

THE TRANSIT ADVOCATE

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*Torrance Transit Gillig 474 at the Long Beach
Transit Mall on November 8, 2011.*

—Andrew Novak Photo

Bulletin Board / Members in Action

Bulletin Board:

Our thanks to Stephen Fox of the Southern California Association of Governments for his informative presentation on the draft Regional Transportation Plan at our November meeting.

The December 10th meeting will begin at 1:30 PM. Perias Pillay, Charles Powell (Chair) and Charles Hobbs are the 2012 Election Committee and they will oversee the voting for 2012 Officers and Directors.

2012 Nominees:

Directors -- Ken Ruben, J.K. Drummond and Joe Dunn

Treasurer -- Dave Snowden

Recording Secretary -- Edmund Buckley

Corresponding Secretary -- Dana Gabbard

Vice President -- Kent Landfield

President -- Nate Zablen.

After the election a round-table forum will be held where all present have 3 or 4 minutes to make comments on the future goals of SO.CA.TA, public transit predictions, or other transit related matters.

Afterward the holiday banquet is due to start at 5:00 PM at Taix, 1911 W. Sunset Boulevard near Alvarado (served by Metro lines 2 and 4). Cost is \$25 and you can pay at the event. Entree choices are pot roast of beef, roast chicken or vegetarian Pasta Monégasque plus fresh french baguette, soup of the day, organic greens with house vinaigrette dressing, fresh vegetable, rice or potato (choice of one), sherbet, and coffee or tea. The response to our requests to local transit agencies etc. promise the usual trinket goody bag plus door prizes and a giveaway of transit schedules from around the country collected and donated by

co-founder Steve Crosmer. Food, fun and freebies are on the menu for all who join us this year!

The American Public Transportation Association announced the individual and organizational winners of the 2011 APTA Awards October 4th in New Orleans during the APTA 2011 Annual Meeting and EXPO. The 2011 winners of the Outstanding Public Transportation System Achievement award in the category of providing more than 20 million annual passenger trips is Santa Monica's Big Blue Bus. Appropriately Outstanding Public Transportation Manager Award was given to Stephanie Negriff, Big Blue's recently retired General Manager who is credited with the innovations and steady hand that led the agency to win the APTA honor.

Other local leaders honored include Outstanding Public Transportation Business Member Award to Sharon Greene, Principal of Sharon Greene + Associates, Laguna Beach, California. and the Hall of Fame Award to retired Metro CEO Roger Snoble. APTA posthumously honored Cameron Beach, who died in March 2011, with the Local Distinguished Service Award for his four decades of work in the transportation industry. Kudos to all the winners!



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Transit Updates

Special Holiday Services for 2011

Downeylink

This year Downeylink will once again be operating Saturday service during the holiday season. The special service begins on December 3rd and runs until December 17th.

Irvine iShuttle

For the first time the Irvine iShuttle is operating special mid-day service from December 1-23rd, Monday thru Friday from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM. The three routes named Winter Way, Jingle Jump, and Holly Highway operate to and from the Irvine Spectrum. For more information on the iShuttle visit: <http://www.irvineshuttle.net/> email info@irvineshuttle.net or by calling 949-72GO-BUS (46-287)

Torrance Transit

Torrance Transit will operate a Holiday Shopper's Shuttle this year. This service will begin on Saturday, November 26th ending on Saturday, December 24th.

Holiday Free Rides

Metro plans its annual free rides Christmas eve and New Year's Eve and we expect other properties in the region (OCTA, RTA, NCTD) will do similar as in past years.



Big Blue Bus

From December 18, 2011 to January 2, 2012, Santa Monica Big Blue Bus will be operating reduced service on all routes except Routes 2, 3, Rapid 3, 4, 7, and the Downtown Ride. For more information contact Big Blue Bus customer service at 310-451-5444.

Foothill Transit

From December 2nd to February 12, 2012 the westbound Line 492 stop at the corner of Arrow Highway and Enid Avenue in Azusa will be temporarily closed due to construction. An alternate bus stop can be found on the corner of Arrow Highway and Lark Ellen Avenue, one block west of Enid Avenue.



Glendale Beeline

Effective December 9th Glendale Beeline will cancel Line 13. Five round trips on Metro Line 201 will be added between Glendale Adventist Medical Center to Glenoaks Canyon at similar times cancelled Line 13. The new revised 201 service starts on Monday December 12th. For more information call 818-548-3960 or visit: glendalebeeline.com



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Transit Updates Continued

Inglewood I-Line

The Inglewood I-Line shuttle now has a timetable available on-line.

<http://www.cityofinglewood.org/civica/inc/displayblobpdf2.asp?BlobID=6500>

Metro

Metro has decided not to make any service changes in December. Changes are likely to occur in June 2012 with public hearings in early next year.

Since November 13th Metro has been running trains on the Red, Purple and Blue Lines every 10 minutes until midnight.



Metrolink

Metrolink has begun adding special bicycle cars to their trains. These bike cars are older Metrolink coaches that have had the low-lever seating removed and space for 18 bicycle added. These cars are identified by a yellow decal or a special wrap.



RTA

The Riverside Transit Agency recently donated one of their last diesel-powered trolleys to the Ramona Bowl Amphitheater in Hemet. The vehicle will be used to transport patrons from the lower level parking lot to the venue. The vehicle will also be used to transport people from local senior and community centers to the Amphitheater.

Rosemead Explorer

Effective December 5th the City of Rosemead began operation of a new Rosemead Explorer route called the Commuter Connection. The new route operates Monday thru Friday from the Target at Rosemead and Marshall Street to the El Monte Bus Station and the El Monte Metrolink Station. Trips depart Target at 6:00 AM, 7:00 AM, 8:00 AM, 4:00 PM, 5:00 PM, and 6:00 PM. Each trip drops off at the bus station and the train station before returning to Target.



Silver State Trailways

Effective December 1st, Silver State Trailways has expanded their daily service from Orange County to Las Vegas, Nevada. Buses now depart the Gray Line terminal in Anaheim at 8:00 AM, 2:30 PM, and 7:30 PM. Return trips depart Las Vegas at 10:00 AM, 1:30 PM, and 7:30 PM. For more information contact Silver State Trailways at 800-892-7979 or at www.silverstatetrailways.com

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This month in Transit Topics we have a few things you might have missed from the world of transit.

A trolley of your own: Have you ever wanted to own your own trolley? Well now is your chance. D.F. Barnhardt & Associates are selling three PCC cars that you can purchase. These cars are in South Lake Tahoe and were part of a failed plan to start a trolley service in that city. One car is former San Francisco MUNI car 1101, the second is former Toronto 4472, and the third is a custom made PCC built from two MUNI cars. If you are interested visit:

www.trains-trams-trolleys.com



(MUNI PCC 1101 in Lake Tahoe -DFBA Photo)

Tri-Rail: Florida's commuter rail system Tri-Rail which operates between Miami, Fort Lauderdale and Palm Beach recently began operating Hyundai-Rotem cars similar to those now operated by Metrolink. For more information on Tri-Rail visit:

<http://www.tri-rail.com/>



(Tri-Rail Cab Car 513 -Buswayflyer Photo)

Nixon Library Holiday Festival of Trains

From now until January 2, 2012 the Richard Nixon Presidential Library will once again host their Holiday Festival of Trains. Included with regular admission to the library the display consists of various model trains including a Lego train display. The display is open 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM Monday through Saturday and 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM on Sunday. The Nixon Library is located at 18001 Yorba Linda Boulevard in Yorba Linda. For more information call 714-993-5075 or visit: www.nixonfoundation.org

Iconic Buses: Recently two iconic buses have made the news. In London England the iconic Routemaster Double-Decker bus has made a comeback. Routemaster buses first entered service in London in the 1950's and over the years became a London Icon. Over the years many Routemasters have made the journey to the United States and are almost as iconic in this country.

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Public and Legislative Affairs By Dana Gabbard

Here are some interesting facts about the Riverside Transit Agency I learned via their recent eNewsletter the RTA Reader: During September, RTA buses handled roughly 801,000 boardings, an increase of 12 percent compared to the same month a year ago. Ridership on CommuterLink express routes climbed 24 percent and Dial-A-Ride was up 19 percent. Several factors appear to be driving the ridership upward, including high gas prices, more student boardings, increased service efficiency and a consistent focus on customer service.



The minutes of the October 24th Access Services Board meeting details ASI Executive Director Shelly Verrinder's report on their contract with the L.A. Sheriff Department targeting fraud. She stated that the Sheriff had been very aggressive in checking Access ID cards on the Antelope Valley Metrolink line. She also stated that the two lines most affected by fraud were Antelope Valley and San Bernardino.

The focus has been on the Antelope Valley line. Recently Access Services had its third felony conviction of a non-eligible rider using an Access Services ID card and what was interesting was that they were convicted on identity theft. Ms. Verrinder stated that fraud of people using the card and using them for personal care assistants was becoming a bigger issue especially on Metrolink where the fares were much higher.

Ms. Verrinder added that the Quality Services Sub-committee (QSS) was discussing the issue to come up with some possible resolutions that would be presented to the Board. She also reminded the Board that Access Services reimbursed Metrolink

around \$1.5 million last year in Free Fare and this year the projection was over \$2 million in fare reimbursement. Ms. Verrinder also stated that Metrolink and Santa Monica were witnessing a lot of fraud with riders trying to sell trips at the bus stops.

An addenda to my report on the Patsaouras Plaza busway station last month. The revised version of agenda item #28 from the October Metro Board meeting now reflects a FTA grant award of \$9,679,000 for the station awarded October 17th "will help accelerate the completion of the Project. Staff intends to complete the additional design work and coordination to enable construction to begin by Summer 2012, with a planned completion of Spring 2014." While no longer delayed until after the Express-Lanes project is finished it is noted "construction of the Patsaouras Plaza requires intensive coordination with the ExpressLanes project to mitigate potential risks to the Demonstration Program". Spring 2014 is a lot sooner than mid-2015, so I won't even wonder why this revised staff report was so tardy appearing on the Metro website.

I'll conclude by noting on November 30th a ceremony was held at the Glendale Amtrak and Metrolink rail station where it was re-named the Larry Zarian Transportation Center after the recently deceased Metro and Metrolink Board member and California Transportation Commissioner who served for 16 years on the Glendale city council. An honor well deserved.  

Bulletin Board / Members in Action *Continued*

Members in Action:

Alek Friedman attended "The Future of Your Downtown" public forum on Wednesday November 9th at the Orpheum theater.

Russ Jones witnessed the Metrolink Santa Express display at Union Station on November 18th.

Thomas Grose is slated to be a special guest at the December 10th groundbreaking of the Orange Empire Railway Museum new Library and Research Center, named in his honor.

Ken Ruben was quoted in November 10th issue of Culver City Observer ("Council Considers Bus Service Changes") and attended the Westside Central Governance Council meeting on November 9th.

Jerry Martin and Ruben attended the Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor Agency Technical Advisory Committee meeting December 1st.

Ruben plus Dana Gabbard, Dave Snowden, Robert Meinert and Kirk Schneider participated in the day after Thanksgiving trip on November 25th. 🚌 🚌

Upcoming Events:

Former member Kym Richards is posting her Metro Board Reports on her Blog Page at: <http://mtaboardreport.blogspot.com/>

Finally don't forget to visit our friends at Rapid Transit Press. They are currently offering a wide variety of transit related books and newsletters. Visit them at: www.rapidtransit-press.com

Are you buried in paper?

Are you interested in getting your SO.CA.TA newsletter in PDF?

We are now offering the SO.CA.TA newsletter in PDF format to our members. The PDF newsletters will be available a week before the meeting and will be in full color. If you would like to get the PDF newsletter instead of the printed version email us at: rtd1121@yahoo.com



Beach Cities Transit 536 at LAX. This is one of the new El Dorado buses placed in service during August and September.

-Russ Jones Photo

Transit Updates Continued

VVTA

Effective November 21st, the Victor Valley Transit Authority (VVTA) has moved into their new bus yard and administrative offices. The new address is 17150 Smoketree Street Hesperia, CA 92345. Website and phone numbers remain the same.

On November 21st VVTA made modifications to several routes in there system.

Route 45: This route no longer serves the VVTA headquarters building.

Route 46: This route now serves the new VVTA headquarters. From 'C' Avenue and Mission, westbound on Olive Street, the route will turn left on 'E' Avenue and continue across Main Street to the new VVTA offices on Smoketree. The bus will turn around in the parking lot and then travel left on 'E' and left on Olive back to regular route.

For more information of these route changes call the VVTA Scheduling Department at 760-948-3030 🚌 🚌



Amtrak Heritage P42 66 at Union Station.

-Russ Jones Photo

Transit Topics Continued

In the mid-2000s the Routemasters were retired from the streets of London. English artist and designer Thomas Heatherwick has teamed up with the Wright Group to build a modern Routemaster that is has three doors and two sets of stairs. The new buses will also be environmentally friendly buses.



(Two photos of the new Routemasters due to hit the streets of London -Photos from the Heatherwick Studio)

The Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) will soon be retiring the last of their New Look transit buses. The iconic New Looks, also known as fishbowls, have been on the streets of Toronto for 52 years. TTC had been operating some of the last New Looks anywhere in North America. Only 12 of the vehicles remain in service and are currently operating on the agencies last non-accessible route. In January 2012 that route

is scheduled to become accessible. With holiday service reductions, the buses could be retired as early as December 16th. In early November the Toronto Transportation Society sponsored a "Farewell to the GMC New Look" excursion. Below are two photos taken by Kevin Nicol of the buses on the night and day time excursions.



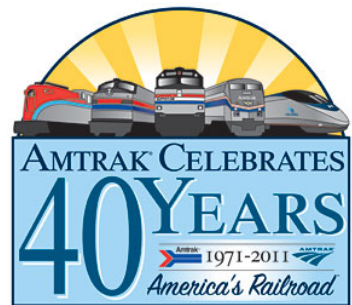
LADOT MCIs: On November 30th LADOT introduced their first new MCI to the public. The first of the new buses was scheduled to enter service in early December. More in next months issue. 🚌 🚌

Amtrak 40th Anniversary Train



On November 19-20, 2011 the Amtrak 40th Anniversary Train was on display in Bakersfield before heading to San Diego and Los Angeles. On this page are three photos of the train that weekend.

-John Anderson Photos



Photos of the Month

Rosemead Explorer cutaway 37-01 in Rosemead on October 28, 2011

-Andrew Novak Photo



OmniTrans New Flyer 1215 passes the former Santa Fe Station in Redlands earlier this year.

-George Gong Photo

How to join SO.CA.TA: Yearly dues are \$30.00 (\$12.00 low income). Dues are prorated on a quarterly basis.

Submission of materials: ALL materials for the TRANSIT ADVOCATE newsletter go to Andrew Novak at P.O. Box 2383, Downey California 90242 or to rtd1121@yahoo.com. Please enclose a self addressed stamped envelope for returns.

Newsletter deadlines are the Fridays a week before SO.CA.TA meetings, at 6:00 p.m. Pacific time, unless otherwise announced.

Opinions: Unless clearly marked as "Editorial" or "Position Paper", all written material within, including all inserted flyers and postcards, are the expressed opinions of the authors and not necessarily that of the Southern California Transit Advocates.

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SO.CA.TA officers, 2011

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Vice President:	Kent Landfield
Recording Secretary:	Edmund Buckley
Executive Secretary:	Dana Gabbard
Treasurer:	Dave Snowden
Directors at Large:	Ken Ruben J.K. Drummond Joe Dunn

Newsletter Editor: Andrew Novak
Newsletter Prod. Mgr: Dana Gabbard
Webmaster: Charles Hobbs

NEXT SO.CA.TA MEETINGS : **Dec 10th** and **Jan 14th** at Angelus Plaza, 4th Floor, 255 S. Hill, Los Angeles

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