

## **TRANSIT UPDATES**

Effective July 27, MTA line 761 began serving new stops in Westwood, located at Sunset and Bellagio (both directions), Hilgard and Sunset (southbound), and Hilgard and Charing Cross (northbound).

Service on the Metro Gold Line began July 26. Effective July 27, Foothill Transit made adjustments to lines 184, 187, and 189. Service on MTA line 686 began July 27 while line 401 continued to operate until July 28.

The city of Sierra Madre is operating a new bus route to the Sierra Madre Villa station. The Gateway Coach Gold Line Shuttle operates weekday peak periods only. The existing Round-A-Bout has been renamed the Gateway Coach Community Loop. Fare for most is 50¢.

The city of South Pasadena is operating four new bus routes to the Mission station. The Gold Link operates weekday peak periods only. Fare is 50¢ and all MTA passes are accepted.

Culver CityBus has begun installing bicycle racks on its buses. As of July 25, six buses had been installed with the new equipment.

Effective August 3, Santa Clarita Transit made several minor schedule revisions to its bus service. In addition: Routes 507 and 615 were discontinued. Routing changes were made to routes 502, 602, 605, 611, and 614. Routes 616, 617, and 618 are new, serving Rio Norte. Routes 793 and 798 now serve Sherman Oaks Galleria. Route 794 now serves

College of the Canyons. Route 795 no longer stops at Crown Valley and Sierra. Route 798 no longer serves Norte Dame.

San Diego NCTD will implement several service changes on August 17. There may be a fare change as well, but this is unclear since NCTD has not yet posted information on this service change.

The Redlands Trolley begins service on September 2. The blue and red routes will replace Omnitrans routes 30 and 31. The rubber-wheeled trolley buses are a partnership between Omnitrans and the city of Redlands. A special 25¢ fare will be offered through the end of the year. ♦

*Compiled by David Davenport.*

## **FIRST RIDE GOLD LINE**

**Ken Ruben**

I was among seven SO.CA.TA members on the first regularly scheduled Gold Line run, during the early morning of July 26. Besides yours truly, other present members included Erik Griswold, Joseph Dunn, Armandō Avalos, Andy Novak, John Amdoh, and Hank Fung.

Also riding that morning were Pacific Railroad Society members Jed Hughes and Art Reynolds, along with *Los Angeles Times* transportation writer-reporter Kurt Streeter and photographer Gary Friedman. Jed was mentioned in Kurt's article the following day.

We left on time, at 3:55 AM, with cars 232 and 247 and proceeded along the

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## **BULLETIN BOARD**

Upcoming speakers: A presentation on MTA's draft transit service policy will be presented at our meeting this month; Rick Peterson of Amtrak Thruway services will be at our Sept. 13 meeting; Oct. 11 we will receive a progress report on the status of SCAG's 2004 Regional Transportation Plan; and Nov. 8 Lt. Mike Parker of the L.A. County Sheriff's Dept. Transit Services Bureau will discuss security for the Red and Gold Lines.

A hearty thank you to all who helped staff our booth during the Gold Line opening weekend: Lionel Jones, John Ulloth, Woody Rosner, Andrew Novak, Joe Dunn, David Davenport, Nate Zablen, Charles Powell, and Hank Fung.

At our August meeting we will set the date for the OCTA night owl trip (either this month or in September). Leave a message on our hotline if you wish to be contacted regarding this event: 1-866-476-2282. We also need to start considering where we want to go for this year's day-after-Thanksgiving study tour.

The remaining unsold "goodies" from Ray Mullins' schedule collection have been sorted by Lionel Jones and will be available for sale at the August meeting. Anyone who sees something they want but doesn't have money can request that it be held until the September meeting. Also, there will be a "15 for \$1" box at the August meeting, with proceeds going to the Pat Moser plaque project.

The Pasadena Museum of Railroad, in conjunction with its exhibit Next Stop—Pasadena—From Red to Gold (through November 30, 2003), is co-sponsoring a lecture series on various rail topics with the Los Angeles Railroad Heritage Foundation ([http://www.pasadenahistory.org/nextstop\\_lecture.htm](http://www.pasadenahistory.org/nextstop_lecture.htm)). This month's lecture will be held Thursday, August 7, on "a behind the scenes look at the operations of the MTA rail system" presented by Dave J. Kubicek, MTA Director of Rail Services. All lectures begin at 7:30 PM, with the exhibition open at 6:00 PM for pre-program viewing. Lecture admission is \$15, which includes entry to the exhibition. Please call (626) 577-1660, ext. 10 for reservations. The museum is located at 70 West Walnut Street in Pasadena.

Interest in a light-rail line linking Silver Lake and El Monte has emerged: <http://www.metroilverline.com>

Caltrans has added to its website a transit-oriented development searchable database: <http://transitorienteddevelopment.dot.ca.gov>

*Compiled by Dana Gabbard.*

*As always, the Transit Advocate needs articles, letters, transit tips, photographs, and research from all members and interested nonmembers. All items should be sent to 3010 Wilshire Blvd. #362, Los Angeles, CA 90010 (or e-mailed to [transit@lerami.lerctr.org](mailto:transit@lerami.lerctr.org)). Items for publication should be received two weeks prior to the next scheduled SO.CA.TA meeting.*

# **PUBLIC AND LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS**

**Dana Gabbard**  
**dgabbard@hotmail.com**

Sometimes minutes of agency governing board meetings raise concerns. For Example, in the June 10 Access Services, Inc. (ASI) Board of Director's meeting minutes, the ASI Board unanimously voted to hire Mr. Alan Cantrell as the new ASI Executive Director. Also noted is his salary, set at \$140,000 plus standard benefits. Can you imagine how puzzled I was to then read in the minutes of the June 23 ASI Board meeting "Access Services has come to terms with Mr. Alan Cantrell. The terms of employment are not similar to those that were previously announced in open session at the last Board Meeting." No explanation is given for why changes occurred or any details offered as to what Mr. Cantrell's actual salary will be. Since that is a matter of public record, I have asked the agency to clarify these issues. If I get a response, I will include it in a future column.

In the Inland Empire, a drama is being played out regarding the Sunline Transit Agency and associated Sun entities empire. A May 29 draft audit raised questions about accounting practices. After further revelations at a hastily called special Sunline Transit Agency Board of Directors meeting on July 9, General Manager Richard Cromwell and chief financial officer William Maier were placed on paid administrative leave while a thorough management audit of Sunline

is being conducted. Recently, the *Desert Sun* (<http://www.thedesertsun.com>) called for Cromwell and Maier to resign or be fired in an editorial. By the way, Cromwell's salary is \$130,000 per year.

Revelation of the month: In the minutes of the June 27 meeting of the Foothill Transit Executive Board, it is stated Foothill's agreement with Monrovia to provide administrative oversight for Monrovia Dial-A-Ride "...assists Foothill in meeting the MTA's 'Maintenance of Effort' requirement, which specifies that transit agencies must generate five percent of their operating expenses from auxiliary revenues."

All across the state, the regional transportation agencies are loaning funds to Caltrans to ensure in-progress projects go forward despite the state's budget problems. The agencies are nervous, though, about if and when the state will be paying back these loans (according the July 25 issue of *Political Pulse*). And I can understand why, given the volatile and chaotic conditions that currently predominate Sacramento.

The ballot measure to create an infrastructure fund I mentioned in a previous column (ACA 11) has now been assigned a number: Proposition 53. Instead of being on next spring's ballot, it will be part of the Oct. 7 ballot, which includes the attempt to recall Governor Davis. A lawsuit has been filed to move Proposition 53 back to the March 2004 election to give voters more time to consider the proposal.

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## **SAN PEDRO RED CARS**

**Charles P. Hobbs**

OK, so this is a tourist attraction, and not a "real" transit system. It has a maximum speed of about 20 mph, and the jointed freight rail combined with the hard wooden seats makes for a very bumpy ride.

But no one on board the San Pedro Red Car seems to mind much.

Young children and families onboard chatter excitedly, while those old enough to have ridden the original Pacific Electric streetcar system reminisce about their experiences.

The San Pedro Red Car is a project of the Port of Los Angeles. It uses 1.5 miles of freight (and former Pacific Electric) rail right-of-way along the San Pedro waterfront.

There are four stations: Cruise Center (near Harbor/Swinford), Downtown San Pedro (at 6th St.), Ports O' Call, and Marina Station (near 22nd St.). Special



*Interior of Red Car, Charles P. Hobbs photo.*

electric shuttle buses connect the Red Car with the heart of San Pedro and run south of the Marina to Cabrillo Beach. All stations (and cars) are accessible to the disabled.

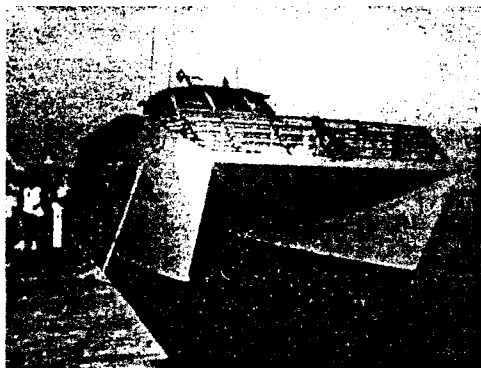
Two cars run along the line: Number 1058 is an original Pacific Electric "Red Car" that had been preserved by the late Richard Fellowes; number 501 is a locally-built replica of a smaller "Red Car." Another replica (number 502) is being built now.

San Pedro Red Cars run Friday-Monday from 10 AM to 6 PM, approximately every 20 minutes. Fare is \$1, good for an all-day ticket. ♦

## **LONG BEACH AQUALINK**

**Charles P. Hobbs**

Long Beach Transit has operated the Aquabus for several years. The Aquabus is a small red boat that loops around Long Beach Harbor, serving attractions like the Queen Mary, the Long Beach Aquarium, Catalina Landing, and the foot of Pine Avenue.



*(Continued on page 7) Aqualink at terminal, Charles P. Hobbs photo.*

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route without picking up passengers. We arrived at Sierra Madre Villa 42 minutes after departing Union Station. We had some door problems at Fillmore Station.

I tried to call one of the talk shows on KABC radio during the trip but was unable to get on the air.

We picked up people at various stations on our return trip to Union station, which took a little over 36 minutes to complete.

I decided to make one more round-trip. Before I boarded again, Kurt Streeter asked me some questions about the trip while his photographer took some

photos. Neither were used in the article.

Later, after resting and having a small snack, I joined my long-time friend Jed Hughes for a trip to South Pasadena to visit the ERHA-SC booth. Our particular train was jammed with people!

After doing my weekly Let's Talk Trains report via cell phone and spending an hour or so in South Pasadena, I joined long-time transit fan Warren Quon in waiting 1-1/2 hours for a return train.

We eventually boarded and I spent the rest of the day at the SO.CA.TA table at Union Station. All in all, it was a tiring but eventful and historic day. ♦

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The July issue of *Metro Investment Report* interviews South Gate Mayor Hector de la Torre about the proposed Los Angeles-to-Anaheim Maglev Orange Line (an online excerpt is at <http://www.ablinc.net/mir/archive/july2003c.html>). When asked about the proposed route, speed, and station stops, de la Torre elaborates: "The stops would be about every two miles or so along the old Pacific Electric line. This will not go over 200 miles per hour like some of the other high-speed trains currently out on the market. But, it would go over 100 miles per hour using magnetic levitation.

Maglev trains can accelerate and decelerate very quickly, smoothly, and very quietly. It will have elevated columns much like the monorail at Disneyland, so it will not interfere with the normal flow of vehicular traffic. A good chunk of the right-of-way, the part that was the Pacific Electric Red Line,

already is accessible to lay down track. With stops about every two miles along the route, there can be some positive economic development, both residential and commercial, near the stations. So, some of these cities in the core of Southeast L.A. County and in Northern Orange County will see a benefit from the train as well." I think there are about six different ways you could poke holes in this statement, but why bother? Like several other proposed projects in our region, it is pure politics and has little or no grounding in reality or a real transportation need.

I'll conclude by noting Mark Maloney has left Glendale Beeline to work at MTA. Mark was invaluable in providing assistance and documentation that enabled us to monitor the San Fernando Valley Transit Zone application process. Thanks for all the help and good luck in your new job, Mark! ♦

## MEMBERS IN ACTION

Ken Ruben attended Pasadena Museum of History's July 8 lecture "Metropolitan Transportation Authority: Serving the Greater Los Angeles Area" by Jack Gabig, General Manager, MTA San Gabriel Valley Service Sector. Ken explains he "was really the only one there that knew and was interested in transit. [Mr. Gabig] talked about his bus operations and the Gold Line, etc."

Bart Reed and Kymberleigh Richards were quoted in the July 14 *Los Angeles Times* article "Private Citizens Dropped From MTA Board."

Mark Panitz participated in the MTA Accessibility Advisory Committee preview of the Gold Line on July 17.

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More recently, LBT has added a new service called Aqualink. This larger boat, actually a catamaran, serves just three stops: Queen Mary, the Aquarium (Dock 4), and Alamitos Bay Landing (near Belmont Shore). The three stops are served in this order every 90-120 minutes or so, except for the very last trip from Alamitos Bay Landing (which serves Dock 4 before terminating at the Queen Mary).

Fare is \$2, collected by boat staff and fed into a bus farebox located near the entrance. Bus passes and transfers are not accepted on the LBT boat services.

On board, passengers can buy refreshments (including small bottles of

Attendees of the July 19 opening of the San Pedro Red Cars included Ken Ruben, John Ulloth, Nate Zablen, and Edmund Buckley.

In her capacity as an MTA Sector Governance Councilmember, Kymberleigh Richards attended the APTA Transit Board Members Seminar and Board Support Workshop July 20-23 in Baltimore. In addition, she attended Glendale Beeline's July 29 unveiling of its NextBus Information System and Signal Priority System.

Bart Reed appeared on the July 28 airing of "Talk of the City" on KPCC radio. ♦

*Compiled by David Davenport and Dana Gabbard.*

alcohol) or relax. The ride is very smooth and fast.

Alamitos Bay Landing is where boats are kept by their owners. There are also small electric boats for rent (about \$60-70 per hour). The LBT Passport Shuttle stops nearby for those passengers wanting to ride to Belmont Shore or even back to Long Beach.

Both Aquabus and Aqualink run every day during the summer, with extended service (before 11 AM and after 5 PM) Wednesday-Sunday. During non-summer months, service is provided on the weekends only.

For more information, visit:  
<http://www.lbtransit.com/aqualink.html> ♦