

TRANSIT UPDATES

All MTA bus and rail service is back to normal as of this writing. October and November *monthly* passes are being accepted as fare until the end of December.

All other operators (Foothill, LADOT, Santa Monica, etc.) that had been providing expanded service during the strike have now gone back to their regular schedules and fares.

MTA will be offering free bus service on Christmas Eve and New Years Eve, starting at 9 p.m. and continuing until 5 a.m. the next day. Also for the first time, all-night service will be provided on the rail lines (Red, Blue, Green and Gold) on New Years Eve (although a ticket will be required after 2 a.m.)

Also, Metrolink will offer service on January 1, on its San Bernardino and Orange County Lines.

The following MTA lines will have service modifications effective Dec 21:

- Line #58 will run weekday rush hours only, on the Alameda route only
- Service on #130 west of the Cerritos Mall will be cancelled. Line #275 will be rerouted via Artesia and Valley View, picking up part of #130's route in this area
- #225 and #226 will become a one-way loop connecting Palos Verdes to San Pedro and back. The portion of #225 between Redondo Beach and LAX will be cancelled. No more mid-day or Saturday service, either.
- #254 will lose its last trip of the day, as well as all Sunday service
- #270 will also be cancelled on Sundays
- #608 will run hourly, and lose Saturday service
- The Playa Del Rey/Westchester portion of #625 will be dropped, with the balance of the line combined with #626
- City Nightline #646 (owl service between Carson and San Pedro) will be cancelled.

Foothill Transit will change the following routes in February:

- #187 and #189 will serve the Sierra Madre Gold Line station via Rosemead, Foothill and San Gabriel (actually entering the station and serving the bus bays)
- MTA #471 will be replaced by new Foothill #285, operating via Colima thru Whittier, but ending at La Habra/Beach
- The Puente Hills Mall park/ride is going away, and so is Line #495. Instead #493 will operate on its current route from Phillips Ranch via Golden Springs. (#493 will also serve the current Puente Hills Mall bus transfer point, but no commuter parking will be permitted) A new line #497 will serve Diamond Bar park/ride, then operate express (via S-60) to a new park/ride in Industry (Hacienda/Stafford) before continuing to LA.
- Foothill buses will not serve the Cal Poly campus until 2006 due to construction near the bus stop.

BULLETIN BOARD

Membership renewals for 2004 are now due: \$21--regular, \$8.40--low income.

At our Dec. 13 meeting elections will be held for 2004 officers and directors. This will be supervised by the Election Committee, consisting of Woody Rosner (Chair), Bart Reed and John Ulloth. Nominees include:

Directors-at-Large - Armando Avalos, Hank Fung, Ken Ruben, Chaffee Yiu, Nate Zablén

Treasurer - Juanita Dellomes

Corresponding Secretary - Dana Gabbard

Recording Secretary - Edmund Buckley, Hank Fung

Vice President - Lionel Jones

President - Lionel Jones, Kymberleigh Richards, Mark Strickert

The December meeting will start at 1:00 PM, with the first hour taken up with a forum prior to the election. Afterward our annual holiday celebration (with transit trinkets and door prizes) will be held in Long Beach at the Colonial Buffet (355 East 1st St.) from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Cost is \$15.

Our thanks to Nov. 8 meeting speaker Lt. Michael J. Parker of L.A. Sheriff's Dept. for an informative presentation and question/answer session regarding security on the Red and Gold rail lines. He also provided photocopies of an article on the Transit Services Bureau from the April issue of Star News, published by the Sheriff's Relief Association. Lt. Parker stated whenever one sees something suspicious happening on an MTA bus or

train they can contact the Transit Service Bureau 24 hours via its public access phone number: (323) 563-5000. For on-going non-emergency problems e-mail TSB at MetroSheriff@lasd.org

Upcoming speakers:

Jan. 10, 2004--Ed Clifford and Haim Gefen of MTA will be making a presentation on MTA's hub and spoke proposal, Feb. 14 Tom Hines will discuss personal rapid transit and April 10 Chris Carson of the League of Women Voters will talk on transportation issues.

February 6-7, 2004 at the Hampton Inn in Downtown San Diego (1531 Pacific Highway) Robert Guyer is holding his only seminar on training in legislative and executive agency advocacy to be held in California next year. More information and registration materials can be found at www.lobbyschool.com

The L.A. to San Diego Rail Corridor Strategic Plan is available for download on the Amtrak California website: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/rail/> or contact Caltrans for a copy: (916) 651-9533.

Activist's Guide to Metropolitcs is a new publication from Ameregis & the Metropolitan Area Research Corporation. It lays out in question & answer format common questions about land use, fiscal equity and regional governance. It also provides case studies of how organizations are working to advance policy reforms in their own communities. Copies of the guide can be found on the web at <http://www.ameregis.com> (continued on pg. 6)

This month a group of Los Angeles area heavy hitters gathered at an invitation-only meeting on building consensus to facilitate funding opportunities for upgrading infrastructure. This was sponsored by the California Rebuild America Coalition and hosted by the Transportation & Land Use Collaborative. A follow-up is planned for January. This follows a number of recent similar efforts spearheaded by the L.A. Chamber and L.A. County Economic Development Corporation. Somehow, someway I think eventually we'll overcome the parochialism that permeates local politics and start being heard with one voice in our advocacy. Too bad in the meantime the state piggy bank has gone empty and the federal one may well be inaccessible (i.e. no earmark in the new federal appropriation for the eastside line).

Speaking of the state, how nice that the first thing the new Governor did was to cut the transportation budget by \$933 million. Does anyone remember his comments during the campaign about the importance of transportation investments?

dubious claim of the month: at the Nov. 6 Southern California Association of Governments Transportation and Communication Committee meeting Mark Pisano (SCAG Executive Director) is quoted in the minutes as claiming while there is no way to have a legally enforceable cap at LAX, passenger levels could be limited through gate limitations, and monitoring aircraft size and passenger levels. To which I ask are those types of measures themselves legal? Would airlines allow such tactics without challenge?

Cal Poly Pomona is up to its old tricks again. A while back it tried to prohibit transit buses from entering its campus, on a dubious claim that the vehicles were causing extensive damage to the school's roadways. Foothill Transit addressed the situation by working with the local congressman who arranged a federal earmark to help pay for the repaving. Now Cal Poly Pomona has stated buses cannot enter the campus because allegedly the buses would disrupt construction of a parking structure being built near the former bus terminal. The expected return date for bus service is 2006. The Foothill Transit Board at its Dec. 5 meeting discussed taking legal action against Cal Poly for return of the bus shelters they funded at the Cal Poly transit center, and for repayment of the federal grant. We intend to join Foothill in pressuring Cal Poly to rescind their edict.

Talk about hysteria--MTA has requested a seat on the Access Services Board. The local and municipal operators (who compose the membership of ASI and currently have two seats on the board) agreed to the request only if there also was a seat on the board added that the operators would share to counterbalance MTA's presence. Disability activists at the Nov. 3 ASI Board meeting decried the proposal, expressing a fear that their influence would be diminished. The current state of affairs became clear as the disabled had their board allies pass a motion to oppose the bylaw change proposal. But the final decision rests with the member agencies. The whole situation reeks of the inmates having taken over and rebelling at having to share power.

In other disabled transportation news, the L.A. City Disability Commission at its Oct. 1 meeting discussed accessibility shortcomings of the new Gold Line. The MTA representative present in response to questions about this state of affairs diplomatically noted they should instead be directed at the Blue Line Authority since it oversaw construction and design with minimal input from MTA. Does this mean cheaper, faster, better is achieved at the cost of non-compliance with ADA?

At long last the MTA Westside/central Sector Governance Council members have been selected. I plan to attend at least their first meeting to scrutinize it as a possible useful source of information, much like the MTA Citizen Advisory Council meetings.

In other Sector Council news, MTA Chair Zev Yaroslávsky took it upon himself to draft a board motion for the Dec. 4 board meeting to strip the councils of their travel allowance to attend American Public Transit Association meetings, allegedly "in light of the MTA budget situation". To his credit boardmember John Fasana stated his opposition to the measure, professing a desire for the Councilmembers to have access to educational opportunities to aid them in better doing their duties. Board members LaBonge and Villarraigosa joined in professing concern at the proposal. Bowing to the inevitable Zev proposed a reasonable compromise to have limits placed on how much each of the Sectors can spend on travel.

Zev earlier in the meeting also showed some grace in admitting that the recent strike was as much as anything due to failures on the part of the board in its ap-

proach to labor negotiations. Over reliance on numbers and an arms-length attitude was exactly the worse approach to take in dealing with Neil Silver and his volatile situation. Hopefully in the coming months MTA's leadership will grapple with the need to assemble a team that first and foremost deals with the human dimension--something lacking with Brenda Diederichs as MTA's lead negotiator.

The Board of the Alameda Corridor Transportation Authority had an odd item on their Dec. 4 meeting agenda: "Approve an expanded mission for ACTA to support and develop intermodal projects that facilitate more efficient goods movement while improving air quality, congestion relief, and enhanced traffic safety. Authorize the ACTA staff to engage in several short-term, mid-term and long-term programs and projects to implement this expanded mission". I'll be curious what this results in...

Let us conclude by noting Bill Budlong, AVTA Executive Director since the agency was formed in 1992, resigned Oct. 27. Local press made much initially that the parting was on good terms. But I am hoping to soon get a copy of the minutes of the Nov. 19 special board meeting at which Budlong is reputed to have had a public tantrum about the circumstances of his departure, denouncing members of the AVTA Technical Advisory Committee as having undermined him. Is this the definition of going down swinging? While the AVTA Board awaits the results of a recruitment effort David Ashcraft, formerly head of Culver CityBus, is serving as AVTA Interim Executive Director thru his employer Gannett Fleming. ■

MEMBERS IN ACTION

Correction to last month's column: Ken Ruben met Amtrak CEO David Gunn Oct. 15.

Attendees of the Mobility 21 Conference held Nov. 17 included Roger Christensen, Dana Gabbard, Bart Reed and Tim Adams.

Kymerleigh Richards attended the Annual Fall Conference of the California Transit Association held Nov. 11-14 in Burlingame and the Center for Transportation Excellence's conference on transit initiatives Dec 7-9 in Tempe Arizona. Plus Richards had an op-ed in the Nov. 12 Daily News "Public doesn't have choice to support the transportation strike". And as our President participated in the California Alternative Transportation Coalition's tele-conference Nov. 18.

Hank Fung, Lionel Jones, Russ Jones, Armando Avalos, and Andrew Novak were present at an MTA Nov. 7 press conference updating the media on the labor negotiations.

Chris Flescher attended an international making cities livable conference held late Oct. in Carmel. Flescher also recently had a letter published in the Carmel Pine Cone

on the need there for larger bus stop signs with information about which routes serve the stop. Also he was mentioned in the Dec. 2003 issue of "Railfan", the newsletter of the Northern California Railroad Club. And on Dec. 5 he attended a presentation on a street smarts program sponsored by the pedestrian and bicycle issues advisory committee for the transportation agency of Monterey county.

Hank Fung went to the MTA San Gabriel Valley sector meeting Dec. 2 and SCAG's Compass conference at the Ontario Convention Center Dec. 1.

Charles Hobbs attended Foothill Transit's meeting in Diamond Bar Nov. 19 on proposed changes to lines 493/495.

Craig Weingarten attended the Nov. 20 South Bay Council of Government meeting.

The Nov./Dec. issue of Metro Magazine includes a feature on OCTA bus service improvements that mentions (w/ accompanying photo) Jane Reifer, referring to her as a "transit advocate". A photo of Mark Strickert attending a MTA sector meeting appears in the Fall issue of MTA's Metro Quarterly magazine with the caption listing his SO.CA.TA affiliation. ■

(Bulletin Board, from pg. 3)

The National Transportation Safety Board has released its report on the Feb. 1, 2001 accident involving Angels Flight. Summary (with link to full report in Acrobat): <http://www.nts.gov/publictn/2003/RAR0303.htm>
A request for a printed copy of the report can be submitted online: <http://www.nts.gov/pubmail/pubmail.asp>

gov/pubmail/pubmail.asp or by calling 800-877-6799 Include in the request the title of the report ("Uncontrolled Movement, Collision, and Passenger Fatality on the Angels Flight Railway in Los Angeles, California February 1, 2001") and its NTSB publication number (RAR-03/03) ■