

BULLETIN BOARD

Editor's Note: Let me know how you like the new look and layout of the newsletter!

Our thanks to honorary member Edmund Buckley for his presentation on transit scheduling at the June 9 meeting. At upcoming meetings we will have speakers on accessibility issues and Metro Rapid service expansion.

We are now anticipating the OCTA study tour will be later this year, and the PCH trip will occur in early 2002. The follow-up exploration of owl service (we did a previous one in 1997) likely will be in August.

20 people attended the presentation by Frank Guzzo of Siemens at our June 14 Rail Transit Systems & Project Implementation seminar. Members attending included Roger Christensen, Bart Reed, Kymberleigh Richards, Anthony Loui, Mark Panitz and John Ulloth. Our thanks to Mr. Guzzo for putting on an informative program plus lively discussion afterward.

Charles Hobbs has added several interesting items to the statements section of our webpage (<http://socata.lerctr.org/statements.html>), including Barry Christensen's article on our visit to the Metrolink dispatch center on Oct. 22,

1996 and co-founder Steve Crosmer's history of SO.CA.TA..

The 2001 Rail-Volution, this year held in San Francisco, is fast approaching (Sept. 13-16). The deadline to apply for scholarships is July 13 by calling 800-788-7077 or via the website: <http://www.railvolution.com/>

A Spanish language subtitled version of Haskell Wexler's documentary on the Bus Riders Union is screening at the Music Hall Theater, 9036 Wilshire Blvd. (in Beverly Hills at Doheny) Thursday July 19. Admission is \$10; further information: (213) 387-2800.

Friends of the Earth has released (in Acrobat format) a report on "Reading the TEA Leaves: Bush Budget and Road Lobby Look Toward the Next Transportation Law.": <http://www.foe.org/eco/roadsbush2.pdf>

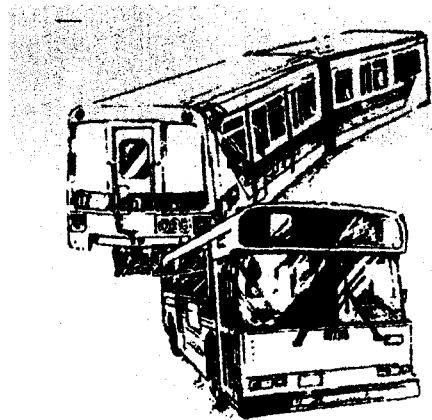
Kymberleigh Richards' San Fernando Valley bus service history page has been updated, with many maps of historic routes added from the collection of member Russ Jones: <http://home.pacbell.net/krichrds/history.htm>

The Summer 2001 issue of David Davenport's "The Transit Times" is now available online: <http://www.netcolony.com/members/dld/summer2001.html>

Tim Adams' Transit People website (<http://www.transitpeople.org/>) is brimming with fun to read trip reports and an informational online lesson on public transit.

Our condolences to the family of Ivory Napoleon, killed June 18 by a San Diego Transit vehicle.

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 date. ■



MEMBERS IN ACTION



Corrections to last month's column: Walkabout International (not Walk San Diego) is the group Chris Flescher has joined. Anthony Loui did not attend the Culver City Council meeting on Exposition. Ken Ruben also was among those who attended the Torrance municipal yard open-house.

Henryka Maslowski attended the California Transportation Futures program held in Universal City.

Charles Hobbs attended the June 12 San Dimas City Council meeting and presented information on a possible site for a San Dimas Metrolink site. He is even mentioned in the meeting minutes: <http://www.cityofsandimas.com/html/City%20Council/Minutes/ccmn0612.htm>

Roger Christensen had a letter supporting light rail on Exposition published in the June 18 L.A. Downtown News.

Jane Reifer was quoted in the July 7 Orange County Register article "OCTA may travel new track with buses" about OCTA considering Bus Rapid Transit: "I think it's really great we're finally starting to look at the whole spectrum of transit options. We definitely need some fast ways to get to the other side of the county." ■



In the past month we have submitted letters of support for the Exposition light rail project, two pieces of legislation (AB 631 for a statewide assessment of transportation needs to be done every five years and ACR 32 to have a report prepared on the possible impact of expiring local dedicated sales taxes for transportation), federal funds for Cal Poly Pomona road resurfacing (to preserve the on-campus Transit Center) and MTA's federal transportation appropriation request. All are important and worthy of our support.

Well, they pulled it off. The activists comprising Friends for Expo Transit along with many others succeeded in convincing the MTA Board to approve unanimously (10-0) light rail on Exposition from downtown to Venice/Robertson as the locally preferred alternative for the midcity/westside transit corridor study. As with the Pasadena and Eastside lines, citizen involvement and the support of elected officials in the corridors won the day (reminder: the Bus Riders Union continue in flyers to claim these light rail lines are "corporate-driven rail projects"). Already the activists are contemplating their next task: finding funding to jumpstart construction (left to its own devices MTA won't have the truncated line open until 2014). As expected the Board

scaled back Bus Rapid Transit a la Curitiba on Wilshire to dedicated lanes only during peak hours initially (with 24 hour lanes deferred to "a future date", which likely will never arrive).

The BRU is launching a campaign to pressure Mayor Hahn to keep his campaign promise to have MTA drop its appeal of the court order that the agency purchase 350 buses. Well, we are also about to launch a campaign, but unlike the sham that the BRU are engaged in ours will produce real and substantial improvements in the lives of bus riders county-wide. Metro Rapid is a clear success, carrying huge numbers of people (including new riders). We can mobilize this natural constituency to build political support which will translate into funding from Sacramento and Washington, D.C. for further expansion of Metro Rapid. Our first step is to enlist Mayor Hahn as a Metro Rapid booster. Next month's newsletter will have a postcard for members to sign and either send to Mayor Hahn or bring to our meeting so we can hand deliver them to the Mayor's office. The next step will be a petition drive at key Metro Rapid stops so riders can register their support for expansion. Then we'll work on enlisting the support of our legislative delegation (state and federal) and MTA board members. Anyone who wishes to participate in this effort can contact me: (213) 388-2364 or dgabbard@hotmail.com (P.S. we have a clear field on this issue since the BRU has been tepid in its public comments on Metro Rapid's success, since to do otherwise would acknowledge an improvement which wasn't the result of their consent decree).

Per Metro Investment Report June issue Mayor Hahn's deputy on environment, transportation and infrastructure is Brian

Williams.

question of the month: the BRU's flyer announcing the agenda for its June 16 meeting includes the statement "Members, we still have information about Cityride, a service for seniors and disabled. Please check it on the information table!" Does that mean these alleged advocates for bus riders have until now been unaware of L.A.'s Cityride program? The mind reels...

The L.A. Independent published a letter on June 6 by Charles Hockett which questioned some of the BRU's stances and concluded by wondering whether they were funded by the same folks (oil & tire companies) reputed to have destroyed the Red Car system. My response published June 13 stated the truth is the BRU gets its millions from westside liberals and charitable foundations, and invited readers to examine my research on their finances posted on Kym Richards' website: <http://home.pacbell.net/krichrds/brufunds.htm>

I recently sent the BRU \$10 to join. Really my intention was simply to get their brochures in the mail to monitor their public pronouncements, instead of having to rely on finding them on buses, bus benches, etc. But they turned me down stating my opposition to their positions made me ineligible for membership (the letter is posted at <http://home.pacbell.net/krichrds/nodana.htm>). Oh, well. (P.S. - they returned my check).

According to Item 41 at the June 28 Board meeting it is the agencies' intention that Foothill Transit will

eventually assume "overall responsibility for operating ... El Monte Transit Station". This is partly due to "Regional service plans currently under consideration call for ... MTA decreasing its presence by withdrawing duplicative services, such as those operating along the El Monte Busway".

Faithful Reader has again shared with me a hot bit of information. In June the Ports of L.A. and Long Beach jointly issued a request for proposal for Property Management Services for jointly owned railroad properties. It turns out the ports own not only the right-of-way for the Alameda Corridor project but the parallel UP San Pedro Branch rail corridor to the east purchased "for alternate and/or future uses". It appears with an eye to the future the Ports are holding the San Pedro branch as a possible additional link. Could this mean in 20 years or so a second multi-billion dollar project for express tracks to link the Ports and downtown L.A. will be proposed when the Alameda line reaches capacity? Has anyone told the cities of Paramount, South Gate, Cudahy, Bell, Huntington Park, Vernon and Maywood this may be in their future?

The May 28th U.S. News and World Report cover story "Traffic: How It's Changing Life in America" (<http://www.usnews.com/usnews/issue/010528/usnews/traffic.htm>) is fascinating for its inclusion of smart growth and transit as among the strategies to deal with congestion and providing an explanation of why latent demand means building your way out of gridlock isn't a viable option. (to p. 6)

(from p. 5) The national debate on these issues is turning more and more in the direction of our position that a multi-pronged approach to transportation must include public transit.

The Planning and Conservation League is preparing a possible transportation funding initiative for the November, 2001 ballot. This would dedicate sales taxes on cars to transportation projects and have gas taxes permanently dedicated to transportation purposes. You can see the current draft text, and obtain information about the initiative, at: <http://www.pcl.org> (click the transportation button). The June 22 California Corridors reports Jerry Meral, Executive Director of PCL, is seeking support from the business community for the initiative campaign.

June 26 MTA held a Public Hearing at Los Angeles Valley College on the proposed San Fernando Valley East-West busway. Members in attendance included Dana Gabbard, Kymberleigh Richards, Bart Reed, John Ulloth, Joseph Dunn, Alan Michaelson, Sean Bainbridge and Nate Zablen (Roger Christensen attended one at Pierce College the previous week). The event stretched from 5 p.m. to nearly 10 p.m. As expected anti-busway comments far outnumbered the 2-3 pro-comments. In my comments I noted that the Valley elite (David Fleming, Gerald Silver and Richard Close) along with Zev Yaroslavsky are the ones pushing the project and that attendees should aim their ire at Zev et al, not MTA or its staff. This whole debacle is soon to land at the MTA Board. Given the outrage generated I advise standing on the sidelines and watch the fur fly...

An ad hoc group of members have prepared our position on MTA's latest set of

service change proposals that will be the subject of a public hearing on July 14 beginning at 10 a.m. at MTA's headquarters building. Besides having copies of the position at the hearing we will also make them available at our monthly meeting that afternoon and on our website. Also on our website you can read the text of my June 26 letter to Jim McLaughlin, MTA's Director of Transit Planning, outlining questions and concerns we have regarding the Municipal Operator Service Improvement Program.

Soaring costs to seismic retrofit bay area bridges (needed since the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake) may siphon money from Southern California transportation projects, if folks up north have their way. This skirmish is in its early stages, so for the moment we'll just keep an eye on the situation.

Laidlaw has filed for bankruptcy protection in Canada and the United States. Member Charles Powell has for several years been following the downward spiral of Laidlaw as it lost contracts and acquired a bad reputation in the industry. Now the other shoe finally dropped.

Member Tim Adams kindly passed along to me a copy of Peter Derrick's new book Tunneling to the Future: The Story of the Great Subway Expansion That Saved New York. In a page-turning narrative Derrick relates how the civic fathers of New York early in the last century saw a massive expansion of the subway system to outlying areas as the only cure to inner city overcrowding and associated ills. Certainly an interesting object lesson on how land uses are shaped by transportation decisions that can have social consequences. (Dana Gabbard) ■

NEW MTA CEO



Roger Snoble, president and executive director of Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) since 1994, has been selected by unanimous vote of the MTA Board to

succeed Julian Burke as CEO. Showing an understanding of the magnitude of the job he is undertaking the Dallas Morning News quoted Snoble as telling a gathering of DART employees "I'm going to a bigger challenge. I'm going to an area that needs a lot of help." The Los Angeles Times quoted Snoble as stating "This is an opportunity that comes along once in a lifetime. Los Angeles County is the biggest one there is. This is an opportunity to play in the World Series."

The appointment means MTA for the first time will be headed by an executive with experience in the transit industry. His long and successful career also means Snoble has the sort of credibility MTA needs in dealing with the media, officials, stakeholders and funding partners. It also means Snoble should be well placed to withstand MTA Board micromanaging.

During his time at DART, the agency has built 20 miles of light rail lines, 27 miles of commuter rail lines and four interim carpool lanes. It also is in the midst of a five-year bus service expansion program and has reported increased ridership since 1997. Former head of the Federal Transit Administration Gordon Linton states "Roger has been instrumental in the growth of the Dallas Metroplex. His skills and the respect he enjoys in the industry bodes well for the continued

improvement and growth of the MTA in Los Angeles. I think Roger will be able to build on the foundation that has been established by Julian Burke."

MTA CEO Julian Burke said he was proud that Snoble would succeed him. "The MTA is a lot more stable than it was when I arrived four years ago, but now it's time to turn to a transportation expert to move Los Angeles forward. No one has a better reputation than Roger Snoble," Burke said.

Roger Yagura, president and general manager of San Diego Transit where Snoble worked for 20 years, echoed those sentiments. Yagura said Snoble was a highly respected manager who worked well with staff, elected officials and the community and was able to bring consensus on key projects.

Prior to his time at DART Snoble was president and general manager of the San Diego Transit Corporation, where he worked for 20 years, starting as a planning and scheduling manager and rising to the top executive post. Snoble first job in transportation was as a planner for the TriCounty Regional Planning Commission in Akron beginning in 1965. He also was a planner for the Akron Metro Transit District from 1971-1973.

During his career Snoble has won numerous awards including being named Transit Manager of the Year in 1998 by the American Public Transit Association.

Snoble was given a four-year contract at \$295,000 per year to manage the MTA. He will start work in September.

(Article by Dana Gabbard, with some

TRANSIT UPDATE



Expo Rail

MTA voted to implement a light rail line along the Exposition Bl. right of way between Los Angeles and Santa Monica. However, initially, it will only extend to Culver City (Venice and Robertson) as the routing west of that point is still very controversial. Under MTA's current funding level, the Expo light rail wouldn't be complete until 2014.

New Green Line Cars

New Siemens P2000 cars are being deployed on the Green Line. Eventually, all of the older Sumitomo cars will be removed from the Green Line and reallocated to the Blue Line. Three-car trains will operate on the Blue Line when the platform extensions are completed later this year.

Elson Trinidad reports that the new cars "...seem quieter, sleeker and have a lot more headroom than the old-school Sumitomo/Nippon Sharyo cars. Not to mention the rail transit version of New Car Smell... They're different enough that it feels like you're in another city. The green seats are nice and the huge windows make the car seem bigger than it really is. The BIGGEST surprise was the very-intelligible pre-recorded PA announcements (no eating, drinking, smoking etc in English and Spanish) and the station calls! Awesome! What's kind of weird though is how they call the next station as the train is departing the previous station...normally

this is called when the train approaches the next station."

The P2000's will also be used on the Pasadena Blue Line, when it opens in July 2003.

Pasadena Blue Line Phase II

Extending the Pasadena Light Rail line to Claremont is gaining support from the corridor cities and key public officials, with coordination/support of the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments. The Blue Line Authority even has a Phase II Extension Committee, which has met at least once. With the aid of Congressman David Dreier, supporters hope to obtain an earmark when the multi-year federal transportation funding bill comes up for renewal in about two years. They are hoping for service to begin in 2008.

Rapid Bus Expansion

Buoyed by the success of the Rapid Bus lines on Wilshire-Whittier (#720) and Ventura Bl (#750), MTA plans to implement up to six more Rapid Bus lines by next year. A Rapid Bus line is proposed for each of the following streets: Vermont, Van Nuys, Venice/Pico, Crenshaw/Rossmore, Avalon, and Florence.

Metrolink News

Service improvements planned for this October include:

- an additional off-peak roundtrip to Moorpark
 - an additional off-peak roundtrip to Lancaster (extension of a current train that now only goes to Santa Clarita)
 - additional peak hour service on the Orange County line to Oceanside
 - extensions of some Inland Empire-Orange County trains to Oceanside.
- As of April 2001, there were approximately 32,700 daily boardings on

Metrolink. About one-third of the boardings could be attributed to the San Bernardino Line, which has seen some days with 10,000 boardings. Depending on the completion of track improvements, and the arrival of new rolling stock, peak-hour, peak-direction service on the Riverside-Los Angeles Via Fullerton route should start by August 2002.

Service to Montalvo (near Ventura) should be in place by next May, with the completion of the Montalvo Metrolink station. The two trains now beginning and terminating in Oxnard would be extended north-west to Montalvo.

Funding is still being sought for the so-called "Tier II" Metrolink stations in Riverside County (Downtown Corona-Main St. and Van Buren) as well as the San Jacinto Branch Line extension to Perris. Due to the current overcrowded conditions at the existing Metrolink stations in Riverside, it is important that these additional stations be built before the Via Fullerton service starts in 2002.

Amtrak trains #566,568,585 and 783 are now available to Metrolink monthly pass holders travelling between Oceanside and Los Angeles, without the use of a step-up coupon. This applies to weekday travel only. (Other designated trains still require the coupon).

Montebello on the Move

Montebello Municipal Bus Lines (MMBL) is interested in taking over MTA #262 (Garfield Ave) and the part of #264 (San Gabriel Bl) south of Las Tunas Drive. Among with the Rapid Bus improvements, this proposed service change is to be discussed at the July 14 MTA public hearing.

Smart Shuttle

The MTA Planning and Programming Committee has recommended that Smart Shuttle be funded for only one additional month, and only on the following routes:

Westlake/MacArthur Park -

- Operate 10-minute service on Western and Normandie between Pico and Hollywood.
- Suspend service on Vermont and Alvarado.

- Operate flexible destination service on Olympic.

Northeast San Fernando Valley -

- Operate 15-minute service on Van Nuys and San Fernando between Victory and the Sylmar Metrolink Transit Center.
- Operate a flexible destination shuttle service north of the Sylmar TC serving the Sylmar area and Olive View Hospital and Sylmar Juvenile Hall.
- Suspend service on Sherman Way, Sepulveda and Victory.

South Central Los Angeles -

- Operate 15-minute service on Florence between Vermont and Pacific.
- Suspend service on Manchester.

West Valley -

- Operate 15-minute service on Ventura between Reseda and Warner Center with flexible destination service along the route.

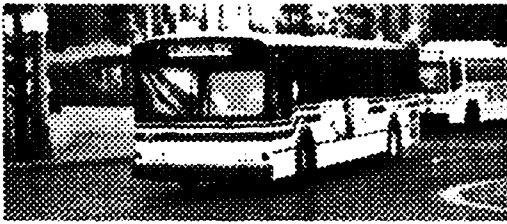
- Suspend service on De Soto and Winnetka."

Mobility Maximizer

Besides MTA the following operators provide free rides upon presentation of an Access Paratransit I.D. Card: Foothill Transit, Norwalk, Transit, Azusa Transit and Monterey Park Spirit Bus. This is part of the mobility maximizer program undertaken by Access Services, Inc.

(Charles P. Hobbs, Dana Gabbard, Elson Trinidad, Hank Fung)

SOUTH BAY/LONG BEACH



Torrance Transit Hybrid Buses

On Monday June 4th Torrance Transit started serving the public with its two new hybrid diesel-electric Orion buses. (They have, so far, operated on Route #4, a lightly traveled multi-loop combination line operating every two hours in opposite directions on its main loops with commute hour service on its side loops).

Their near constant velocity diesel engines turn each generator which both charges a battery pack and powers the AC induction electric motor that move the buses. The motor also acts as a regenerative generator when the bus decelerates to capture energy. There is a converter which supplies the many electric accessories. The bus can run short distances on battery pack only.

Passenger seating differs from the new Orions MTA bought for its contractors. There is an additional package shelf and the loss of a pair of seats on the driver's side at the rear. There is no tete-a-tete pair

of double facing seats in the rear either. Route numbers are marked on the rear. On each side of the round middle rear light emitting diode (LED) stoplight are lamps appearing similar when off. These are amber caution lights. They burn when the driver lessens pressure on the accelerator. Although they appear round, only a horizontal bar ignites. This caution light may prove to be a valuable safety feature alerting drivers behind that slowing is to be expected. They are independent of the brakes, although often braking may follow.

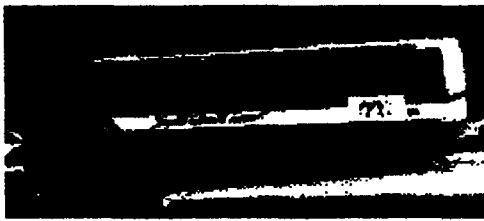
The hybrids were bought with a congestion reduction grant from the federal government. They may be part of an order including some for Foothill Transit. (Joe Drummond)

Aqualink joins Aquabus

Long Beach Transit has started a new water taxi service called "Aqualink". It links the Queen Mary, Aquarium of the Pacific and Alamitos Bay Landing. Aqualink uses a catamaran that can hold 75 passengers, and the cost is \$1.00 each way. Bikes can be brought on board Aqualink (but not on other LBT vehicles). Aqualink operates every 90 minutes starting from the Queen Mary at 11:00am till 5:00pm, 7 days a week. (Mark Panitz) ■

(from pg. 14) should address and get involved with. Electricity will certainly effect the Metrorail lines in Los Angeles and the trolley in San Diego. Could transit fares go up? And, how would you like to be riding the Red Line under the Santa Monica mountains and all of a sudden a rolling blackout hits? I think we need to address

this issue as a safety and security issue. We need to take a position on this before the problems occur and come with ideas and solutions that are worth trying now. (Steve Crosmer) ■



SAN FERNANDO VALLEY & NORTH COUNTY

At the June 28 MTA Board meeting item 51 on the San Fernando Valley transit zone in part C made reference to supposed stakeholder briefings being already held regarding the zone proposal. While MTA staff claim it was indeed held no one else remembers it and we have been unable to obtain any details, such as a date it was held, a transcript of the comments made, etc.

It looks like there may be some all-day, more-or-less frequent, service between the San Fernando and Santa Clarita Valleys soon. The findings of this year's Unmet Needs process directed Santa

Clarita Transit to "...address the following and implement if reasonable to meet: Provide all day/ seven-day service fixed route service between the San Clarita Valley and Los Angeles basin area."

Per the minutes of the May 21 Antelope Valley Transit Authority meeting the Commuter Advisory Committee (set up after the service problems that plagued the express buses from Antelope Valley to downtown L.A., etc.) reported concerns raised at the Committee's May 19 meeting included "the influx of people who are not regular passengers but are taking the commuter buses on Friday to spend the weekend in the Antelope Valley and are taking the commuter buses back down on Monday. Also, some passengers from Palmdale are traveling to the Lancaster Transfer Center to get more premium seating". Also some CAC members met with some AVTA drivers in a fruitful exchange of needs and concerns. (Charles P. Hobbs, Dana Gabbard, Hank Fung). ■

PLEASE CLOSE THE WINDOW

Please keep in mind that air conditioning will only cool a bus down about 10 to 15 degrees. When it's 100 degrees outside, that means that it will still be warm on the bus. It will be bearable, but only if you help us out by following this simple guideline.

You must resist the temptation, however great, to open a window when the going gets warm. It may feel good for a minute, but in the long run things are just getting hotter. Here's why: the air ducts in buses are located over the windows. This means that when the window is open, the cool, air-conditioned air comes out of the air duct and goes - literally - right out the



window. Before the cool air reaches you, it's gone. That's not good!

Keeping the windows closed means that the air that's in the bus stays in the bus. Unless your coach operator tells you that the air conditioning isn't working, or asks you to open the windows, keep them closed.

And if you are in a bus with broken air conditioning, please jot down the bus number and let us know by calling the transit agency. Trust us - in the long run, keeping the windows closed is the cool thing to do.



Labor-Intensive Negotiations

The OCTA and the drivers' union are still far apart in their talks. We are told, "If it hadn't been for the federal mediator, the drivers would probably be on strike." Sticking points include wages, adequate medical coverage for retirees, full holiday pay for drivers on the 4-day/10-hour work week (they now get only 8 hours' pay), full pay for "seat time" between the division and the bus route (they now only get half-time pay), and a return of concessions the drivers made after the 1996 county bankruptcy. The drivers feel the OCTA needs to do all this to reduce severe turnover, and to attract new drivers who will stay on as a career. They may soon be heading for a strike vote. The most recent contract had expired on April 30th.

Friends of Centerline

The next Friends of Centerline meeting will be on Wednesday, July 25, 7pm. Call (714) 525-3678 to confirm meeting location.

Sept, Dec Service Changes

By September, 40 new buses should be added to the fleet, and 23,000 "vehicle service hours" will be added to the system. Among the service changes for September:

- #25 will get Sunday service
- #26 will be extended down to the

Fullerton Park & Ride

- #71 and #73 will be combined into one route, using the service frequencies of the existing #73
 - #79, extended to Larwin Square via Irvine Blvd. (where service has been missing since the former #65 was lost).
 - #167 will run into the Tustin Marketplace
- So far, the major proposal for December would be the extension of route #53 to Brea Mall. The #53 was to be extended to Mall of Orange in September, but this would have been at the cost of removing the route from the Santa Ana Transit Terminal. The route north from Main & Taft is still to be determined, but will in any event improve connectivity between downtown Santa Ana and north Orange County. They are considering extending the short-turn #57 from Block of Orange up to Katella Ave. (would suggest they go to the underserved Anaheim train station), adding Sunday service to the #26 and #177, but then ending all service on the #131 (meaning no service for Kaiser Hospital) and #203, and weekend runs on the #173.

OCTA is also studying extending the #43 back down to Newport Beach, either for December or for March 2002.

Temporary Reroute of Meeting

The OCTA board meeting on July 23rd will be at OCTA headquarters, room 154, 600 S. Main St. in Orange, at 9:00am. This is due to remodeling work at the OC Hall of Administration.

Dial "M" for Much Ado About Little

Measure M is a sales tax levy that is supposed to fund transportation projects in the county. While very little of the money is used for bus transit, the "M" and orange

logo appears on the June Bus Book, and now on the July '01 bus pass.

OCTA Self-Promotion

Ads inside OCTA buses, such as "Questions? Comments? Elvis Sightings?" and "10 Numbers That'll Get You to Downtown Santa Ana", have begun to appear in English and in Spanish. OCTA is also running radio ads for their new "TravelTIP", which is available by phone (949-451-1847), by internet (<http://www.traveltip.net>) or at kiosks in certain transit centers (seen so

far at Fullerton, Anaheim, and Santa Ana train stations). The ads, so far heard on KFI and KNX, market this only for the traffic reports, however bus and Metrolink information are also supposed to be available.

This Just In

OCTA is considering a "guided busway" technology for bus routes along Beach Bl, Katella Ave, Westminster Ave, and the old Pacific Electric right-of-way. Stay tuned...(Mark Strickert, Jane Reifer) ■

SAN GABRIEL VALLEY/ INLAND EMPIRE



First #497, then what next?

Foothill Transit plans to re-open the passenger facility at El Monte Station as a "Foothill Transit Store." According to item 41 at the June 28 MTA Board meeting it is the agencies' intention that Foothill Transit will eventually assume "overall responsibility for operating ... El Monte Transit Station". This is partly due to "Regional service plans currently under consideration call for ... MTA decreasing its presence by withdrawing duplicative services, such as those operating along the El Monte Busway".

Omnitrans changes effective July 9

- #3 will remain on Baseline Rd; its service on 9th St will be covered by new route 12.
- New #12 will replace #32 between Redlands and Highland, then operate via 9th St into Downtown San Bernardino
- Weekend service on #65 will extend

into South Chino, replacing weekend-only #73.

- Route #70 will absorb the #69 route between Ontario Mills and Rancho Cucamonga. It will also serve East Ontario Metrolink
- #71 will absorb #21 between Country Village (Riverside) and Fontana.
- #110 will be redesignated #90 and stop at the Arrowhead Medical Center, but not at Kaiser Fontana or Ontario Airport. Regular Omnitrans fare will be charged.

RTA changes

- IEC routes #100 and 149 will board inside the Downtown Terminal (not on-street).
- Route #1 will change routing slightly to serve Central Avenue, basically circling Riverside Plaza.
- The special "jurors shuttle" between the courthouse and Fairmont Park has been made permanent and designated Rt. #2. This service will be open to the general public and run on weekdays.
- In January 2002, look for additional service on routes #1, 3, 16 and 49. The amount of additional service that would be provided is dependent on fuel costs; if fuel (CNG) becomes too expensive, the added service may be implemented at a later time. ■



In as much I support green ideas, not everything goes 100% to a person's liking. I for one, am a person who favors expansion of nuclear power. I am well aware of the critic's calls on the safety issues, and therefore the research and development on making it safer must continue. Also, power plants need to be properly guarded against sabotage with armed guards and personnel that work there should have thorough background checks prior to employment.

As for transportation, nuclear power is a cheap alternative to reliance on petroleum and its supply is abundant. Plenty of power would be available for electrified rail lines such as rapid transit, light rail, and high-speed intercity rail and commuter rail service (ala the South Shore-let's bring back the interurban!). Other transportation uses could be for electric trolley bus service and power connections to recharge battery-operated cars while commuters are away at work or whatever else they are in town for while parked at the stations.

I am surprised that the Bush administration chose Spence Abraham for Energy Department Secretary. He lost his re-election bid in Michigan to the US Senate and supports abolition of the department; not an intelligent decision that we are now facing a crisis. It is also a perception of the Bush administration that the only way

to reduce fuel and electric prices is to open up all environmentally sensitive areas to drill more oil and reduce our dependence on foreign oil. Nor does he utter a word about improving transit or rail service to the chagrin of the big oil companies that financed his campaign with millions of soft money donations. Bush also places our nation on a security risk in the event of war by doing so, and I feel oil that is in the environmentally sensitive areas should be reserved for that purpose only.

A report, that was in USA Today recently, said California is the most energy efficient state in the nation. California has gone out of the way to provide its people with solar power and development of wind machine farms in the valleys with strong breezes to generate electricity. The BART system in San Francisco uses power from wind machines to operate its trains.

In other parts of the world, France has developed nuclear power more than any other nation; where would the TGV train be now without it? In Japan, when the Shinkansen began operation, again, nuclear power was used to bring it to life, and still is today, I have even been there on the train myself. Germany, England, and Spain also have developed high-speed rail and expanded light rail systems that are partly dependent on nuclear power. Could you imagine the cost of a ticket if they were dependent on petroleum, let alone knowing they pay about three times as much for a gallon of gas as we do?

I believe that the power crisis issue is something that we at So.Ca.T.A. (to p.10)