

BULLETIN BOARD

SO.CA.TA MEETING NEWS

At our Oct. 13th meeting, we will select the site of our holiday banquet and the itinerary of the day-after-Thanksgiving study tour. Only proposals with details (such as restaurant location, cost, and room availability for Dec. 8th, and route itineraries), ready to be voted on by attending members, will be considered.

Our scheduled guest speaker, Cathi Cole of the Pasadena ARTS system, will have to postpone until next year.

We will again have a booth at the Alternative Car and Transportation Expo at Barker Hangar adjacent to Santa Monica Airport. This year it will be held Friday, Oct. 19th and Saturday, Oct. 20th, from 10:00 AM to 5:30 PM both days. <http://www.altcarexpo.com/index.html>

SO.CA.TA's next Wilshire Corridor subway meeting is in the Miracle Mile area, scheduled for Monday, Oct. 29th, from 6:00 to 8:00 PM, at the El Rey Theatre, 5515 Wilshire Blvd.

IN OTHER NEWS

MTA will have a set of public study meetings for the Westside Extension Transit Corridor. All will be from 6:00 to 8:00 PM:

Thursday, Oct. 11th, 2007 — Pan Pacific Park Recreation Center, 7600 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles

Tuesday, Oct. 16th, 2007 — Wilshire United Methodist Church, 4350 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles

Wednesday, Oct. 17th, 2007 — Beverly Hills Public Library Auditorium, 444 N. Rexford Dr.

Thursday, Oct. 18, 2007 — Santa Monica Public Library, 601 Santa Monica Blvd.

Contact: (213) 922-6932 or WestsideExtension@metro.net

http://www.metro.net/projects_programs/westside/default.htm

MTA will also have a series of study meetings for the Crenshaw-Prairie Transit Corridor:

Monday, Oct. 15th — Darby Park, 3400 W. Arbor Vitae St., Inglewood, from 6:00 to 8:00 PM

Wednesday, Oct. 17th — Nate Holden Performing Arts Center, 4718 W. Washington Blvd., Los Angeles, from 6:00 to 8:00 PM

Saturday, Oct. 20th — Audubon Middle School, 4120 11th Ave., Los Angeles, from 9:00 to 11:00 AM

Contact: (213) 922-2736 or crenshaw@metro.net

http://www.metro.net/projects_programs/crenshaw/default.htm

Riverside Transit Agency (RTA) is holding public hearings to receive comments on proposed route changes and new service:

Thursday, Oct. 11th — Glen Avon Library, 9244 Galena St., Riverside, at 2:00 PM, and Temecula Library, 30600 Pauba Rd., at 7:00 PM

Tuesday, Oct. 16th — Lake Elsinore Senior Center, 420 E. Lakeshore Dr., at 10:00 AM, and Corona Civic Center, 502 Vicentia Ave., at 7:00 PM

Wednesday, Oct. 17th — Calimesa Senior Center, 908 Park Ave. at 3:00 PM, and Beaumont Civic and Community Center, 550 E. 6th St., at 7:00 PM

The Expo Construction Authority has scheduled public meetings for Expo Line Phase 2 Initial Screening Results. All meetings are 6:30-8:30 PM:

Mon., Oct. 22nd — Santa Monica Civic Auditorium East Wing, 1855 Main St.

Wednesday, Oct. 24th — Venice High School


Auditorium, 13000 Venice Blvd., Los Angeles

Thursday, Oct. 25th — Vista Del Mar Child and Family Services Gymnasium, 3200 Motor Ave., Cheviot Hills

The Port of Long Beach is holding its annual Green Port Fest on Saturday, Oct. 13th, from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM, at the Port Administration Building, 925 Harbor Plaza. One of the attractions is free rides on a train through the Port Complex.

Train Riders' Association of California (TRAC) is holding its annual "Rail California 2020" conference on November 3rd in Old Town San Diego. Details at <http://www.calrailnews.com>, or (916) 557-1667.

We were unable to arrange a preview tour of the Sprinter, NCTD's train line from Oceanside to Escondido scheduled to begin revenue service in December. TRAC has arranged for a tour on Sunday, Nov. 4th, arranged as part of their annual meeting. Tickets can be purchased, on a space available basis, by using the TRAC contact information above.

The Sixth Annual Southern California Transportation Summit is being held on Monday, Nov. 5th from 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM, at the Ontario Convention Center, 2000 Convention Center Way. Registration and other details at <http://www.mobility21coalition.com/>. 



*One of two turnouts on the LEFT side of eastbound Huntington Drive in Arcadia. These minimize dangerous mid-block crossings for Santa Anita racetrack and Methodist Hospital
— Mark Strickert photo*

So the newspapers report despite recent budgetary setbacks everything is OK because the California Transportation Commission allocated the money for building Expo Phase I? Unfortunately what the media missed in covering this story is that the CTC only allocated money for the first year of construction. As Michael Turner of Metro Government Relations explained at the Sept. 26 MTA Citizens Advisory Council meeting, this means each year hence Metro will have to lobby for subsequent disbursements. And due to dwindling state funds, if the robbery of transit funds that characterized this year's budget deal is repeated the funding for Expo will likely be drawn from funds that were supposed to be for projects already approved by the state. Turner also related how past assurances the goods movement component of the recently passed transportation bonds would mostly go toward addressing the needs at the L.A./Long Beach ports complex have gone out the window; one agency with a straight face sought a slice of these funds for the paving of local roads because of the need to facilitate the delivery of pizzas! Meanwhile the California Transit Association has now filed a lawsuit against the state over the budget robbery. And we are in the midst of undertaking a campaign in response to these shenanigans that may shake-up the political powers-that-be; details next month.

In her Administrative Update to the Aug. 28 Board meeting Sherrie Fisher, General Manager of the Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District, noted MTD's Manager of Human Resources & Risk Gabriel Garcia recently represented the agency in a small

claims court matter, which was filed for \$3,000. Due to Mr. Garcia's efforts, the claim against MTD was dismissed and closed. To which I can only add my admiration for Mr. Garcia's initiative, and note he did it without the use of a high priced lawyer.

I was amused at the near paranoia among various areas fearful of facilitating airport growth that has frozen participation in the revived Southern California Regional Airport Authority as described in the Sept. 6 *Los Angeles Times* ("Regional airport board stalled"). Amazing!

As happened last month, a number of local transit professionals have taken new positions. Allan Pollock, former head of Montebello Bus Lines, is now the head honcho at Salem-Keizer Transit in Salem, Oregon. The Ventura County Transportation Commission has hired Darren Kettle of the San Bernardino Association Governments as its executive director, succeeding the retiring Ginger Gherardi, who has headed up VCTC since it was formed in 1989. And Anne Mayer, #2 at the Riverside County Transportation Commission, was named executive director, succeeding the retiring Eric Haley who has headed RCTC since 1998.

And then we have Gloria Jeff, hired 18 months ago with great fanfare to head LADOT, only to be summarily fired this month. There are whispers the Mayor's staff when vetting Jeff's appointment never learned of what the *Daily News* described as her "blunt, gruff manner". This rubbed staffers and officials the wrong way, hence the ouster. With the recent hiring of Gloria

Allred as Jeff's lawyer I predict this brief drama will end with a face saving statement and some sort of severance package.

Fact of the month: 48,165 weekday boardings on the Silver Streak (per minutes of the July 31 Foothill Transit Executive Board meeting)

With the Division 6 swap dead and the replacement yard near LAX probably a decade from being built, MTA has a problem since 6 lacks CNG fueling capacity and the aging RTS diesels stored at 6 are in need of replacement. The solution? MTA plans to purchase 50 gasoline hybrid buses (agenda item #39, MTA Board Sept. 27 meeting).

Can anyone explain to me why while MTA is undertaking a mid-life overhaul of the Berda Red Line cars, which is standard practice in the transit industry, that in regards the Blue Line cars it has been decided "The current Metro Blue Line fleet is past both its mid-life and technology-life cycles. Due to the fleet's original design and integration application the current fleets does not possess basic industry configurations that are still available commercially-supported products. The cost involved with refurbishing and upgrading the vehicles to a commercially-supported configuration is approximately equal to the cost of a new 2550 vehicle which is not cost-effective approach." (Agenda item #42, June 28 MTA Board meeting). Also, at our Sept. meeting longtime bus/rail aficionado Warren Quon warned the greater weight of the P2550 replacement vehicles will tax MTA's rail infrastructure. Could these replacement cars end up costing more to operate and negate any saving obtained from their purchase versus doing the overhaul?

I'm told attendance was sparse at the Sept. 26 initial session of the Metro Board's Ad Hoc Sustainability Committee. Which is a shame, as I look over the fascinating Power Point presentation by staff on this emerging topic. [http://www.metro.net/board/Items/2007/09_September/20070926Sustain_Item2B.pdf].

The Griffith Observatory Shuttle will end in November. And so far the Recreation and Parks Dept. has been indifferent to the proposal to offer a weekend DASH line from the Western/Hollywood Red Line station to serve that part of the park. Hopefully Rec & Parks won't neglect providing some way to access our Observatory without using a car.

The word is that the governor has agreed to allow the high speed rail bond to be on the 2008 ballot. It'll be the one chance in a generation for a bullet train--is anyone organizing a campaign?

In a recent interview on the *Newshour* on PBS Mary Peters, Secretary of Transportation, scapegoated bike paths as being the cause of why monies to maintain bridges like the one that collapsed in Minnesota is lacking. She even said Bikes are not real transportation. Oh, boy! The bicyclists are foaming mad about that one!

Quote of the month: "It is, after all, the responsibility of the expert to operate the familiar and that of the leader to transcend it."--Henry Kissinger

I'll conclude this month with a fond farewell to rail advocate Barry Christensen, a fixture at the annual Fullerton Railroad Days. He has moved to Louisville KY, and will be missed. 🚂

TRANSIT UPDATES

AMTRAK – from Dana Gabbard

Per the August 2007 *Wheel Clicks*, newsletter of the Pacific Railroad Society: As of October 29th, Amtrak will no longer accept personal checks except under certain circumstances, and will only accept money orders if purchased from the U.S. Postal Service.

GOLD COAST TRANSIT – from press release, and 10/7/07 Bus Book

The transition from SCAT to Gold Coast Transit continues...their first all-schedule Bus Book is now out, effective October 7th, 2007. The Bus Book includes a list of all stops on each route, and a centerfold system map. Service changes include:

- ☐ Route 8 Oxnard College – some Sunday trips run express from OTC to Oxnard College; last Saturday trip leaves OTC 7:20 PM, and last Sunday trip leaves 7:00 PM
- ☐ Route 10 Telegraph Road/Saticoy – Two-way service added on weekends. Reduced travel time between Ventura and Saticoy; last weekend trips start:
- ☐ Route 11 Telephone Road/Saticoy – Two-way service added on weekends. Reduced travel time between

- ☐ Ventura and Saticoy. New stops added on Main Street at Target and at Main/Telephone; last weekend trips start:
 - ☐ Route 15 El Rio/Northeast – Existing route expanded to include Auto Center Drive
 - ☐ Route 16 Ojai-Ventura/Main Street - On weekdays, the final northbound and southbound trips will leave at 7:50 PM and 7:45 PM respectively; last Saturday trip leaves OTC 7:20 PM, and last Sunday trip leaves 7:00 PM; last Saturday trip leaves Ojai 7:10 PM, and last Sunday trip leaves 6:50 PM
 - ☐ New Route 30X OTC-VTC Express – weekday commuter express service between the Oxnard Transportation Center and the Ventura Transfer Center.
 - ☐ New Route 31X Ojai/Government Center/OTC – weekday commuter express service between Ojai and the Ventura County Government Center, the Topa Building and the Oxnard Transportation Center.
 - ☐ New Route 32X OTC/Ojai Express – weekday commuter express service between the Oxnard Transportation Center and the Ojai Park and Ride lot at Fox Street and Ojai Avenue.
 - ☐ Also, later weekend service, to at least 7:00 PM, on routes 1, 2, 3, 4B, 5, and 6
- www.goldcoasttransit.org ☐

MEMBERS IN ACTION

Samuel James attended the July 31st special meeting of the Foothill Transit Executive Board, and made public comments "expressing concern regarding the wait time frequency of the Silver Streak service at West Covina shopping mall. Mr. James indicated that the Silver Streak stops at the mall between 4-9 minutes causing schedule

delays."

Correction to last month's column: Damien Goodman was elected Co-Chair of the Empowerment Congress West Area Neighborhood Development Council.

Dana Gabbard and "Ken" Ruben attended the Sept. 26th MTA Citizens Advisory Council meeting on . Details in this month's PLAC report (lead story, page 4). ☐