

## Members in Action

Ken Ruben attended the evening session of the Culver CityBus outreach meeting on September 30<sup>th</sup>. He also attended the Westside Sector Governance Council Meeting on Oct. 14<sup>th</sup> and the Meet and Confer meeting of Metro's Service Sector Governance Councils on Oct. 23<sup>rd</sup>. Ruben's report on our Oct. 10<sup>th</sup> preview of Angel's Flight appeared in the November issue of the Pacific Railroad Society's (PRS) Wheel Clicks newsletter.

Kymerleigh Richards, Jerard Wright, Bart Reed and Ken Ruben attended the Metro Board Meeting on Oct. 22<sup>nd</sup>. Ruben and Reed along with Nick Matonak attended the LOSSAN Board Meeting on Oct. 28<sup>th</sup>. Ruben and Tom Grose attended the Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Southern California Chapter of the Railway and Locomotive Historical Society. Grose and Ruben plus Andy Novak participated in the Barstow Flyer trip on Oct. 17<sup>th</sup> sponsored by [LARail.com](http://LARail.com) and the PRS.

Ken Ruben, Dave Snowden and Russ Jones attended various parts of the Electric Railroaders Association Convention over the Labor Day Weekend (September 5-7).

Members attending the Crenshaw corridor Sept. 30<sup>th</sup> meeting were Joe Dunn and Jerard Wright.

Assisting with our booth at the Alt Car Expo in Santa Monica Oct. 2-3 or dropping by to say hi were Woody Rosner, Alex Schaffer, Kymerleigh Richards, Joe Dunn, J.K. Drummond, Erik Griswold, Lionel Jones, Ken Ruben and Dana Gabbard. Thanks to Darrell Clarke for the display and information sheet on the Expo project. And also to John Ulloth for the assist in taking stuff to & from the event!

Carlos Osuna volunteered at the Sept. 26<sup>th</sup> Metro Roadeo and at the Oct. 12<sup>th</sup> San Gabriel Valley Service Sector meeting he received a certificate in recognition of his assisting with

the Metro Roadeo for a period of years. Ken Ruben was at the Sector meeting and congratulated Carlos in comments to the Governance Board.

Paul Castillo is in the running to be the next operations manager for Veolia's Metro contract. Good luck, Paul!

John Ulloth's photos of rail locations in Portland appeared in the Sept. issue of Wheel Clicks. John also attended Metro's Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting on the Harbor Subdivision.

The website City Watch ([www.citywatch.com](http://www.citywatch.com)) ran a commentary by Harold Katz ("Bus-Only Lane will Turn Wilshire into Traffic Mess") and several installments of Ken Alpern's weekly Moving LA column ("Five Fair Things Politicians Can Do for Transportation", "A Whine and Cheese Party at Metro", "New Problem: Transpo YIMBYs (Yes In My Backyard)", "Tunnels and Trenches: Can You Dig It?" and "How to Create a 21st Century Eastside Rail Network").

Chris Flescher attended the Oct. 24<sup>th</sup> joint Railpac/NARP meeting in San Carlos.

Jane Reifer's comments were featured in the Oct. 26<sup>th</sup> Orange County Register article "Bus Riders to OCTA: Save Our Routes".

Members Hank Fung, Jerard Wright, Alex Friedman, and Nate Zablen attended the October 26<sup>th</sup> Westside Subway Extension informational meeting at the LA County Art Museum.

Member Nate Zablen gave public comment at the Metro San Fernando Valley Governance Council Meeting on November 4<sup>th</sup>. Member Bart Reed was present at this meeting.

Bart Reed had a letter to Editor in LA Times, Oct. 8<sup>th</sup> and was quoted in Ventura Star on Oct 8<sup>th</sup>.

*(Continued on Page 11)*

## Transit Updates

### **Flyaway**

On November 16<sup>th</sup>, the newest Flyaway route will begin operation between the Irvine train station and Los Angeles International Airport (LAX).

The service will operate seven days a week. Buses will depart the Irvine station at 4:45 am, 6:45 am, 8:45 am, 10:45 am, 12:45 pm, and 4:45 pm. Buses will depart LAX at 9:45 am, 11:45 am, 3:45 pm, 5:45 pm, 7:45 pm, and 9:45 pm.

One-way fare on the new line will be \$25 for adults and children ages 5 and under ride free. For more information visit:

[www.lawa.org/flyaway](http://www.lawa.org/flyaway)



### **Foothill Transit**

The agency is considering a variety of changes to their service in an effort to improve service and to close a budget shortfall.

The agency will hold two public

hearings in December to discuss the proposed changes and accept public comment.

The agency has proposed headway reductions for the following lines: Silver Streak, 185, 187, 195, 291, 480, and 699.

Public hearings will be held on December 1<sup>st</sup> at El Monte (Metro San Gabriel Valley - Conference Room at 6:30 pm) and December 2<sup>nd</sup> at Pomona Public Library at 6:30 pm.

Foothill will also accept comments by mail, fax, email, and at the Transit Stores until December 2<sup>nd</sup>.

For more information, visit:  
[www.foothilltransit.org](http://www.foothilltransit.org)

Comments will also be accepted by:  
E-Mail: [service2010@foothilltransit.org](mailto:service2010@foothilltransit.org)  
FAX: 626-967-4608

Or Letters can be sent to:  
Service Changes 2010, Foothill Transit  
100 South Vincent Avenue, Suite 200  
West Covina, CA 91790

### **Metrolink's Toy Train Express**

For the 13<sup>th</sup> consecutive year the Metrolink Toy Train Express will be making stops at stations along the system. The train will start on Saturday November 21<sup>st</sup> and operate on Friday-Sunday until Sunday December 20<sup>th</sup>. Visitors are encouraged to bring a new unwrapped toy to the train for the southern California firefighters "Spark of Love" Christmas toy drive.

For more information on where the train we be, visit [www.metrolinktrains.com](http://www.metrolinktrains.com) or call 1-800-371-5465.

### **Metrolink's Holiday Schedules**

A modified schedule will be operated on November 26<sup>th</sup>, Thanksgiving Day.

Trains will only operate on the San Bernardino and Antelope Valley Lines on a Sunday Schedule. No other Metrolink Lines will run.

On Thanksgiving day, fares will be 25% off regular weekday fares for one-way and round-trip tickets. Discounted fares only apply to passengers traveling on Thanksgiving.

On Friday November 27<sup>th</sup> all trains will operate on their normal weekday schedules.

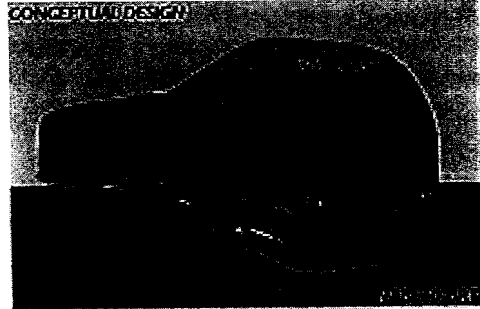
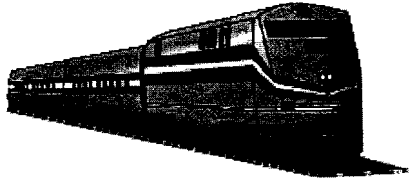
On Saturday, November 28<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, November 29<sup>th</sup> trains will operate on their normal weekend schedules.

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## Transit Updates Continued

### **Rail 2 Rail (Amtrak and Metrolink)**

Metrolink monthly passes will NOT be valid for travel on Pacific Surfliner trains November 25<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> or 29<sup>th</sup>. All Metrolink tickets, including monthly passes will continued to be honored between Oxnard and Los Angeles Union Station during this period on Trains 799 and 768.



### **Riverside Transit Agency (RTA)**

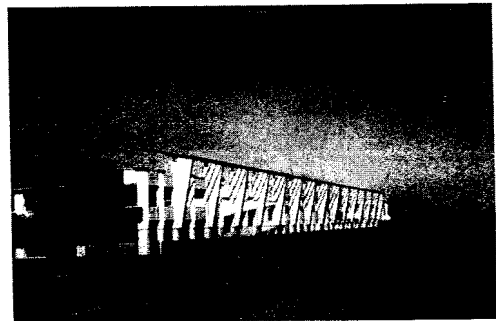
The Corona Transit Center will move one step closer to completion this month when RTA hosts a public groundbreaking for the project at 10 a.m. on November 20<sup>th</sup>.

Eight bus bays will be built on more than two acres at 31 E. Grand Boulevard just south of the railroad tracks at Metrolink's North Main Street station. This project calls for a pedestrian plaza, a bridge to the Metrolink station and a parking area.



### **Santa Monica Big Blue Bus**

Santa Monica recently announced it would be purchasing 11 60-foot NABI BRT articulated buses for use on Rapid Line 7. The new buses are scheduled to arrive by the end of 2011. The agency has an option to purchase an additional 10 articulated buses that will be used on Rapid Line 3. These new buses will have 53 seats instead of the standard 40 seats.



### **New parking for Fullerton Station**

The Fullerton City Council has recently approved a plan to build a \$42 million dollar, 4 level, 850 space parking structure on the west side of Harbor Boulevard. This new structure will be connected to the train station by a pedestrian bridge next to the railroad. Several details will need to be worked out before work can begin. 🚌 🚌 🚌

Well, the will of the voters in passing Measure R a year ago was finally codified as Metro's Board of Directors passed the long-overdue Long Range Transportation Plan. But even after the discussions that took place over the preceding months, it was still a contentious (and long ... even longer than the previous month's AnsaldoBreda matter) process.

**Yes, Virginia, There Is A LRTP:** You know you are in for the long haul when any item on the Board agenda takes more than a page to summarize. So when I saw that item #10 took a full three pages to summarize – including all of the amendments and additional motions – I knew it was going to be a long Thursday. And it was.

Public comment alone took nearly all of the hour allocated by Chair Ara Najarian, with the Bus Riders Union wasting about 5% of that time with comments such as Barbara Lott-Holland's claim that the LRTP "will be an economic and environment disaster" and the appearance of Lou C. Fer (a BRU member dressed as the devil, who tried reverse psychology in saying that since the LRTP would build "the highways from hell" the Board should pass it and do him a favor), flanked by a costumed vampire (representing the rail system that would suck the life blood from the bus system) and "service slasher".

Damien Goodmon also turned up to claim that the LRTP is a civil rights violation because the Expo Line was supposed to be a replacement for the Wilshire subway. How he makes these things up and keeps a straight face is beyond me.

Several speakers, representing various constituencies and districts, urged an end to "political posturing" ... and then proceeded to

do exactly that, with the bulk coming from electeds in the San Gabriel Valley pushing the Gold Line Foothill extension. This really didn't surprise me, since the week before at the Planning & Programming Committee meeting, Pasadena Mayor Bill Bogaard had talked about the need to speak "regionally" before repeating the oft-made claim that the extension would be built all the way to Claremont by 2017.

Speaking of which, it was that city's Council Member Sam Pedroza who had called the loudest at the committee meeting to "stop the politics". Apparently that phrase is supposed to exclude the person who invokes it. Oh, does it matter that Pedroza is that city's rep on the Foothill Construction Authority's governing board?

And that was just public comment. We were also treated to a rant by Supervisor Gloria Molina, lasting close to a half-hour, in which she attacked Metro planners, Rail Operations, her fellow Board members, and everyone short of the custodial staff. Not surprisingly, her main point appears to be her recurring case of sour grapes that the Eastside Extension is light rail instead of "the subway we were promised" and the delays in starting operation of the line she apparently hates so much she named it after her mentor, the late Congressman Edward M. Roybal.

In her most memorable moment, which ended up being the focal point of La Opinión's coverage of the meeting, she claimed she doesn't believe the line is safe, but that she would assure the community it was nevertheless. I leave it to the reader to figure out where the integrity of her office falls within that contradictory statement.

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## **Public and Legislative Affairs** By Dana Gabbard

Well, the Bus Rider's Union lawsuit against the last Metro fare increase on the basis of the California Environmental Quality Act has failed, with the Court of Appeals turning down their challenge to the trial court's denial of their petition for a writ of mandate. This was a foregone conclusion because CEQA has a exemption for fare increases that are used to help pay operating expenses. So why did the BRU sue? It certainly seems like empty grandstanding from where I stand.

Is anyone who matters (like a Metro Board member) asking hard question about why the Gold Line Eastside extension was delayed? And why safety improvements (to the tune of \$4.5 million) are necessary this late in the building of it? Measure R is funding near continual light rail construction all over the region for the next decade or two.

Are we finding out what went wrong with this project to ensure any mistakes are not repeated, projects are designed to a reasonable level of safety from the get-go, etc? That is what worries me - Gloria Molina's recent rant at the Metro Board meeting is a distraction from the hard questions that seeming are not being asked.

After a month Metro in response to my public records request for the recent TAP audit sent it as requested as a e-mail attachment. Good gosh, I never had a document that proved so popular with members, transit agency insiders, etc. It even got mentioned on The Source and Bart Reed kindly posted it online.

In 55 pages it details the sorry situation with what was supposed to be our cutting edge smart card, which we all know falls far

short of being that. Sad. And again the Metro Board dropped the ball, letting this debacle fester for years.

We could also use leadership from the Metro Board regarding the continuing troubles with Metro's light rail car procurement efforts. What went wrong with the P-2000 and P-2550 car procurement process? How do we avoid repeating mistakes plaguing these multi-million dollar expenditures whose results will operate on our rail lines for 30+ years? As with TAP and the delays in the Eastside Line, where is the leadership at the Metro Board?

So what happened with Breda? My gut instinct is Breda blinked and decided to kill the deal by making demands they knew Metro couldn't say yes to. I think under all the jargon it was a simple dollars and cents calculation by Breda. They had sweetened the deal with promises of a plant, fiscal guarantees, two free cars, etc. and belatedly realized it didn't pencil out.

Mayor Villaraigosa and the County Labor Federation take a hit for chasing pie in the sky promises many of us felt were unrealistic. Only Michael Antonovich comes out of it looking good for his persistent advocacy that Metro not exercise the option. He was right, and six months was wasted by not listening to him.

Rick Thorpe has resigned as Metro's chief capital management officer overseeing rail construction at the agency. He is staying on as the CEO of the Expo Authority overseeing that project, which will keep him busy for the next 5-6 years. I see Thorp as just the latest person who finally decided the paycheck wasn't worth the continued trashing of

## Public and Legislative Affairs Continued

his reputation by Metro Board member grandstanding attacks (a la Joe Drew).

I bet Metro will end up having to pay a premium salary to recruit the sort of experienced hand we'll need in the job. Another legacy of Gloria Molina's recent already almost legendary rant.

Metro Chief Planning Officer Carl Inge is slated to leave at the end of the year, reports The Source. And after successfully guiding the Long Range Plan to adoption after a multi-year convoluted process, who can blame her?

I'm very grateful Kevin Roderick of LA Observed published my commentary "Take

transit seriously" after the blog's business columnist Mark Lacter dismissed the Purple Line extension as a pipedream. I concluded my comments by noting "It is now a serious effort that is the object of realpolitik and serious number crunching.

My assumption was the word about this had spread among news junkies, political observers, stakeholders, etc. Mr. Lacter has reminded me such isn't the case and more needs to be done in basic education and sharing of knowledge. Just another part of the large and complex task that is necessary to make the subway extension a reality."



*A new mixed-use transit-oriented development has been built on the Hollywood and Vine Metro Red Line Station. Photo by Alek Friedman*

## Metro Board Report Continued

We were also treated to yet another round of micro-management by Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, who put forward a lengthy motion calling for Metro to start looking under the sofa cushions ... er, I mean, pursue other funding sources beyond the federal New Starts program for projects that he deemed worthy of accelerating the time line on (such as the Foothill Extension, for which he included in his motion an operating commitment by Metro). Not to be outdone, Richard Katz introduced a similar motion for the segments of the Westside Subway not covered by Metro's pending New Starts application.

After much more discussion in which neither motion was gaining any traction – and during which Chair Najarian pointed out, to no avail, that the LRTP does not prioritize funding – Ridley-Thomas agreed to incorporate language from Katz's motion into his own, then shot down with a single "no" fellow Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky's attempt to put the items in the motion into a more logical order.

After all that, the vote to approve the LRTP was unanimous, including familiar face Tom LaBonge, brought in for the day to pinch hit for fellow Los Angeles City Councilmember José Huizar (who was out of town), apparently just in case a swing vote was ultimately needed.

**Quote Of The Month:** Supervisor Don Knabe, who was chairing the meeting at the point that the BRU's devil finished speaking, who thanked "Lou" and added "Happy Halloween"

**AnsaldoBreda Again:** As noted in last month's column, the "drop dead" date for Metro to come to agreement with the Italian railcar manufacturer was two days after the October Board meeting. Which meant we got an update from CEO Art Leahy that there was still an issue with the already-built overweight cars (Breda was offering to build two extra cars at

the contract rate as a mitigation, although I fail to see how that mitigates the ongoing cost of running overweight equipment). Not satisfied was Supervisor Mike Antonovich, who insisted that the previous month's motion took precedence over any new offers Breda wanted to make, and moved to cancel the contract right then and there.

Finding little support, he instead voted against accepting Breda's offer; he may well have been the smartest one in the room at that moment, along with Lakewood Councilmember Diane Dubois and Supervisor Molina, who abstained from the vote. All three must feel vindicated by Breda's decision a week later to walk away from the deal after trying to get additional concessions from Metro.

### Where Goes The Eastside Extension Next?:

The other major item on the Board's plate this month was the question of which alignment the Gold Line will take for the second phase of the Eastside Extension. It's now down to two candidates: One to South El Monte, primarily along the 60 freeway, and the other to Whittier, primarily along Washington Blvd. Supervisor Antonovich asked, logically enough, why both alignments could not be built, since they diverge at such a great distance. Told at committee that the only drawback would be funding, he dutifully had "whichever alignment is not chosen" added to the unfunded portion of the LRTP. So it now appears that eventually there will be yet another light rail branch in the network to go along with the Blue/Expo Line split just south of Pico Station and the expected Expo/Crenshaw branch as the latter project moves forward.

I will once again take a month off from writing this column, since the usual holiday split between the committee meetings and full Board meeting has our newsletter deadline between.



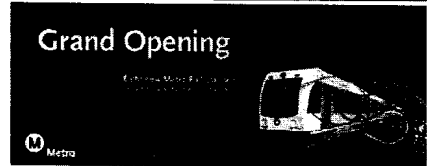
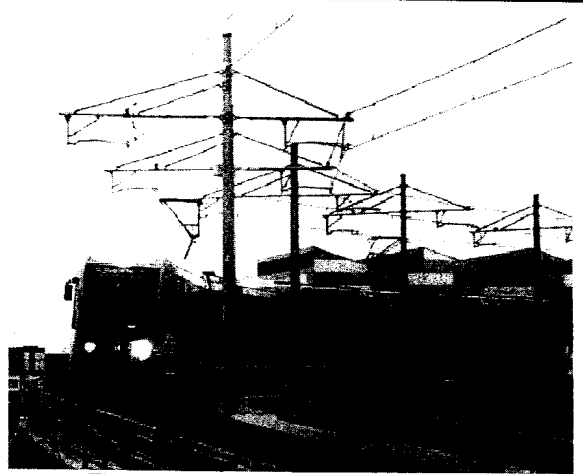
## ***Eastside Extension opens November 15th!***

The long awaited Eastside Extension of the Metro Gold Line (aka La Linea de Oro), will open to the public on Sunday November 15<sup>th</sup>.

We will have a booth at the east portal of Union Station during the festivities from 9 am to 5 pm. We are planning to have our new Transit Guide available for sale.

On the first day of service, special free fare trains will operate from Union Station to Pomona and Atlantic (East Los Angeles). Regular service will operate from Union Station to Pasadena at regular fare. Direct service from Pasadena to East Los Angeles will begin on Monday.

Metro will also operate special Line 632 from Union Station to the eastern end of the line at Pomona and Atlantic to help ease over crowding. This will be the last day for Line 632 which has operated since June. 🚋 🚋 🚋



### ***Photo of the month***

**"Be My Valentine"**  
This interesting public relations message was seen on a Vallejo Baylink MCI in November 2009.

Photo by  
Richard Silagi





## The 2009 Day After Thanksgiving Trip

This year on November 27<sup>th</sup> we will be taking our annual "Day After Thanksgiving" trip.

This year we will be taking advantage of the new Metrolink Family Four Pack of Tickets to tour the commuter system.

We will begin by meeting at Los Angeles Union Station between 7:30 am and 7:50 pm. Below is the itinerary of our trip:

Train 600 (Union Station to Orange Station)  
8:00 am to 8:46 am

Train 800 (Orange to San Bernardino)  
9:32 am to 10:50 am

Train 321 (San Bernardino to Union Station)  
11:00 am to 12:30 pm

Lunch at Union Station  
(Everyone is on their own for lunch.)  
12:30 pm to 1:10 pm

Train 109 (Union Station to Moorpark)  
1:10 pm to 2:20 pm

Train 116 (Moorpark to Glendale Station)  
2:30 pm to 3:24 pm

(For those who are not interested in the Antelope Valley portion of the trip, you can stay on Train 116 and arrive back at Union Station at 3:40 pm.)

Train 211 (Glendale to Lancaster)  
3:55 pm to 5:35 pm

Train 222 (Lancaster to Union Station)  
5:50 pm to 7:50 pm

The trip will officially be over once we arrive at Union Station. As with any SOCATA excursion you can leave at any time you want. The trip will cost \$7.25 per person for your train ticket. Lunch is not included in the price of this trip. At Union Station in the morning you will need to meet Kymberleigh who will be purchasing the Family Four Pack Tickets for us. 🚂 🚂 🚂



## Bulletin Board

Our thanks to Brynn Kernaghan, Executive Director/VP for Communications and Planning at Long Beach Transit, for a very illuminating presentation at our Oct. 10<sup>th</sup> meeting. And to John Welborne for the preview trip on Angel's Flight some members had before the meeting.

At our Nov. 14<sup>th</sup> meeting a representative of the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) will provide an update on their CityRide program. Also nominations will be taken for 2010 officers and directors, with the election at next month's meeting.

Reminder: our holiday banquet will be held at Clifton's (on Broadway near 7<sup>th</sup> St. in downtown L.A.) after our Dec. 12<sup>th</sup> meeting, starting around 4 p.m.

We are slated to have a booth at the Gold Line eastside extension opening on Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>, probably in the East Portal of Union Station. Drop by and say hi. The event will be from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Metro now has its own blog, staffed by ex-

LA Times reporter Steve Hyman and MetroRider L.A.'s Fred Camino -- <http://thesource.metro.net/>

Save the date: May 1-2 next year will see the premiere of Brea Railroad Days, successor to the much missed Fullerton event -- <http://www.scrpa.net/scrrdays.htm>

The San Bernardino Associated Governments is sponsoring a Victor Valley Long Distance Commuter Needs Study. The online survey for it can be found at <http://www.victorvalleycommute.com/>

We have learned of the recent passing of member June Aronson, who resided in the San Fernando Valley and advocated on behalf of clean bus stops.

Rapid Transit Press now has a list of upcoming bus and rail excursions: <http://www.rapidtransit-press.com/excursions.html>

We encourage members to regularly check the calendar on our website

<http://socata.net/calendar.htm> 🚌 🚌 🚌

### **Members in Action continued**

Attending the open forum on bus service held Oct. 4<sup>th</sup> in the Beverly Hills Library were Ken Ruben and Joe Dunn. That same day attending the Westside Subway Extension meeting at Beverly Hill's City Hall were Joe Dunn, Jerard Wright and Craig Weingarten.

Bart Reed attended the Metrolink Board meeting on Oct. 10<sup>th</sup>, the San Fernando Valley sector meeting on Oct. 7<sup>th</sup> and the LOSSAN meeting on Oct. 13<sup>th</sup>. 🚌 🚌 🚌

