

TRANSIT UPDATES *Have anything to report? Call 213 388 2364*

Santa Monica routes #1,4,7,8, and 10 will undergo a slight re-route in Downtown Santa Monica (typically near where these routes intersect 4th St.)

This June, Foothill Transit is considering replacing MTA #497 service to Montclair, if MTA decides to cancel it. Foothill #699 would be extended to Montclair (and possibly renumbered)

Also, Foothill Transit plans in the coming year to began a major rehabilitation of the El Monte busway station, including renovation of the bathrooms and adding a Foothill Transit Store.

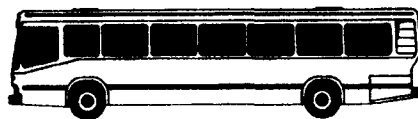
LADOT Community Connection route 147 (San Pedro Community Connection between 25th & Western and Peck Park/Park Plaza Shopping Center) will cease entering Port O' Call starting April 15th. Ports O' Call will continue to be served by LADOT route 142 (Long Beach-San Pedro) 7 days/week and the San Pedro Electric Trolley

LADOT 147 southbound will change slightly to dip down the hill a few blocks to Harbor Blvd. For the first time the 147 will have stops on 6th St. After the change both north and southbound routes will be the same. The time savings will allow service to be every 30 minutes Mondays thru Saturdays and hourly Sundays and holidays

During May, there is a special promotion with the Warner Center DASH route. Passengers riding the DASH to either the Topanga or Promenade malls five times during May will receive a \$5 gift certificate good at the food court of either mall. A special punch card is needed and is available from the Topanga Mall, or from Warner Center DASH drivers.

Carson Circuit has moved the layover where all its lines meet to the south side of Del Amo Blvd north of Carson Mall a bit east of Avalon Blvd. This moves the layover away from the mall itself. A while back they moved the layover from the west side of the mall nearer Avalon Blvd. to the east side behind the mall itself. The buses wait at the curbside now.

Palos Verdes Transit officials recently honored its operators with a luncheon for driving over fourteen months without a single accident.



San Buenaventura Mall Transit Center, Ventura

-C.P. Hobbs photo

BULLETIN BOARD

We are trying out a toll free hotline: (866) 4-SOCATA. Our thanks to Jane Reifer for facilitating this.

At our June 9 meeting beginning at 2p.m. honorary member (and editor of Western Transit) Edmund Buckley will make a presentation on transit scheduling, demystifying this process for our members and others.

Darrell Clarke of the Sierra Club Angeles Chapter Transportation Committee and Friends 4 Expo Transit made an presentation at our April 14 meeting advocating for light rail along the Exposition right-of-way. Our thanks to Darrell for an educational and enlightening program.

May 19 we will undertake our first study tour of the year, tracing the route of historic route 66 between Santa Monica and San Bernardino. At our May 12 meeting we will decide which end to start at and set a time and place to rendezvous. If you can't make the May 12 meeting but want to participate call our hotline a few days ahead of time for details.

Consideration of the bylaw changes printed in the April newsletter was deferred to our May 12 meeting due to time considerations. We will also engage at that meeting in a work session where members will write letters to officials. Bring your own stationery and envelopes to enhance the individuality (paper and envelopes will provided for those who lack them).

Executive Secretary Gabbard is scheduled to make a presentation June 17 to the Unitarian Universalist Society of the San Fernando Valley, which will focus on Valley transportation issues: the busway proposals, metro rapid bus and the transit zone.

The Torrance Municipal Yard annual open house will be held Saturday June 2 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. This is a chance to see Torrance's bus fleet up close and talk to the folks at Torrance Transit plus score free trinkets. The yard is at 20500 Madrona Ave. in Torrance.

The Santa Monica Transit Mall project now has a website: http://www.santa-monica.org/engineering/projects/transit_mall.htm. Also a hotline has been established: 800-200-8340 [completion is slated for May 2002].

Caltrans has begun publishing a Journal (to have six issues this year) with articles about new engineering techniques and practices, major construction projects, and transportation policy along with travelogues describing scenic highways. Subscriptions are \$40 per year. Send check payable to Caltrans to: California Department of Transportation, Publication Distribution Unit, 1900 Royal Oaks Drive, Sacramento, CA 95815-3800. Or pay with credit card via phone: (916) 445-3520 or by fax: (916) 324-8997 or via the internet: <http://caltrans-opac.ca.gov/publicat.htm>

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics has released the beta-test version of its Intermodal Transportation Data Base (ITDB), which provides a broad collection of transportation data: <http://www.itdb.bts.gov/>

As always, *The Transit Advocate* needs articles, letters, Transit Tips, photographs and research (newspaper clippings, etc.) from all members and interested non-members. All materials should be sent to 3010 Wilshire #362, Los Angeles, CA 90010. (or e-mailed to transit@lerami.lerctr.org). Material for publication should be received two weeks before the scheduled SO.CA.TA meeting

PUBLIC AND LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Dana Gabbard (dgabbard@hotmail.com)

James Cragin instead of running for re-election to the Gardena City Council opted to make a run for the vacated Mayor's seat but lost to a fellow councilman. Since he no longer is a public official Cragin had to leave the MTA Board. The Southwest Cities caucus has chosen Councilperson Pam O'Connor of Santa Monica as Cragin's successor. SO.CA.TA awarded its Transit Advocate of the Year Award to O'Connor at our first holiday banquet in appreciation for her support of transit (O'Connor doesn't own a car and use transit as her main means of transportation). We are excited to have a transit user at last sitting on the MTA Board! Once the full City Selection Committee validates the selection she will be sworn in. Good luck, Pam!

Kymerleigh Richards made comments on our behalf at the MTA Board April 26 meeting to mark Mr. Cragin's stepping down and acknowledge his efforts on behalf of transit users, long before that became the fashionable. I understand at the same meeting Chair Yvonne Burke warned the BRU that she would not allow them special comment time again after their latest grandstanding on behalf of their campaign for free student passes.

Flash! Faithful Reader brought to my attention that while MTA's two main unions for operators and clerks, the UTU and TCU respectively, renewed their contracts for three years the mechanics union, Amalgamated Transit Union local 1277, has one for only two years that expires Sept. 30, 2002. Evidently the ATU disliked having to negotiate in the shadow of the bus drivers union. If the ATU strikes all MTA unionized employees will honor its picket line. Sounds like we bus riders can't get too comfortable. By the way, local 1277 now has a website (including the text of its agreement with MTA): <http://www.atu1277.com>

Faithful Reader also brought to my attention

Supervisor Antonovich's tirade at a recent MTA Board committee meeting. Antonovich gave a tongue lashing to MTA Operations Chief Tom Conner regarding why MTA's drivers didn't call dispatch and report bums sleeping at a bus stop in downtown L.A. Turns out this location isn't even served by MTA. When asked later about this discrepancy Antonovich's aide stated the Supervisor was misinformed. I'll say he was!

If SCAG can't get the \$1 million it wants from the feds for maglev planning, is the project dead? I guess we have a new goal in life: NO FUNDS FOR SCAGLEV!

A co-worker brought to my attention a rare piece of positive coverage of MTA: a March 30 Christian Science Monitor article "Bus Route 720: a ride through the new diversity" profiling the ridership of Metro Rapid Route #720 as a cross-section of diverse Los Angeles headlines Face of America's Future.

MTA blinked. To stave off state legislation that would take a bite out of its operations budget MTA agreed to allocate to the Municipal Operators \$15 million per year for the next five years to be used to address overcrowding, new service, etc. While the riders of the munis are "less poor" than MTA riders they I think also deserve some relief.

In an amazing development the L.A. Times in a April 28 editorial ("Putting Westside on Rails") endorsed light rail on Exposition. This may add some kinks to the politics of the transit corridor study process. Meanwhile Martha Welborne has belatedly done public outreach with the brochure titled "Rapid Bus and Beyond". Many question some of the numbers (busway looks low-balled, while light rail looks inflated). Roger Christensen at the MTA Board meeting in his public comments criticized the figures and stated he felt it was not

appropriate for politicians to pushing one alternative in the midst of the EIR process and also that the brochure had the appearance of being official by coming in an MTA envelope (Welborne paid for it with her grant funding).

Question of the month: does 49 USC 5303(c)(5) (B) as Tom Rubin claims provide the means for the city of Los Angeles to withdraw from SCAG and set itself up as a separate Metropolitan Planning Organization?

Remember Linda Bohlinger, former interim MTA CEO and former CEO of Tri-rail in Florida? She has now turned up working for engineering consulting firm HNTB in Orange County as part of a team working on environmental studies for the inland empire alternative of the statewide high speed rail proposal.

Panic time for San Fernando valley zone zealots: consultant Russell Chisholm informed the zone Technical Advisory Committee that farebox revenues are projected lower than expected. The TAC responded with a direction for Chisholm to "make the lower revenue numbers work". This reeks of the dubious numbering crunching I

warned of when MTA was revising the zone guidelines.

While reading the 2000 Annual Report of the California Transportation Commission this brief item caught my eye: "Caltrans has \$90 million assigned to a very large freeway project in Southern California, for which construction cost might come to \$1 billion and it proposed to spend \$15 million for environmental studies followed by \$75 million for engineering design, leaving construction funding up in the air. The regional agency, so far, has indicated no interest in putting regional funds into construction." (2000 Annual Report v.1, page 5).

I'd like to conclude by offering a congratulations to Steve Cunningham, long-time Assistant Director of Transportation for Culver City (Culver CityBus) and Acting Director for same since the retirement of Dave Ashcraft in January, who was appointed permanent Director of Transportation for Culver City by the City Council effective April 23.

O.C. COMMITTEE NEWS *Mark Strickert/Jane Reifer*

TRANSIT ADVOCATES OF ORANGE COUNTY MEETING - 4/12/01 (with updates)

First topic for discussion at the meeting was the study on bus ridership counts, which wound up being covered at the OCTA board meeting on 4/23.

Preparations were made for the Fullerton Railroad Days weekend. SO.CA.TA would have a booth at the festival anyway, but the local TAOC folks would certainly help with the outreach, and play gracious hosts for the visit to Orange County Committee territory. Local group plans included preparing new flyers for TAOC (with SO.CA.TA membership forms on them), setting up a new toll-free phone number (866-4-SO.CA.TA) and PO

Box to be placed on said flyers, and getting a supply of OCTA Bus Books and maps to hand out. An Orange County rail survey was distributed by TAOC, and results will be used to gauge support for OCTA's CenterLine project. Our thanks to all SO.CA.TA members who made it down!

Next up, there was a report on the OCTA driver contract talks. What we had heard in early April still holds as of 5/3, that there were enough differences for them to miss the 4/30 contract deadline, but the negotiations were close and friendly enough for the drivers to continue under the old contract at least for the short term. To play it safe though, TAOC members still discussed strike preparation plans. (to pg. 8)

VENTURA EXCURSION #2 *Dana Gabbard*

For our 2000 day after Thanksgiving trip our members decided for the first time to visit an area we had previously visited. In 1995 for our first post-Thanksgiving trip we had visited Ventura County and ridden VISTA, Thousand Oaks, SCAT and Simi Valley bus routes. This year we decided to check out the new Conejo Connection service, ride some more VISTA and SCAT routes plus try out the Ojai Trolley. Member Kymberleigh Richards, a former resident of Ventura County, kindly consented to plan the trip. Please note all ride counts for this report INCLUDE our members.

And so it was at 5:34 a.m. on Nov. 23, 2000 I caught MTA route 20 (CNG Neoplan #6553) at Wilshire and Park View eastbound for a short trip to the nearby MacArthur Park station, and from there took the Red Line to Union Station. Depending on where you were coming from members could join the trip on the Red Line train to North Hollywood departing Union Station at 6:06 a.m. I arrived at Union Station about 5:45 a.m. and soon met members Russ Jones and Charles Powell on the platform. We boarded Breda car #545 which departed on time at 6:06 a.m. At each station I poked my head out the door to make sure members waiting to join us knew which train car we were on. And two did join us en-route: Armando Avalos (Civic Center), and Mark Strickert (7th/Metro). By now a critical mass of bus fans had assembled and soon we were all looking over some of the remarkable bus photos Russ had brought.

We arrived at Universal City station at 6:30 a.m. and made our way to the nearby bus plaza. Here two more members were waiting to rendezvous with us for the trip: Woody Rosner and Frank Schroder. At 6:41 a.m. we boarded MTA metro rapid line 750 westbound (CNG NABI

#7010). With only 11 passengers ridership seemed light. The bus never became overly active. The heaviest activity was 4 boarding at Reseda and 6 deboarding at Topanga.

We arrived at the layover zone of Oxnard/Owensmouth at 7:20 a.m. and met up with members Charles Hobbs and Kymberleigh Richards. There was some concern because there was no sign indicating the Conejo Connection (or any VISTA bus) served this location. But the schedule had a detailed map for the stops in the Warner Center area and this was clearly the location indicated. Plus around the corner a Antelope MCI charter bus (#6955) was parked, which we suspected was the bus that we would be taking running ahead of schedule and waiting to make the time point at its final stop before beginning its express segment. And indeed at 7:30 a.m. the Antelope bus pulled around the corner, opened its door and the driver confirmed it was the Conejo Connection.

We climbed aboard and paid the \$2 fare. There were no other passengers. We had the bus and its driver all to ourself! And what a bus - this was travel at its most plush: reading lights, heat, cushioned seats that leaned back, a luggage rack and a bathroom in the back. Just the sort of charter buses I sight all the time plying up and down Wilshire Boulevard full of gawking tourists. Except this time it was SO.CA.TA members who were the ones enjoying the passing view while in the lap of luxury. On our trip north we passed the MTA route 161 layover at Westlake/Townsgate and caught sight of our first VISTA bus stop information cube (much like those of Culver CityBus).

We arrived at the end of the line, the Esplanade Mall, at 8:31 a.m. Only there was no mall there,

just a pile of rubble where it had stood (a new upscale replacement is planned as the latest salvo in the Oxnard/Ventura mall/sales taxes war described by William Fulton in "The Reluctant Metropolis"). At this location we found cubes for VISTA and SCAT.

Our next bus, SCAT route 6B, arrived at 8:36 a.m. with a load of 40 passengers. The bus was a Flexible #3506. We arrived at the Pacific View Mall bus stop at 9:10 a.m. This was a rather simple affair - a length of sidewalk with multiple stops, some benches and a kiosk with information on buses serving it (Kymberleigh later informed me while the route 12 schedule it displayed was correct the map was outdated). During the 20 minute wait for the next bus a nearby Sears Auto Repair Center provided some of us with the opportunity to get snacks or use the restroom.

At 9:30 a.m. our route 16 bus arrived, a Flexible #4000. We departed with a light load of 10 passengers (9 SO.CA.TA members and one "civilian"). We traveled along a stretch of Main Street which I would term commercial/residential. Then we entered the historic downtown of Ventura. A detour due to a community festival resulted in our going off route for 2 blocks. We also caught sight of Mission St. Buenaventura. Then we entered the Ventura Avenue district, the oldest part of the city. What began as a business district became industrial than rural as we left Ventura and commenced our journey to Ojai. Along the way we passed thru the small enclaves of Casitas Springs and Oakview. In Oakview we had 3 boardings and 1 deboarding. At the connection point with the Ojai Trolley Mira Monte route, 5 passengers deboarded. We continued on to the Ojai Transit Center, a rather generic bus pull-thru/turnaround, which had no seating but at least did have a coke machine. We next walked to downtown Ojai, taking in the sights (and

some of us tried the outstanding ice cream one shop sold).

At Signal & Ojai we caught the Ojai Trolley on its Mira Monte route at 11:29 a.m. The driver was named Pete and the bus was a Startrans [made to look like a trolley] with wooden bench seating. There were 2 passengers (and 6 deboarded) when we boarded. The bus passed thru areas that were mostly residential with some stores scattered throughout. We also caught sight of some horses. I quickly decided while they added to the historic atmosphere of the vehicle the benches left a lot to be desired as to comfort.

At Highway 33 & 150 we deboarded to catch SCAT 16 for the return trip to civilization. The bus arrived at 11:55 a.m. (#4006). While it began with 18 riders soon the load swelled to 39 riders. In downtown Ventura we ate lunch at a local landmark, the Top Hat. This is a shack that serves basic tasty fare (burgers, etc.). Limited seating meant I ended up eating with my food placed on top of a post of some sort. But it was good.

After a bathroom break at an accommodating American Legion Hall we made our way to Main & Figueroa to catch rt.6B at 1:17 p.m. (#3503) with 13 riders. We passed thru areas that were mostly residential, mixed with some commercial. Kymberleigh Richards tells me this segment of rt. 6B is through an historic residential segment of Main St. Ventura doesn't really have a lot of long business-only street mileage; virtually every street has some residential on it, with a high mix of single-family homes on arterials (the apartment buildings tend to be on lesser streets, an interesting commentary on the city's brand of urban planning.)

Next we took rt.11, a Flexible 30 foot bus (#3000) with 15 riders. This passed thru(to pg.10)

(from pg. 5) Among them, the possible online ride-board, and coming up with a reference list of alternative transportation. OCTA rules most of the county, but there is Laguna Beach Transit, a few MTA routes in the north, private bus lines to the airport, Disneyland and such, and the StationLink shuttles staffed by Laidlaw drivers.

Other topics touched on included potential route adjustments to propose for the September Service Changes, the holdup on the proposed Amtrak "Desert Tortoise" to Las Vegas, the proposed railroad museum for the Fullerton Santa Fe depot, OCTA bus stop numbers, and their use (or non-use) by the Customer Information people, and the OCTA Citizens Advisory Committee.

JUNE BUS BOOK

The Transit Advocates of Orange County was called on to proofread a draft copy of the June Book. The group did its part to assist OCTA's paid staff by spotting a number of typos and inconsistencies in the maps and the schedule headings. We look forward to an even more helpful final product when it hits the newsstands just ahead of the 6/10 changes.

EARLY RETIREMENT, WITHOUT A GOING-AWAY PARTY?

The #424, a once-daily shuttle between Fullerton Transportation Center and the Raytheon plant in the hills above Malvern and Gilbert, was set to be cancelled with the June Changes thanks to low ridership. However, as Jane witnessed while she happened to pass through the Fullerton Transportation Center on the morning of Thursday, April 19th, 4 would-be riders discovered that OCTA had jumped the gun by closing down their route after the previous afternoon. Jane checked into the situation, and while the planned cancellation announcements were never issued, the route remains cancelled. OCTA has now instituted a mechanism to prevent surprises like this from happening again.

GROUND-BREAKING EVENT IN SOUTH COUNTY
The long-awaited Laguna Niguel/Mission Viejo Metrolink station is now a step closer to reality. Jane Reifer went down there on April 20th to witness the dirt-shoveling ceremony. Completion ETA is early 2002.

FAST FORWARD, aka OCTA LONG RANGE PLAN

If all we had to go on was the first of the 4 initial workshops (the Irvine one on 5/3), they might have to name it for another VCR control, such as the "Pause". I'm a bit tired and bogged down in work to give you a full report in time for this newsletter, but my thumbnail review is this: Two hours of rampant negativity...anti-traffic, anti-HOV lanes, anti-rail, and anti-bus. Hopefully the attendees of the other workshops (Brea, Garden Grove, and Mission Viejo) will have some ideas about what TO do? Will try to make it to the Brea one too, for comparison's sake.

Perhaps the most reasonable opponent to the "CenterLine" light-rail plan is John Kleinpeter and his Website <http://www.nocenterline.com>.

PEDICABS IN FULLERTON?

Fergus McTaggart, a Brea High School teacher who also owns a valet parking firm, has proposed a pedicab service for downtown Fullerton. It would be available in the evenings to start, and expand to include regular business hours if there was enough demand. What a fun way to get around downtown! It would also solve the problem of downtown destinations that are sometimes a little too far to walk.

GOODBYE ORANGE TROLLEY

Alas, the Orange Trolley is no more. Maureen Peters tells us that the service she operated was recently cancelled. The free trolley ran several days a week between the Disney area and downtown Orange.

OCTA SERVICE PLANNING POSITION TO OPEN
OCTA will soon be advertising a new position available in route planning. They will probably be responsible for undoing much of the straight-lining tangle. They have already advertised for someone with experience in overseeing the construction and operation of large capital projects (hmmm, like a CenterLine mayhaps?)

CALIFORNIA HIGH SPEED RAIL
As part of the formal environmental review process scoping meetings are being held to collect public input. The Orange County event will be Wednesday, May 23 at the Irvine Civic Center, Conference and Training Center, One Civic Center Plaza from 3 p.m.-5 p.m. and again from 6 p.m.-8 p.m. Further information: (916) 324-1541

OCTA BUS CHANGES AND DETOURS NOW AVAILABLE BY E-MAIL
OCTA has a great new way to let riders know of "Riders Alerts" - new bus changes and detours. If you have access to a computer you can sign up for e-mail alerts to be delivered directly to your e-mail account. Sign up at: <http://www.octa.net/busrail/routes/alerts.asp> and click on the e-mail notification banner. There is talk of implementing a Riders Alert hotline so passengers without e-mail can access the same information.

SANTA ANA PEDESTRIAN SAFETY TASK FORCE EVENTS
Celebrate Santa Ana event on Thursday, May 17th from 5:30PM-8:30PM at First American Title Insurance, 1 First American Way, Santa Ana. As part of the larger program, there will be a roundtable discussion with representatives from Santa Ana's 55 Neighborhood Associations regarding community-based participation to improve pedestrian safety.

Thinking Life Safety: Tools to Help Walkability in Santa Ana
Santa Ana Pedestrian Safety Task Force Meeting, Tuesday, June 5, 2001 from 3:00-5:00 PM at Santa Ana City Hall, 2nd floor in the Community Room. RSVP to Bernadette Vargas at (949) 824-5371 by May 29th. The Task Force is an interesting coalition of people from the City of Santa Ana, the community, and the Santa Ana Pedestrian Safety Project at UC Irvine. They have been doing great work trying to reduce pedestrian injuries and fatalities, especially in the Hispanic community.

EXTRA! EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT!
The Fullerton Observer has a regular column on rail and other transportation issues. The Transit Advocates of Orange County gets its own column within that column, so when visiting Fullerton please watch for the friendly little twice-monthly community paper with writings by the same folks who bring you the Orange County Committee page here in the Transit Advocate. ■



SCAT Bus southbound from Ojai to Ventura
-C. P. Hobbs photo

(from pg. 7) a varying landscape as Route 11 loops to/from a part of Ventura called Saticoy: commercial to industrial to rural. I had a conversation with a passenger who expressed concerns about security on buses and driver behavior, asking how to communicate complaints to management. After going thru a suburban upscale area we entered what appeared to be a somewhat older neighborhood. We returned as route 10 (which means we went out on Telephone Road and came back on Telegraph Road).

After a quick trip on route 6B to Seaward and Main (with a pitstop at a convenient doughnut store at the locale) we caught route 14, which only runs at peak hours. This first trip after swinging by the beach had a shortened route back to Pacific View Mall (which got us there in time for the 4:05pm trip to Oxnard via route 6A).

Now we undertook the trip between Oxnard and Ventura on rt.6A on a Flxible (#3513). This is the busiest SCAT route and carried 34 passengers. As we enjoyed the trip between cities I reflected on how nice the drivers we had encountered were and also became aware things would soon be winding down for our trip (the sun already was low in the sky).

It should probably be noted that we rode the 6B branch from Oxnard to Ventura in the morning, and the 6A back in the afternoon; this is the only portion of the route that differs on the "A" and "B" branches. (6A serves Ventura College and Montalvo; 6B operates a more direct routing.)

After arriving at the Oxnard Transportation Center we took rt.15 at 4:58 p.m. (#3504) with 23 passengers. The sun set and I glanced out the darkened windows as we made our way along the circuitous route. On the trip back to OTC there were 13 passengers. Upon arrival we called it a day and went for dinner at the nearby El Taco de

Mexico. While eating we discussed the day of riding and I solicited suggestions anyone might have that we should make to the agencies based upon our experiences. These included:

Ojai Trolley should have timed transfers with SCAT route 16; also needs easier to read maps

Oxnard Transportation Center - lobby should have more bus information, like a system map; also new schedules should always be available (we found old ones that hadn't been replaced instead. Strangely we found an MTA system map mounted on the wall of OTC]

Pacific View Mall - route 12 map needs updated (subsequent to our trip we learned a major upgrade to this facility is planned)

SCAT - Frank Schroder suggested the need for a direct express connection between Oxnard and Ventura (instead of current 45 minute trip on rt.6); someone else offered they should consider offering a day pass.

VISTA - bus stop signs should be installed at any stop that does not already have one.

Afterward some of us went home via Amtrak, others Greyhound. But everyone went home satisfied after a great day of bus riding. My thanks to Kymberleigh Richards, Mark Strickert and Armando Avalos for their contributions to this report.

So where should we go for this year's trip? ■

MEMBERS IN ACTION

Armando Avalos had a letter on the Cal Poly situation ("Moving Buses is Inconsiderate of Disabled") published in the April 3 Poly Press (the campus newspaper).

Mark Strickert responded to anti-light rail dogma in a letter ("Lite Rail") published in the March 30 OC Weekly.

David Davenport defended MTDB's TransitWorks program in a letter ("The San Diego Trolley Definitely is Working") published in the April 19 San Diego Union Tribune. He has also moved the website for his newsletter the Transit Times (covering San Diego County):
<http://www.netcolony.com/members/dld/>

Roger Christensen had a letter printed in the Valley section of the April 29 L.A. Times "Busway", responding to an earlier letter extolling the Oxnard busway alternative.

April 29 Jane Reifer, Mark Strickert, Dana Gabbard and Charles Powell converged on Charles Hobbs' apartment to assist in updating the Transit Guide for the Fullerton event. Our thanks to them for their hard work.

On May 2 the California High Speed Rail Authority held a workshop at the Japanese/ American National Museum in Downtown L.A.'s Little Tokyo. Attendees included members Ken Ruben, John Ulloth, Roger Christensen, Dana Gabbard and Charles Powell.

Mark Strickert attended OCTA's May 3 Fast Forward workshop in Irvine. His overall impression is the attendees indulged "Two hours of rampant negativity...anti-traffic, anti-HOV lanes, anti-rail, and anti-bus."

James Umbach has added photos of transit from his recent tour of L.A. to his website:
<http://urbanophile.home.mindspring.com/>

TAOC members Kirk Schneider and Barry Christensen had letters commenting on CenterLine critics in the Los Angeles Times Orange County edition on 4/1 and 4/8, respectively. Mark Strickert's letter commenting on an anti-CenterLine letter was printed in the 3/30 OC Weekly. OCTA comments by Jane Reifer and T.J. Stiller appeared in the Times Orange County on 3/28. Jane Reifer appeared in a short interview recently on KOCE's weekly Transportation Tuesday show, discussing OCTA's recent ridership decline. (KOCE is Orange County's PBS station, on channel 50). ■