# THE **TRANSIT** ADVOCATE

Newsletter of the Southern California Transit Advocates March 2012 Vol. 20, No. 03



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Metro NABI 8092 at CMF on February 25, 2012.

—Andrew Novak Photo

ISSN 1525-2892

### Bulletin Board / Members in Action

#### **Bulletin Board:**

February 18th we held a special event in the Angelus Plaza auditorium with past Governor of Massachusetts and Presidential candidate Michael Dukakis speaking on The Future of Rail and Transit in America. Attendance during the hour-long event hovered just under 40. This was a joint effort of our members that enabled us to have a successful event.

Ken Ruben handled relations with the Governor, publicity with local train groups and was Master of Ceremony/Moderator. Curtis Raymond was Ruben's right hand person. Dana Gabbard did publicity, prepared sign in sheets, signs, coordination and the agenda. John Ulloth supplied food and organized the set-up. Jerard Wright supplied comment cards and also helped with set-up. Kent Landfield brought food/ice, signage, arranged for videotaping and helped with clean up. Dominick Falzone helped with miscellaneous set-up. Nate Zablen brought some refreshments, veggie chips, napkins, and bowls plus introduced the program and oversaw coordination. Charles Hobbs placed the event announcement on the front page of our website.

Dominick Falzone, along with Ken Ruben and Nate Zablen, escorted the Governor from Hill Street to the auditorium. Alan Weeks gave the Governor a ride back to Westwood (he was pressed for time to attend a wedding reception that afternoon that he would officiate at).

At the March 10th meeting we will have guest speakers discussing the proposed statewide high speed rail project (L.A. to Palmdale and L.A. to Riverside segments).

On the front page of our website (and also pasted on our Facebook page) are the text of letters we have sent regarding the status of the Municipal Area Express in the South Bay and questioning Metro's extension of route 201 to serve Glenoaks Park.

Joe Dunn informs us the radio frequency used by operators testing the Expo line is 160.935. Also that Dash frequencies are 472.2375 (Hollywood & San Fernando Valley) [this frequency also covers Veoila's contracted services MTA lines 96, 218, 603] and 472.3625 (all downtown Dash Buses).

#### Members in Action:

Robert Meinert attended the February 8th Regional Connector Final EIR/EIS open house in Little Tokyo.

Edmund Buckley, Andrew Novak and Dino Mandros were the only three attendees of the February 21st Anaheim Resort Transit meeting for the proposed Anaheim to Buena Park Service.

Joe Dunn attended the Access Services February 22nd community meeting at Plummer Park in West Hollywood and the February 25th City of Los Angeles Mobility Element Think Lab workshop at LACMA West on the Miracle Mile.

LA on the Verge of a Transit Breakthrough - Move LA's 4th Annual Transportation Conversation on February 24th was attended by Bart Reed, Numan Parada, Ken Ruben, Perias Pillay, Kent Landfield, Alek Friedman and Jerard Wright.

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## Transit Updates

#### Gold Coast Transit

Effective February 12th Gold Coast Transit in Effective February 12th Long Beach Transit Oxnard has made the following changes to their system:

Route 1: service frequency has been increased to every 20 minutes.

Route 8: Improved weekend service to replace discontinued Route 38X

Route 17: New route that connects the Esplanade Shopping Center, St. John's Regional Medical Center, and Oxnard College via Vineyard, Central, and Rose.



#### LADOT - DASH

Effective February 13th the southbound bus stop at Townsend Avenue and Oak Grove Drive was discontinued on the DASH Highland Park/Eagle Rock route.

#### LADOT - Commuter Express

Effective January 4th at stop was added at Loyola High School on Line 431. One eastbound trip stops there at 7:20 AM and one westbound trip stops at 5:31 PM.

Effective January 16th Route 438 will provide passenger service at Imperial Highway and Main Street in El Segundo in both directions.

#### Long Beach Transit

made several changes to their service. Below is a list of those changes. The downtown transit center has now been renamed the First Street Transit Gallery.

Route 93: Service was increased on the route during weekdays to improve the frequency.

Route 96 ZAP: Select trips now service Woodruff at Spring during morning and afternoon runs. The line now ends at 7th Street and Long Beach Boulevard instead of the First Street Transit Gallery.

Route 103: now heads north on Bellflower instead of Clark from Carson.

Route 111: now deviates to Carson at Clark on its 9:35 PM trip from the Transit Gallery.

Route 171: now has increased service west of Cal State Long Beach from 25 to 20 minutes. Select trips now at Cal State.

Route 181/182: now stops at Shelter H instead of Shelter E at the Transit Gallery along with minor schedule adjustments.

Route 192: late night service was increased on weekdays. The last northbound trip now stops at the Del Amo Blue Line at 10:41 PM and the last southbound service from Los Cerritos Center serves Del Amo until 1:00 AM.

Minor schedule adjustments were made to the following routes: 1, 21-22, 51, 61, 63, 71-72, 172-173, A, B, and D.

For more information call 562-591-2301 or by visiting www.lbtransit.com

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Page 3 www.socata.net

### Transit Updates Continued

#### Metrolink

On February 15th Metro added a Line 794 stop at the Sun Valley Metrolink Station.

On March 25th Metrolink will be providing special train service to/from the Fontana Speedway for the Auto Club 400.

Route 1 will stop at Oxnard, Moorpark, Chatsworth, Van Nuys, Covina, Montclair, Rancho Cucamonga, and the Speedway.

Route 2 will stop at Lancaster, Santa Clarita, Sylmar, Downtown Burbank, LA Union Station, and the Speedway.

Route 3 will stop at Oceanside, San Clemente North Beach, Irvine, Orange, Riverside-La Sierra, San Bernardino and the Speedway.

Tickets are \$19 round trip per person. Tickets are available from the Speedway only and mailed prior to the race. For more information or to purchase tickets visit:

www.autoclubspeedway.com
or call 800-944-7223.

Angles Express Trains are back for the 2012 Angels baseball season beginning March 19th. Trains operate to all weekday home games that start at 7:05 PM. This year additional service will be provided on the IEOC Line for every Friday night games. Fares are all roundtrip and \$7 for adults, \$6 Senior disabled, \$4 for youth ages 6-18, and free for kids 5 and under with a fare paying adult.

For more information and for train schedules visit: <a href="https://www.octa.net/angelsexpress.aspx">www.octa.net/angelsexpress.aspx</a>

# METROLINK

#### Pass Transit

Recently Pass Transit started a new commuter service between the Beaumont Wal-Mart and the San Bernardino Metrolink Station. Buses depart Wal-Mart at 4:00 AM, 5:00 AM, 4:20 PM, and 5:45 PM. Buses depart Metrolink at 4:30 AM, 5:30 AM, 5:00 PM, and 6:45 PM. The fares are \$3.00 oneway and reservations are required 24 hours in advance. Reservations can be made by calling Pass Transit at 951-769-8530 weekdays from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

On April 2, 2012 Pass Transit fares will be increasing. Fixed route fares: \$1.15, 65¢ (Senior/Disabled), and \$1.00 for youth 17 and under. Dial-A-Ride fares: \$2.00 per trip and \$3.00 for an attendant and no-shows will be charged \$2.00. For more information visit: www.ci.beaumont.ca.us

#### RTA

Beginning February 26th Routes 1, 13 and 15 will begin using regular routing on Magnolia Avenue. Routes 1 and 15 will no longer detour on to Brockton and Jurupa avenues and Route 13 will no longer detour on Jurupa, Riverside and Central avenues. Stops on those streets will be discontinued for those routes. Routes 1, 13 and 15 will resume regular routing an Magnolia Avenue. For more information call the RTA Customer Information Center at 951-565-5002.



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## NCTD Service Changes

Effective March 11th, NCTD will be making several changes to their system. Below is a summary of those changes.

Route 101: will have minor schedule adjustments on weekday evenings to better serve V.A. employees and on weekend mornings to allow for better Sprinter connections.

Route 302: on weekdays and Saturdays will no longer serve Jefferson Street or Vista Way west of El Camino Real. On Sundays and holidays, Route 302 will still serve Jefferson Street and Vista Way west of El Camino Real. Weekday service will now operate every 15 minutes during peak and every 20 minutes during midday.

Route 306: its weekday schedule will be adjusted to improve on-time performance and connections at Vista Transit Center along with minor weekend schedule adjustments.

Route 308: will shift its schedule 30 minutes on Saturday and Sunday morning connections to Sprinter. Buses will arrive at Escondido before and depart after the half hour along with minor weekday schedule adjustments.

Route 309: Most trips will now use Mission Avenue, Frazee Road, and College Boulevard between El Camino Real/Mission and Town Center North. Select weekday midday trips will continue to serve Douglas Drive and Vandegrift Boulevard. During weekday peaks, service on Douglas and Vandergrift will be provided by Routes 303, 311, and 315.

Route 311: is a New weekday peak-period route operating between Town Center North and Rancho Del Oro Sprinter station using College Boulevard, Vandegrift Boulevard, Douglas Drive, Pala Road, Los Arbolitos,

Fireside Drive, Mission Avenue, Rancho Del Oro Drive, Via Rancho Parkway., Ivy Ranch, Mesa Drive, Rancho Del Oro, Ocean Ranch, Corporate Center, and Oceanside Boulevard.

Route 313: between Oceanside Transit Center and Mesa Drive/El Camino Real is unchanged. From here Route 313 will use Mesa Drive, Rancho Del Oro Drive, and Highway 76 to Town Center North. It will operate approximately every 45 to 60 minutes in the peak period and every 90 minutes in the midday. For alternative service in the area north and east of Mesa/El Camino Real use routes 309, 311, 315, and 316.

Route 318: will be extended from the El Camino Real Sprinter Station via Oceanside Boulevard, Bobier Drive, Anza, Arcadia, Oak, Foothill, E. Vista Way, and Vista Village Drive to Vista Transit Center. This extension replaces Route 334-335 service between Bobier/Melrose and Vista Transit Center. The service will operate every 60 minutes on Monday thru Saturdays with no Sunday/holiday service.

Route 332: will now operate every 20 minutes during weekday peak period and every 30 minutes during weekday midday. Additional service during school commute periods.

Route 333: will be discontinued. Route 332 will provide service to Vista Courthouse, Route 334-335 on Melrose Drive, Route 318 on Oceanside Boulevard, and Route 315 for service on Avenida Del Oro, Old Grove Road, and Frazee Road.

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## Public and Legislative Affairs By Dana Gabbard

Looks like David J. Armijo has recovered from his tumultuous tenure as CEO of Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority (HART) in Tampa Florida. He has been named general manager for the AC Transit District in Oakland, California, beginning March 1st. He was previously a Metro sector general manager in the San Fernando Valley and Westside/Central and Chief Operations Officer at the Transportation Corridor Agency in Orange County.

On February 9<sup>th</sup>, Bill Bradley of the blog New West Notes noted pushback for the bullet train has started ("JERRY-RIGGING: RIDING THE RAILS") with radio ads being run in Northern California by a building trades coalition, the California Alliance for Jobs. U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood did a tour of the state touting the project. Bradley concluded "It's a good beginning for the high-speed rail comeback, but only that." I agree; the Governor needs to be front and center as advocate #1!

Reading the agenda of the February 9th Access Services Transportation Professionals Advisory Committee meeting I was startled to learn since July 2011 the L.A. County Sheriff's Department has made over 68 arrests concerning fraud and abuse of the Access TAP card. Access staff continues to work with LASD to proactively investigate the alleged abuse of Personal Care Attendant rides but the growing number of fare evasion reports continues to threaten the integrity of the free fare program.

Funny comment of the month: "It wasn't about him getting money". Lawyer Christopher Sutton on his client whose numerous lawsuits and accusations have been dropped following a big payout from the Gold Line

Authority buying his property in Monrovia needed for the Gold Line rail yard (San Gabriel Valley Tribune February 10th "Gold Line Officials Reach Multimillion dollar settlement with Monrovia Property owner").

I'll conclude with more bad Expo news. Gökhan Esirgen, who monitors all the meetings of the Expo Authority Board, reports at the March 1st meeting Authority staff announced the Flower Street/Washington Boulevard junction is still a problem. There is a possibility of opening the line to Culver City in May. However the station plaza in Culver City is having issues with the fire alarm, which could also delay opening. YIPES! My thanks to Ken Ruben to passing along Esrigen's e-mail.



#### Members in Action ctd.

The Transit Coalition February 28th meeting was attended by Pat O'Connor, Tom Rubin, Ken Ruben, Bart Reed and Justin Walker. Reed attended the February Metrolink and Metro Board meetings plus the Westside Mobility Plan special community briefing held January 31st.

Attending the Metro San Fernando Valley Service Council meeting on February 1st were Bart Reed and Nate Zablen.

Dana Gabbard and Ken Ruben attended the February 22 Metro Citizens' Advisory Council meeting.

### **NCTD Changes** Continued

Route 334-335: will be revised and will now be a smaller loop. The revised route will serve Olive Avenue, Melrose, North, Los Angeles, Townsite, E. Vista Way, Williamston, Vale Terrace, Alta Vista, Coventry, Beaumont, and Eucalyptus, and Santa Fe. Route 334 (clockwise loop) will operate every 30-40 minutes all day while Route 335 (Counterclockwise loop) will operate during peak periods. Alternate service for discontinued segments: Route 318 on Bobier, Anza, Arcadia, Oak, Foothill, service. Riders on Melrose north of North Avenue will need to walk to Route 334-335 or to Route 318. Riders on South Santa Fe can take Route 305 to Vista Transit Center while riders on Civic Center Drive can walk to Route 305 or Route 334-335.

Route 340 will be discontinued. Route 347 will now provide service between CSUSM Sprinter station and Craven Circle.

Route 347: will operate from CSUSM Sprinter Station to Palomar College Transit Center on San Marcos Boulevard and Las Posas between San Marcos/Via Vera Cruz and Las Posas/Linda Vista. It will operate every 30 minutes between CSUSM Sprinter and Craven Circle, replacing Route 340. Passengers on Barham Road should either walk to the Sprinter station or Route 347. Passengers on Woodland Parkway, Mission, and Bennett should walk to Route 305. Passengers on Knob Hill and on Nordahl north of Center should either walk to Route 305 or to the new Route 353 at Center/Avenida Ricardo. Route 353 will also provide service between Avenida Ricardo and Escondido Transit Center.

Route 350: will now operate earlier on Saturday morning connecting with MTS Route 20 at Del Lago Transit Station.

Route 351-352: will be shortened to operate only to Midway Drive with select trips serving Orange Glen High School at bell times. It will now operate every 15 minutes during weekday peak, every 20 minutes during weekday midday, and every 30 minutes weekday evenings, weekends, and holidays. It will also be the only bus service on Grand Avenue in downtown Escondido. Routes 355-357 will provide replacement service on El Norte Parkway east of Washington, and on Valley Parkway east of Midway Drive.

The Route 353: will replace portions of existing Route 347. It operates between Avenida Ricardo/Center and Palomar Medical Center via the Escondido Transit Center and serves Avenida Ricardo, Center, Nordahl, Auto Parkway, Citracado Parkway, Andreasen, Enterprise, Hale, West 9th, and Valley Parkway/ Grand. This route will also serve the new Palomar Medical Center West campus when it opens in 2012. The route operates every 30 minutes on weekdays and hourly on Saturdays. No Sunday/Holiday service.

Route 354: from Escondido Transit center buses will now travel north on Quince and east on Washington to Escondido Boulevard.

Routes 355-357: a new two-way loop route serving Broadway, El Norte Parkway., and Valley Parkway. Weekday peak-period service, operating every 60 minutes. Route 355-357 replaces Route 351-352 on El Norte Parkway between Washington and Valley Parkway, and on Valley Parkway between El Norte and Midway Drive.

# WE MOVE PEOPLE www.gonctd.com

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## 2011 Day After Thanksgiving Trip By Dana Gabbard

This year Andrew Novak devised our Day-After-Thanksgiving trip. When I asked him what inspired this tour of suburban San Diego County north of San Diego he mentioned looking over a regional transit map and picking the routes that seemed worth exploring or had unusual attributes. Unfortunately family obligations prevented Andrew from joining the trip but on Friday November 25th Dana Gabbard, Ken Ruben, Dave Snowden and Robert Meinert met up before sunrise at Union Station and boarded Pacific Surfliner #562 departing at 6:05 AM southbound for San Diego. We were on the bottom level of coach car 6951 (with very comfortable seats).

As we left Union Station there were some of the new Metrolink cars arriving that passed us. Then we spotted Division 20 (the Red Line yard) as we made our way away from Los Angeles amid a lightening sky promising an impending dawn. Next we passed the Amtrak maintenance facility with famed steam train 3751 barely visible hidden under a tarp. We chatted and watch the passing scene as the world awoke. At Fullerton Kirk Schnieder joined our small band. Continuing south we marveled at the level of amenities Irvine station sports (places to sit on the platform, an eatery, etc.). The trail alongside the right-of-way in San Clemente is evidently new, Kirk remarked, as he didn't remember seeing it the last time he rode the line a year or two ago.

Ken Ruben returned from visiting the cafe and noted the train was running virtually empty. It was wondered if this is mostly an equipment move which seemed confirmed by the crowd of north-bound folks waiting for our train at San Diego when we arrived

at 9 AM. Tour participants explored the historic Santa Fe station and encountered a volunteer at traveler's aid who was reluctant. to hand out more than 1-2 transit schedules per person. Since the America Plaza trolley station was closed for renovations we caught the Blue Line car #1054 at 9:27 AM for a short 4 minute ride to Civic Center station where we waited to catch the Orange Line. The weather was ideal - bright, clear and cloudless with a temperature of 54 degrees and around 9:40 AM we boarded car #2046 on the Orange Line for the trip to El Cajon. Along the way we passed thru industrial and suburban areas along the former freight right-of-way.

By 10:25 AM we arrived at El Cajon. Dave Snowden caught a charter bus to visit one of the local casinos. The rest of us checked out the transit center which includes a mini mart with restroom. At 10:45 AM we boarded MTS route 816, bus #8166. The route skirted downtown El Cajon traveling along East Main. Our bus carried few passengers (although two riders with bikes did board at one point) and the streets seemed mostly empty confirming our impression despite being a weekday the day after a holiday has a slower pace that usual, especially during the morning hours.



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## 2011 Day After Thanksgiving Trip Continued

Also affecting ridership was that the main destination of our bus was a college. We have found during past DAT trips that routes that serve educational institutions generally have little ridership on the day after Thanksgiving, since they are closed that day. We passed Main Street Liquor, which was large enough that it looked more like a Market. Signs brought to our attention the street we were on also was historic US 80. The streetscape included merchants offering military surplus, lumber, tee shirts and payday loans. As we turned off Main onto Jamacha most of the passengers deboarded. We continued through residential areas alternating with upscale commercial zones as exemplified by as a Gelson's-like market called Harvest Ranch with the slogan "purveyours of fine food".

By now we were down to 4 passengers and the scenery had a rural-like vibe. We arrived at Cayamaca College at 11:13 AM, getting off at its bare bones transit center consisting of a paved loop with benches. Fall leaves blanketed the adjacent park space (which even had picnic tables but at the moment was totally deserted). The solitude of the place and moment was profound even with two buses parked there laying over. MTS bus line 856 vehicle #8123 was the other bus and at 11:30 AM we boarded it to continue our travels.

Just after leaving the college a 20ish gentleman of a woeful demeanor boarded and held up the bus while paying the final few cents of the \$2.25 fare. He kept digging around in pockets in a display of trying to find twenty five cents after depositing two one dollar bills in the farebox while the driver delayed pulling away from the stop and admonished

the procrastinating gentleman "come on, pay so I can get underway--we're going to be late! Pay the full fare or I'm going to have to ask you to get off". The guy even started asking those of us on board to help him out and finally somebody gave him a quarter so the bus could pull out. Then he tried to claim he had put two stacks of bills (two singles and three singles) constituting five dollars into the farebox and that he should get a day pass. The driver was astonished at this whopper of a tale and loudly noted the farebox is designed to count bills even when stuffed in a stack. "This machine isn't stupid" she declared in rebuffing him. After a moment the guy gave up and went to a seat mid-way on the bus.

We were now in Rancho San Diego, the sort of subdued suburb where the McDonald's has to make do with a small lawn sign instead of the usual golden arches. Briefly we zipped along Highway 94, followed by County Road 517 which led us past tumbleweed strewn hillsides imparting a rural feel. "Welcome to Spring Valley" a sign proclaimed as we re-entered suburbia.

#### To be Continued...



## **NCTD Changes** Continued

#### **Transit Updates** Continued

Routes 358-359: From Escondido Transit center will travel south on Quince and east on 2nd to Broadway.

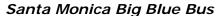
Route 388: From Escondido Transit center will travel south on Quince, east on 2nd, and north on Valley Boulevard to Valley Parkway.

Routes 303, 304, 305, 316, 323, 444, 445, and 446: will undergo minor schedule adjustments.

FLEX Route 371: Ramona trips departing Escondido Transit center will travel south on Quince, east on 2nd, and north on Valley Boulevard to Grand.

Flex Route 373: Southwest Carlsbad zone will be expanded south to La Costa Avenue between Carlsbad Boulevard and El Camino Real. Subject to vehicle availability, trip requests by walk-up passengers at Poinsettia Coaster Station will be accommodated.

For more information and to download the revised schedules visit NCTD at: GoNCTD.com Also information available by calling: 1-855-287-6283. 📮 🛱



On February 12th Big Blue Bus made some changes to there service. Below is a summary of those changes.

Route 4: Schedule changes were made to the weekend and holiday schedules. Trips to downtown Santa Monica that change into Route 8 trips to UCLA will now do so from Broadway at 4th Street.

Rapid 7: a new stop was added on Pico at Avenue of the Stars in both directions.

Route 8: now ends service on 6th at Broadway instead of on 2nd Street at Broadway.

Rapid 10: Minor schedule changes.

#### San Diego MTS

Effective March 1st MTS introduced new rules and procedures for carts, strollers and carry-on items taken aboard MTS buses and Trolleys. The new rules were designed to create a safer environment and improve boarding and travel times for all riders. For more information and to review the policy:

http://www.sdmts.com/cartpolicy.asp 📙 🗒





## 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

### Photos of the Month



Santa Barbara MTD will be testing a NovaBus articulated bus on Route 15X from Isla Vista to UCSB during March 2012. The photo above ©Paul Wellman/ Santa Barbara Independent.



Michael Dukakis during the special SOCATA event on February 18th. Member Ken Ruben is in the background.

-Alan Weeks 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 logos of agencies appear for information and 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 PM 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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NEXT SO.CA.TA MEETINGS: Mar 10th and April 14th at Angelus Plaza, 4th Floor, 255 S. Hill, Los Angeles

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