Birney" restoration is progressing fast. The operators stand has been installed and looks great. John Cusack and John Weed are pulling wire to the control stand, brakes, and doors.
- **PCC #2129:** Bondo work on the south side of our operating PCC car has been completed; repainting is pending. Installation of a back-up camera system has been completed.
- **CS&I #59:** "The Leclede" has a new photo-friendly front end for visitors wanting to take photos of the 1901 car.
- **Car #48, "The Brill":** Stored in the carbarn awaiting restoration, the car has been transformed into the former residence of a young couple stationed at Ft. Carson shortly after WWII. It has received many favorable comments.
- **Denver Tramway Cars #724 and #770:** Plans are to use these cars for a trolley maintenance-of-way exhibit.
- **Car #3101, LARy War Baby:** On static display. Roof repair plans are being finalized.
- **Car #4363, exSP6777, Rock Island RR Museum:** The Rock Island car has been moved toward the east to accommodate John Caulfield's new steps and railings, which is greatly appreciated by all. We are still looking for someone to prepare, prime and paint the south side of the car.
- **Car #4002** has been evaluated by John Caulfield, Tom Levy, and Wayne Russert. It has been wrapped in better tarps and saved for now.
- Under consideration is weatherproofing and sealing the north roundhouse windows; a "storm window" approach may be feasible.
- Tom Levy has installed an end of train device, or **FRED**, on the West boxcar. He also has put N scale cabooses models on display in the D&RG 01501 caboose.

**Volunteers – Always Needed, Always Welcome**

## Do You Know the Truth about FRED?

Trolley Museum volunteer Tom Levy calls it a "caboose killer." The railroads call it a "cost-saver." What has made "FRED" so controversial?

**FRED**, the acronym for a **flashing rear-end device**, is an electronic device mounted on the end of freight trains in lieu of a caboose. These end-of-train devices are divided into three categories: "dumb" units, which only provide a visible indication of the rear of the train with a flashing red taillight; "average intelligence" units with a brake pipe pressure gauge; and "smart" units, which send back data to the crew in the locomotive via radio-based telemetry.

They originated in North America but are also used elsewhere in the world. Because they replaced the caboose along with two crewmen per train who would have ridden in the caboose, they have been called "caboose killers!"



Your continuing support of the Pikes Peak Historical Street Railway Foundation is vital for meeting operating expenses and funding restoration costs. Please consider additional contributions for the restoration of the "Laclede" and the "Birney." **Please mail checks to PPHSRF, PO Box 544, Colorado Springs CO 80901-0544 or indicate payment by credit card or PayPal below.**

**MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION** (Please print)

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Ph: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Ph: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES** (Please check one)

**Individual**

**Family**

**Corporate**

Friend \$40.00       Unlimited guests \$60.00       Sponsor \$250.00

Check enclosed. Please mail to the address at the top of this form.

Please charge my credit card: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name as it appears on card (please print) \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

"PayPal": Send funds to [csstreetcarfdn@aol.com](mailto:csstreetcarfdn@aol.com)

Additional Contribution: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to be applied to (please check one):

Car Restoration       Museum Displays       General Operating Fund

**PLEASE CONTACT ME ABOUT VOLUNTEERING!**

**Note:** For contributions of \$250 or more, please consider making your donation through the El Paso County Enterprise Zone; your contribution may qualify for a 25% Colorado state tax credit. For more information, call 475-9508.

*Many thanks to our volunteers, donors, and members — your contributions make a huge difference to the PPHSRF!*

**2019 Museum Hours**  
**Open Wednesday through Saturday**  
 Museum opens at 9:30 a.m.  
 Last tour at 3:00 p.m.  
 Adults \$5, Seniors \$4  
 Children 3-11 \$3, under 3 free

**NEWS ALERT!**

**El Paso streetcars make their return after 45-year absence**

The City of El Paso launched its much-awaited El Paso Streetcar service Friday afternoon at 5:00 p.m., November 9, 2018, when streetcars opened to the public. The launching ceremony featured all three different color schemes of the newly restored Presidents Conference Committee (PCC) Streetcars, and its first streetcars filled with passengers. The service was free on grand opening weekend (Nov. 9, 10 and 11) and every Friday, Saturday and Sunday until Jan. 6, 2019. The streetcars' new 4.8 mile-route consists of two loops through El Paso's Uptown and Downtown areas.

Left: Waiting to ride the newly-opened El Paso Streetcar line on opening weekend, November 2018 *El Paso Times* photo  
 Right: Boy Scout Troop 42 and spouses after riding new El Paso Streetcar line, April 26, 2019 *Mike Walker* photo

