

Rodrigues Awaiting \$700K Grant to Start Renovations on Kalakala

Friday, 06 November 2009

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Jay Barrett/KMXT

As we reported on Monday, the former Washington State Ferry Kalakala, currently tied up in Tacoma, Washington, may have a new home soon

The current owner of the Kalakala, Steve Rodrigues, would like to restore the 276-foot ship to its 1935 Art Deco glory, and make it a centerpiece on the waterfront of Port Angeles, on Washington's Olympic Peninsula. But, he adds there are other possible homes for the unique ship.

After retirement from ferry service, the Kalakala spent nearly 30 years beached in Kodiak's Gibson Cove, serving as a fish processing plant. It was refloated and towed to Seattle in 1998 by Peter Bevis, who bought it from the city of Kodiak.

-- (Kalakala 1 30 sec "We basically have three ...Angeles to Victoria.")

The price tag to restore the Kalakala is now estimated to be 11-million dollars, a figure which has skyrocketed in recent years. But despite the number of dot-com billionaires in Washington State, Rodrigues says money not what the Kalakala needs most:

-- (Kalakala 2 32 sec "Why haven't Paul Allen ... to make it beautiful.")

One plan

Rodrigues has for the ship is to replace the hull. The original hull came from a San Francisco Bay ferry called the Peralta (per-alta), which burned to the waterline in 1933, upon which the Kalakala's unique streamlined superstructure was built. He said the Peralta's hull could be put on display while the Kalakala sails on a new one.

With his

many goals for the ship, it's obvious Rodrigues has a passion for the Kalakala beyond it being a simple investment:

-- (Kalakala 3 48 sec "The beauty of the ... and it was abused.")

Rodrigues

says once the Kalakala is seaworthy again, he'd like to sail it back to Kodiak for a visit. In the meantime, he's awaiting word on a 700,000-dollar National Parks Service "Save America's Treasures" grant to begin work on the ship. The Kalakala was added to the National Registry of Historic Places in 2006.

I'm Jay
Barrett.

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