

BULLETIN BOARD

SO.CA.TA NEWS

Our thanks to Pete Serdenis of Metro Stops & Zones for his informative presentation at our Jan. 13th meeting.

Upcoming speakers will include Phil Aker of LADOT, a representative of Flexcar, and member Damien Goodmon presenting his vision for an integrated regional rail network.

At our Feb. 10th meeting, we will discuss the bylaw change proposals printed in the January newsletter.

Membership renewals are now due: \$25 regular, \$10 limited income. We also have updated Transit Guides, \$12.50 postpaid.


We have established official e-mail addresses for SO.CA.TA office holders. You can contact any of them at the address using the format (first initial)(last name)@socata.net

(e.g. ljones@socata.net)

IN OTHER NEWS

The Angelino Heights activists hoping to bring a streetcar to their area have lost use of the storage space where they stored the LARy Birney No. 1030 that was donated to them. If you wish to assist them check their website [<http://www.ahrolley.org/donate.html>] or e-mail contact@ahrolley.org

The annual South Bay Energy Fair (www.southbayenergyfair.com) is being held Saturday May 5, 2007; Fullerton Railroad Days will be held the same weekend. We need volunteers to staff the Rancho Palos Verdes event, so we can have a presence at both venues.

New website for Cheviot Hill residents who support having the Expo light rail line serve their community: <http://www.lightrailforcheviot.org/> 

TRANSIT UPDATES

Effective July 15, 2007, Amtrak will cease to be a Travel Partner in the Alaska Airlines Mileage Program.. Amtrak will continue to honor all rail travel awards until July 15, 2008.

Metrolink will have a Lunar New Year promotion at Irvine Transportation Center, Saturday February 24th starting at 8:30 AM. First 300 attendees get a free round-trip Metrolink ticket from Irvine to Los Angeles Union Station.

Foothill Transit

(Per Foothill meeting agenda:

"Recommended Action: Authorize a two-week fare-free period during the first two

weeks of service on Foothill Transit's Silver Streak.")

"The creation of the Silver Streak will eliminate 70% of the Foothill buses on the Busway and 55% of the Foothill Transit seats during peak hours (with a loss of 33% of the overall seats on the Busway when MTA is considered). Source: westbound buses during the 7 AM hour, assuming all fleets use the 40 seat NABI 40LFW and 57 seat NABI BRTs are used on the Silver Streak. And you want to make the service free? While I understand that the Foothill board may not understand transit, I expect the folks at Veolia to know better.

"If I need to state the obvious, here is what is going to happen. People that would normally take the frequent MTA service leaving

the busway instead are going to take Foothill, especially in the afternoon when they don't have to be at work on time. You are also going to get people trying out the service. Thus, you will have a crush load of people that only exacerbate the loss of seats. The only good thing is that they will not attempt to collect fares, which may only lead to trouble as riders find out that the cost of their trips have doubled (like from El Monte to West Covina, previously a base fare on the 480 but now \$2 since the 480 is eliminated west of West Covina). The first day is going to be very interesting. I'll let you know when that day is.

"In some cases Metro will still come out ahead. Because it will be 75 more cents still to ride Foothill from CSULA or USC versus \$1.25 from Metro. It's only between El Monte and CSULA where it will be 25¢ cheaper to take Foothill. Other than that from Pomona to LA it will on the example I used it will still be more expensive to ride Foothill and you are paying for the bus to come less frequent. Shall be interesting. Though with the MTA 490 being canceled on Saturday that might give Metro some competition. I will be keeping a close eye on this." -- *Charles Hobbs*

Long Beach Transit

2/18/07 service changes include:

- * Route 23 (late-evening shorts to Cherry/Carson) converted to Route 21 (Cherry/Alondra) on weekdays; 23 shorts still in place Sat/Sun/Hol.
- * Route 46 - improved to 30-minute headways late-evening all days
- * Routes 91, 92, 93, 94 - many small schedule adjustments eastbound north of Bellflower/Stearns for all but Rt. 94, and westbound for most entire trips on each route; 91 and 93 extended east to

Alondra/Woodruff (91 also Sat/Sun/Hol.)
* Route 171 - later trips; last eastbound leaves 8:26 PM, last westbound 9:21 PM

Proposed changes for June 24th, 2007:

- * Village Tour D'Art: Reroute. To view map of proposed changes: http://www.lbtransit.com/News/Images/map_tour_dart.jpg
- * ZAP limiteds (66/Atlantic and 96/7th St.): ZAP service will be discontinued, replaced by regular local service.

Written comments on these proposed changes to be received by February 15, 2007, to:

June 2007 Service Change
ATTN: Marketing Dept
Long Beach Transit
P.O. Box 731
Long Beach, CA 90801-0731

Omnitrans

From Charles Hobbs, based on notice on the Omnitrans website. Please note that changes will occur over 5 years from 2007-12.

FIXED ROUTE BUS SERVICE PLAN

- * Weekday headway increases to Routes 22, 66, 68
- * Saturday headway increases to Routes 1, 11, 19
- * Sunday headway increases, Routes 15 & 20
- * Cancel Routes 31, 68 (Sunday service), 75
- * Route 8: Eliminate service between Redlands Mall and Yucaipa; provide "trippers" to Redlands East Valley High School on school days
- * Route 28: Operate only during peak hours
- * Route 31: Eliminate route
- * Route 60: Rerouted to Foothill between Day Creek and Red Oak/RC Civic Center; at Red Oak it will become Route 70 and continue to Rancho Cucamonga Metrolink and Ontario

Mills

- * Route 62: Reroute to Euclid between Ontario Civic Center & 19th St. in Upland (See Route 67)
- * Route 65: Eliminate service to Los Seranos area and Calif. Institute for Men; end route at Chino Hills Marketplace
- * Route 67: Rerouted to 16th St. west of Euclid, the Mountain corridor and Montclair Transcenter (replacing Route 62 in this area)
- * Route 70: Restructure to continue on Milliken corridor to serve Rancho Cucamonga Metrolink and Civic Center at Red Oak; at Red Oak it will become Route 60 to continue to Chaffey College
- * Route 71: Eliminate service on 4th and Haven, and to Country Village; restructure between Ontario Mills and Fontana to operate along Milliken, Jurupa, Etiwanda, Marley, Mulberry, Cherry and Sierra, extending to South Highland and Walnut Village; connect with RTA routes at Marley & Mulberry; eliminate Sunday service
- * Route 90: Eliminate service between San Bernardino and Montclair; increase frequency to every 30 to 60 minutes (from 45 to 90) between San Bernardino and Riverside
- * NEW Route 361: San Bernardino-Fontana-Ontario Mills-Montclair - Provide new limited stop express service along corridors now served by Routes 1, 19, 61, and 62 between 4th St. in San Bernardino and Montclair Transcenter. Provide service in 15 minute frequency in combination with Routes 1, 19 and 61

ACCESS SERVICE PLAN

Adjust service area boundary in accordance with American with Disabilities Act requirement: service available up to ¾ mile either side of local fixed route service during days and times when regular bus routes operate.

OMNILINK SERVICE PLAN

Eliminate Saturday and Sunday service on Omnalink service which operates in Chino Hills

and Yucaipa. Offer timed connections with Route 9 in Yucaipa and Route 65 in Chino Hills.

Fare increase, from \$1.25 to \$1.35, with concomitant increases for other fare types and categories.

Public Hearing Schedule

Tuesday, February 6, 2:00 - 3:30 PM and 5:30 - 7:00 PM

Omnitrans, 1700 W. 5th St., San Bernardino - Use Route 14

Wednesday, February 7, 2:00 - 3:30 PM
Smiley Library, 125 W. Vine St., Redlands -- Use Routes 8, 9, 15, 19, 31

Tuesday, February 13, 2:00 - 3:30 PM
Mary Vagle Museum & Center, 11501 Cypress Ave., Fontana -- Use Route 71

Thursday, February 15, 2:00 - 3:30 PM and 5:30 - 7:00 PM
Ontario Senior Center, 225 E. "B" St., Ontario -- Use Routes 61, 62, 63, 67, 70, 75

NEW SHUTTLES

"Say hello to the 'Avocado Heights, Bassett, and West Valinda Flex-Route Shuttle Service.' As originally envisioned, this was supposed to be a "Smart Shuttle" type operation similar to the Grand Terrace Omnalink. The current plan has the bus going on a fixed route, with an odd "flex route area" where passengers that want to go there have to call 24 hours in advance to be picked up. Apparently there will be fixed route stops as well. Service will operate Monday to Saturday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., and will cost 25 cents with rides free to seniors, the disabled, and all MTA pass holders (which, per past County policy, includes the EZ Pass). The contract starts at the end of the month but I would not expect service to begin until an announcement is made by Gloria Molina's office.

(The Hahn Trolley expansion has not yet happened.)" -- *Hank Fung*

Sunshine Shuttle

"The South Whittier Shuttle has been re-branded the 'Sunshine Shuttle,' with two new brightly colored buses and at least of the same old white unmarked Southland Transit cutaways. No change to fares or schedules." -- *Mark Strickert*



Rancho Los Amigos

"Access Services plans to introduce a fixed routes service from Green and Blue Line stations at Imperial Wilmington and Norwalk to Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center (RLA) in Downey. The service will

operate on a fixed schedule, though will deviate off-route to pickup or drop-off riders who live within a prescribed distance from the route (it is anticipated that the service will deviate up to ½ mile off route). This new service will also be available to non-Access Paratransit riders who wish to use the service along its fixed route. Non-ASI riders will be charged a fare for the service. "Two routes are planned. One will operate east of the RLA facility to the Stonewood Mall and the Norwalk Green Line Station. A second route will provide service west of the facility to the Imperial/Wilmington station that is served by both the Green Line and the Blue Line. It is anticipated that service will be provided from approximately 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The route design is still being finalized, although it is anticipated that service will be provided on a 30 or 40 minute frequency. No timetable for implementation has been announced." -- *Dana Gabbard* 🚍

Public and Legislative Affairs - Dana Gabbard

Jan. 26 representing SO.CA.TA Kimberleigh Richards and I participated in conference call with stakeholders around the state (Bart Reed was also part of the call in his capacity as head of the Transit Coalition) regarding the governor's proposed budget and transportation funding. In a nutshell the Governor proposes to divert over a BILLION dollars that would otherwise be dedicated to public transit purposes. The California Public Interest Group and the Transportation and Land Use Coalition of the Bay Area have taken the lead in putting together a coalition of groups to fight these proposals. It is time to give pushback and not accept our status

as a convenient piggybank to allow our elected leaders to avoid confronting the state's budget gap. We'll discuss joining a sign on letter against the diversion at our Feb. 10th meeting along with how else we can make our voice heard.

The National Transportation Safety Board has issued their report on a bus accident whose findings include a recommendation that cell phone use by bus operators be banned. Thankfully our state already did so two years ago: <http://www.nts.gov/publictn/2006/HAR0604.pdf>

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Curious why the Metro Connection process has devolved into mostly restructuring efforts to save money? Just look over the presentation on the structural deficit Metro faces staff prepared for the Jan. 17 MTA Board Finance and Budget Committee meeting (agenda item #16): http://mta.net/board/items/2007/01_January/20070117F&BItem16Handout.pdf

A special board workshop on the deficit will be held Wednesday Feb. 14 at 2:30 p.m. in the Board Room (3rd floor of the Metro Headquarters). The Board only holds special meetings when something is very significant, and I think this is.

Dec. 26 the *New York Times* in an article entitled "New Los Angeles Dream Factories Design Buildings" described the changes our region is undergoing. Some excerpts: "Los Angeles is moving from a suburban culture to an urban culture," said Richard Koshalek, president of the Art Center College of Design. "It's a seismic shift. The frontier now for L.A. is closed. It can't expand any further. People are frustrated with the commutes."

As a result developers are focusing on high-rises, and public officials are trying to improve mass transit. "There is a conversation in Los Angeles — it's very nascent — about what urbanism is going to mean in coming years," local architect Michael Maltzan said. "The city's changing. It's becoming significantly denser. The city has grown to its physical boundaries."

Mr. Stephen M. Ross, the chairman of Related, said "You're dealing with a different generation. Young people don't want to spend as much time in their cars. They want to be close to their work."

The news on the status of the proposed statewide bullet train is mixed. John Myer's blog Capital Notes reports that Governor Schwarzenegger's staff has publicly hinted the high-speed rail project should not be on the ballot in 2008, and even perhaps cancelled outright. This due to the large bond package proposed by the Governor in the State of the State address that basically maxes out the state's credit card for some years to come. But evidently per Myer, Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez has expressed support for a 2008 high speed rail bond measure, stating "I think it's the right thing to do". Advocates are lobbying the legislature on behalf of the project. The key test is whether the \$103 million the Authority says is needed to keep the project on track is appropriated; the Governor's current proposal has barely enough to keep the High Speed Rail Authority alive, prompting its Executive Director Mehdi Morshed to declare in the Jan. 30 *Sacramento Bee* "If [they] don't want to move forward with the project, then close it down and save yourself some money." Stay tuned.

I appreciated the candor Richard Hunt of Metro management exhibited at the Jan. 24 MTA Citizens' Advisory Council meeting when I questioned him about the financial health of NABI, North American Bus Industries, which has been the chief provider of buses for MTA during the past decade and about which some disturbing rumors swirl. He explained in his capacity as providing oversight for procurement his last visit to NABI's headquarters in Hungary was to ascertain their present institutional health and he confessed some things (like a reduction in the engineering staff) gave him pause, although NABI official assured him of their financial stability and long-term favorable

outlook.

Shelly Verrinder, CEO of Access Services, has some interesting comments at the Oct. 23 ASI Board meeting on eligibility for paratransit under the Americans with Disabilities Act: the accessibility of the fixed route system versus being eligible for complimentary service is dynamic. As an example she noted when Access Services began making eligibility determinations over ten years ago, every fixed route operator in the Los Angeles County relied on the driver to call out stops, and because stops were not regularly called out in some cases individuals were granted eligibility. Now access for visually impaired riders to use fixed route has improved since Metro and other fixed route operators have vehicles equipped with automatic enunciators that call out announcements.

Earlier in the same meeting Ms. Verrinder noted ASI had been experiencing financial constraints and over time the Board and the Member Agencies through the Paratransit Plan update process moved more towards the ADA minimums. In a vast misstatement, ASI Boardmember Kurt Baldwin claimed providing the minimum ADA requirements was done when Access Services started. In fact former ASI CEO Richard DeRock had tried to curry favor with the disability community by providing service beyond that mandated by ADA. I wonder if anyone took Mr. Baldwin aside to quietly inform him of his mistake so he doesn't repeat this gaffe.

In local transitions, Sue Doyle has taken over the *Daily News* MTA beat (viz Rachel Uranga, who now covers the LAPD), Los Angeles City Councilmember Bill Rosendahl has been elected chairman of the Southern California Regional Airport Authority (SCRAA),

and Michael Greenwood is the new Metro Deputy Executive Officer for Transportation Contract Services (viz Mark Maloney).

How embarrassing! The Jan. 29 *L.A. Times* in the Q&A/Local Government column quotes Tony Bell, media flack for L.A. County Supervisor Michael Antonovich, as calling subway "an outmoded type of transportation". Times reporter Steve Hyman follows this with a list of over 30 cities around the world that have this outmoded mode of transportation. OUCH! But in a smart move, Mr. Antonovich at the Jan. 18 Operations Committee meeting requested that the Service Sector Governance Councils be solicited for input regarding the Metro Ridership Plan staff has proposed as it undergoes an evaluation for prioritization per a motion made earlier that same day at the Executive Management and Audit Committee by Mayor Villaraigosa (Kymberleigh Richards informs me the Mayor dubbed the Plan a "laundry list" in its present form). Input from the Sector Councils on an operational issue? Great idea, Mr. Antonovich!

In answer to inquiries, in its last agenda packet the Los Angeles County City Selection Committee included materials outlining the functions of the Committee, etc. This is the entity that appoints the 4 members of the MTA Board representing cities other than Los Angeles. I'll be glad to share these with any member who wishes to educate themselves about this obscure but important governmental body.

I'll conclude this month by noting the recent death of former MTA Board Member James Cragin. He was a true gentleman and often a rare voice of reason that will be missed. I sent his family a condolence card on our behalf. 🚗

Annual Day After Thanksgiving Study Tour—2006

For our 2006 day after Thanksgiving trip we selected Lionel Jones' proposal to explore some of the rural services of San Diego County. This entailed our getting up early to reach San Diego by mid-morning. In fact I ended up observing an empty inbound Foothill Transit line 481 bus on Wilshire near MacArthur Park at 5:40 a.m. while waiting to catch a bus to take me to a Red Line station and then via subway to Union Station. This made me idly wonder whether Foothill should run reduced service on its commuter lines on the day after Thanksgiving, much as AVTA does.

I met up at Union Station with Ken Ruben and we made our way out to the platform and boarded the Amtrak train, only to encounter an edgy attendant ("Paul") who was on some sort of power trip and offered separately to put us both off the train if we didn't move to a different car. We moved after letting the Assistant Conductor know what an S.O.B. this guy was. Our departure at 7:20 a.m. on a rare Horizon Car (#564) was uneventful. At the turntable before the flyover we spotted steam train #3751. Our group at this point included myself and the aforementioned Mr. Ruben plus Woody Rosner, Armando Avalos, John Andoh, Kirk Schneider and Dan Dalke. One of the few interesting sights on the trip down was a chance to see up-close the current installation of a 2nd track near Santa Ana. Aware of the possibility that our connection with the trolley might be tight we made sure to get off post haste, only to find we had actually arrived circa 10:05 a.m. (five minutes early). Here Lionel Jones (who had come via Greyhound) joined us. We made our way to the trolley platform at Santa Fe Depot and at 10:20 a.m. caught a Blue Line train (#1037A, a 1988 Siemens car).

At Old Town station we transferred to the Green Line, boarding one of the new low floor

cars (#3003A) at 10:31 a.m. This had good ridership and we noted a decent number deboarded at Fashion Valley Mall (probably to shop--after all, this was the Day after Thanksgiving!). More got off at the Mission Valley Mall. We arrived at El Cajon station at 11:05 a.m. The adjacent depot has an OK deli/snack shop and what I'll diplomatically term a scary restroom. We sighted tour buses picking up gamblers destined for the Barona and Sycuan casinos. Joining us here were Mark Strickert and Michael Milroy.

[I chose to take an earlier train, as I hadn't been to San Diego since the Green Line opened...made sure to at least check out the San Diego State subway station and transit center, and all the new retail put in around the Santee station, before tracking down the rabble in El Cajon—Mark]

At 11:32 a.m. we boarded MTS route 864, a low floor vehicle (#8111) with 17 passengers. After pulling out it wasn't long before we were making our way to the stop adjacent to the Westfield Shoppingtown Mall (thankfully not one of those stops at a mall separated from the shopping by a long walk thru a parking lot). From what we could glimpse it was clear this was a busy day for the mall. While turning back onto Johnson we noted a shop called Boot World. Shortly thereafter we also passed a shuttered Krispy Kreme. Continuing we made our way through a commercial district, than a residential area with apartment complexes. The overall impression was of classic suburbia. At one point the road was 2 lanes wide, and lacked sidewalks. A welcome courtesy was the helpful bus operator calling out stops along the route.

Next we drove by the East County Square Mall, with a WalMart. And then the Los Coches Liquor Store. Twice. Now the scenery became much more wide open spaces, and we went along a rocky hillside on Olde Highway

80 ("Olde" is how the signs spelled it). And like in the country people had their mail boxes mounted roadside to facilitate delivery with a mail truck. A sign announced we were going through the unincorporated community of Alpine. And soon thereafter we made our way past Alpine Creek Shopping Center. The overall feeling was of an old fashioned city--somewhat touristy yet also rural. Although signifying civilization is encroaching was a sign at one empty lot proclaiming soon an Albertson's would be there. Another sign announced "Local Sweet White Corn", evidently for sale. After crossing over I-8 we arrived around 12:46 p.m. at the end of the line: the Viejas Reservation.

I had been curious at the general lack of boarding/deboarding on the route--nearly everyone who boarded in El Cajon was still aboard at the end of the route. Now I discovered why--the route is anchored by a very strong destination: the Viejas' tribe Casino and Outlet Mall complex. Adjacent to the last stop was an outdoor food court to serve the Outlet Mall. This included such eateries as Subway, KFC, McDonalds, Rubio's Mexican Grill and a Cold Stone Creamery surrounding a waterworks display with numerous tables for eating and watching the occasional water shows. We fanned out to grab a quick bite or use the restrooms. Lionel quipped if we had known about this facility we would have scheduled to have lunch there. One quibble was Adriano's Pizza Shop didn't have slices, only whole pizzas.

At 1:09 p.m. we departed on the same bus for a reverse trip on the same route. Some sights not spotted earlier included the Descanso Ranger District Headquarters and two rustic restaurants in Alpine (J.K. Corral & Montana Cafe and Janet's Montana Cafe). At the new Alpine Estates development a sign out front touted homes there sold for \$800,000-\$1.3 million. One local street sign proclaimed

"Chocolate Summit Drive", while a nearby nursery included cactus among its offerings. We passed clumps of businesses strung along the roads we traveled, along with an RV park and exceptionally large 99 Cents Only store.

The trip back allowed us to relax and observe. It was obvious the operator regularly drove this route as he greeted boarding riders by name. And we were grateful on a fairly warm day for the comfort of air conditioning. I noted this area (like others) has uncomfortable metal benches at bus stops. Also one stop had a sign proclaiming "This bus stop adopted by The Summer Place". As we continued the bus started to load up. And just down the street from Boot World we spotted a rival store--Boot Barn! And then we arrived back at the Westfield Shoppingtown Mall around 2:10 p.m.. This is where we had 30 minutes for a lunch break at your basic mall food court with the usual suspects (McDonald's, Hot Dog on a Stick, Sbarro, Panda Express, etc.).

Now we were about to embark on the centerpiece of our trip: route 891 from El Cajon to Borrego Springs. This route operates once a week, on Fridays. It does one roundtrip, departing Borrego Sprints at 7:45 a.m. and arriving at El Cajon Transit Center at 10:35 a.m. The return trip departs El Cajon at 2:30 p.m. Arriving at Borrego Spring at 5:21 p.m. MTS operates route 892 on Thursday, which starts in Borrego Springs and serves communities west of Borrego Springs (Ranchita, Warner Springs, Lake Henshaw) while 891 serves communities east of Borrego Springs (Shelter Valley, Banner and Julian). The two routes converge near Santa Ysabel and south of that point operate along the same routing (through Ramona, Moreno and Lakeside). We were curious how much ridership this "lifeline" service has, given its very limited operation.

At 2:40 p.m. we boarded MTS rural route 891,

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Rural San Diego Tour cont'd from Pg. 9

a Ford Econoline Cutaway (#211)-with 2' passengers. There were just barely enough seats for all of us with me folding down the extra one near the back. One passenger was bringing with her a lot of grocery sacks plus a huge bag of kitty litter. Obviously for her this route is a true lifeline! We entered highway 67 and began whipping along through the outskirts of the settled area near El Cajon and Santee. We pulled off the highway at Lakeside, passing the local arena (a rodeo ground) with only the shopper lady as a passenger.

We continued along a narrow 2 lane roadway, that even had a stop light at one point. The landscape was classic sprawl development, nestled amid yet more rocky hillsides. Then we entered wide open spaces and spotted a business whose sign proclaimed "Daniel's Nursery". Then we passed a cluster of cars parked roadside at the trailhead of the Iron Mt. Trail. While music played over the loudspeakers we climbed a hillside and spotted some bike riders alongside horse pastures.

Continuing we passed the Salerno Winery, and a field of alfalfa. There was an espresso stand and liquor store, as we entered the small town of Ramona. I noticed a local taco shop proclaimed it was open 24 hours. Finally at 3:20 p.m. we arrived at the Ramona Station, a park and ride next to a K-Mart. The bus has a scheduled 15 minute layover there, and the one passenger sprinted for the store. Since it would be nearly two more hours before the bus reached Borrego Springs perhaps she took the opportunity to grab a snack and use the facilities.

This is the last point the 891/892 connect with any transit service. If we had stayed on the bus effectively we couldn't return for a week. So instead after a short wait we boarded NCTD route 386, a New Flyer low floor (#1151) with

1 passenger. Off we went to see more of rural Ramona, including the local Community Resource Center. We had 1 boarding along an empty stretch of road, going too fast on a 2-lane winding along a hillside with some sharp curves. Next we looped by San Pasqual Academy and noticed no one got on or off there. Continuing we entered the parking lot of the famous Wild Animal Park of the San Diego Zoo and drove by the entrance. We had one boarding while hoards of people leaving the park clogged the sidewalks; evidently we had arrived as it was closing for the day. As we continued there was minimal boarding and deboarding while we passed through Escondido and at 4:35 p.m. arrived at the end of the route -- the Escondido Transit Center.

After a short wait we caught NCTD route 320, another New Flyer (#1015) low floor with 7 passengers. This is an express line and soon was whizzing down the freeway with the shops lining it passing in a blur. We looped by Palomar College where 6 boarded. We also went through Vista Transit Center where several got off and 3 got on. At Plaza Camino Real again several deboarded while 3 got on. By 5:55 p.m. we had reached the end of the line, the Ocean-side Transit Center.

Now we split up--some took the northbound Surfliner #589 departing at 6:46 p.m. The trip back to Los Angeles was mostly uneventful, except for the 20 minutes we waited in Santa Fe Spring while a truck blocking the tracks was towed away.

So evidently for at least one person the 891 despite being a very infrequent service does serve a purpose. We were glad to have the rare opportunity to ride it for a portion of the route, fulfilling the purpose of exploring transit on this unique weekday. 🚌