

# ***THE TRANSIT ADVOCATE***

**Newsletter of the Southern California Transit Advocates**  
**May 2012** **Vol. 20, No. 05**



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*Culver City Bus New Flyer Excelsior 7114 at the city yard on April 26, 2012. This is one of the newest buses in the Culver City fleet.*

*—Andrew Novak Photo*

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## ***Bulletin Board / Members in Action***

### **Bulletin Board:**

Due to the conflict with National Train Day, our May meeting will be on the 19th. Topics for discussion will include the status of the Pacific Surfliner local management takeover legislation, the formation of a committee to plan our Day After Thanksgiving study tour and early consideration of plans for our holiday banquet.

Among the members who assisted with or dropped by our booth (in downtown L.A. adjacent to 7th/Metro station) at the Expo light rail line opening celebration on April 28th were Perias Pillay, Ken Ruben, Samuel James, Bart Reed, Kent Landfield, Nate Zablen, Charles Hobbs, Dominick Falzone, Hugh John, Joe Dunn, Robert Meinert, Alek Friendman and Dana Gabbard.

April 28th Dana Gabbard on our behalf attended the flea market held as part of the Motor Bus Society Spring Convention in Los Angeles. A special reprint of the Transit Guide was made available for curious out-of-towners. Afterword there was a information session on current MBS happenings and a extraordinary slide show put together by Andrew Novak of buses operated by various entities in our region (public and private).

Kent Landfield and (ally) Warren Quon provided invaluable assistance to Dana Gabbard at our Fullerton Railroad Days booth May 5-6 by helping mount our banner. Others members who assisted or dropped by include Ken Ruben, John Bouman, Joe Dunn, Nate Zablen, David Wise and Dave Snowden plus ally Eugene Salinsky.

At all of the events we distributed information about our group and other rail and transit related groups plus answered questions

and engaged in a dialogue with the public fulfilling our educational purpose.

Visions of Empire: The Quest for a Railroad Across America, 1840–1880 is a new exhibit at the Huntington Library from April 21–July 23, 2012. Further information: 626-405-2100 or [www.huntington.org](http://www.huntington.org)

### **Members in Action:**

Ken Ruben attended both the April 11th and the May 9th Westside Sector Governance Council Meetings. He and Bart Reed attended the official Exposition light rail opening ceremony April 27th and the Friends 4 Expo celebration party on April 28th.

April 21-22 Ruben and Andrew Novak were on the San Bernardino Railroad Historical Society excursion with steam train 3751 to and from San Bernardino.

April 25th Ruben attended the Union Station Vision Meeting and later that same day with Dana Gabbard attended the monthly meeting of Metro's Citizens' Advisory Council.

The following members were on all or part of the Motor Bus Society convention that was in Los Angeles from April 27-30: Andrew Novak, Charles Powell, Edmund Buckley, Hank Fung, J.K. Drummond, Ken Ruben, Bill Vallow, Guillermo Merino, and John Andoh.

Andrew Novak and Ken Ruben were on the first public Expo Line train to depart 7<sup>th</sup> and Metro Station at 4:54 AM in April 28th.



## Transit Updates

### **Culver City Bus**

On April 30th, Culver City bus increased service on Line 4 to improve passenger connections to the new Metro Expo Line La Cienega and Jefferson Station. Buses now operate every 30 minutes on the line Monday thru Friday and now until 9:00 PM. The expanded service is operating on a trail basis and is expected to operate at least until June 2012 when the Culver City Expo Line Station is scheduled to open.



### **Greyhound Express Service**

In May 2012 Greyhound will introduce new non-stop express bus service to California.

The new routes are:

- Los Angeles, Oakland, San Francisco
- Los Angeles, San Jose, San Francisco
- Los Angeles, Bakersfield, Fresno, Modesto, Stockton, Sacramento

They are also introducing the service to several cities in Texas. Greyhound launched the express service in December 2010 with new buses that include free Wi-Fi, power outlets, increased legroom, reserved seating, and leather seats. Passengers can buy tickets on line and print tickets at home or at self service kiosks at terminal locations.



### **LADOT - Commuter Express**

Effective April 16th LADOT is relocating the temporary parking for Commuter Express riders at the Balboa Sports Complex. The new parking lot is next to the tennis courts on Burbank Boulevard west of Balboa Boulevard. The stops for Commuter Express Routes 423 and 549 will remain the same. Changes have been made to the bus stops on Commuter Express Routes 573 and 574. The morning stops are now on the southwest corner of Balboa and Burbank. On the schedule Time Point D has been renamed "Balboa & Burbank."



### **LADOT - DASH**

Effective April 23rd, DASH Wilmington service to the Boys and Girls Club located at Figueroa Street and Q Streets in the late afternoon was discontinued. DASH Wilmington continues to operate on its old routing.

*(Continued on Page 4)*

## ***Transit Updates Continued***

### **Long Beach Transit**

Effective August 26th, Long Beach Transit will be making several changes to their Passport Service. Below is a summary of those changes.

Passport Routes A&D will now be renumbered Route 121. Current Route 131 will be modified to serve a portion of the former Passport Route A by traveling south from Second Street to Alamitos Bay Landing. The AquaLink dock will be accessible via a stop along Marina Drive.

Passport Route B will become Route 151 and will no longer serve Ocean Avenue in downtown Long Beach. Routes 121 and 151 will now require payment of fare for the entire length of the routes. Full sized buses will also be used on these routes.

Passport Route C will be renamed "The Passport" and will continue to operate in downtown Long Beach for free. The northern terminus loop on Pine will be extended up to 10th Street, circle around on 9th Street, then return south on Pine. Service on 7th Street, Pacific, 8th Street, Long Beach Boulevard and 5th Street will be discontinued. Also discontinued is the direct service to Shoreline Village. The route will also serve the Residence Inn and the Hilton Hotel, in addition to an alternative stop at the Maya Hotel, on its way back to downtown.



### **Metrolink and Flyaway**

Effective April 30th, Metrolink monthly pass holders with a same day boarding pass can ride to or from LAX free on the Union Station Flyaway. Monthly pass holders can present their boarding pass (printed or electronic) at the ticket kiosk at Gateway Plaza along with their Metrolink pass to receive the free transfer. The free transfer only applies to the Union Station Flyaway and is not valid on Irvine, Westwood, or Van Nuys.



### **NCTD**

Starting April 29th NCTD Breeze passengers will have a last chance to board buses at select Transit Centers. Once a bus leaves their designated stall, passengers can still board the bus at the last chance stall by signaling the bus driver. Below is a list of the last chance stalls at each transit center:

Oceanside - Stall 12  
Plaza Camino Real - Stall 8  
Carlsbad Village - Stall 6  
Encinitas - Stall 3 (Route 101 Only)  
Encinitas - Stall 7 (All others routes)  
Vista - Stall 10  
Escondido - Stall 15

*(Continued on Page 9)*



## *Transit Topics By Andrew Novak*

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

**Bolt Bus comes west:** Starting May 17th Bolt Bus begins service between Portland Oregon and Seattle Washington. Bolt Bus provides discounted bus service with state of the art buses that include added leg room, leather seats, power outlets, and free Wi-Fi. Seats on Bolt Bus are reserved on-line (boltbus.com) and can be as low as \$1 if booked early. Bolt Bus (owned by Greyhound) began operation in the northeast in 2008.



**New street car lines:** The District of Columbia has recently ordered two streetcars from Oregon Iron Works for use on a new street car route that is scheduled to start some time next year. The first line is going to serve the H Street NE Corridor and will be 2.2 miles long. Eventually the city plans to have 37 miles of street car lines in the nation's Capital. Street cars last operated in Washington D.C. in 1962.

Later this year work is expected to begin on a new street car system in St. Louis, Missouri. The new system will use restored streetcars and operate on a 2.2 mile line from Delmar Park to Forest Park. Construction is expected to take a year to complete.

**Seattle Monorail at 50:** Seattle's Monorail opened on March 24, 1962 as part of the Seattle's Worlds Fair and was built by Alweg Rapid Transit Systems. The monorail was a critical link between downtown Seattle and the fairgrounds. Once the fair ended the system was turned over to Century 21 Company and then sold to the City of Seattle in 1965. From 2008-2011 the whole mile long system under went a major rehabilitation project designed to keep the system operating for years to come. The Seattle Monorail carries around two million riders a year. Happy Birthday!



*(Seattle Monorail's Blue Train -Wayne Doran Photo)*

Next month Transit Topics will take a ride on the new Anaheim Resort Transit Routes 18 and 19 which serve the MainPlace mall in Santa Ana and Buena Park. Also we will see the world's largest bus stop sign! 🚌 🚌

Sometimes we forget what a tough job driving a bus can be, especially in a metropolitan setting like Los Angeles. It entails operating a large vehicle often through heavy traffic and keeping an eye out for the dangerous actions of crazy drivers. Then add coping with the behavior of passengers and overseeing fare payment. Remembering if anyone has signaled for a bus stop. Keeping an eye out for folks waiting at a bus stop. Recently this all came to mind as a correspondent passed along a sobering article from the Toronto Sun, "Beaten bus driver takes shot at the system". Charles Dixon drives for the Coast Mountain Bus Company of Vancouver, British Columbia.

In February 2011 Dixon was slugged in the head by a passenger which left him with a concussion and lingering health complications. And by the way, Dixon has been assaulted 14 times over the years he has driven a bus. His first day back to work Dixon showed up wearing boxing gloves and a sparring helmet. This is his way of protesting what he felt was a lenient sentence given to the man who attacked him (an 18-month conditional sentence, two years probation and 200 hours of community service). I don't blame Dixon for wanting to send a message to the justice system.

Federal Transit Administration head Peter Rogoff's April 23rd stern letter to Metro sounds like he is burnishing his left credentials for his post-FTA job search. It contains lots of overblown tough talk. But as from the start all the feds are pressing for is an exercise in paperwork. And I'll note even the Bus Riders Union is not celebrating, which I think proves they see it Rogoff's grandstanding as sound and fury signifying nothing. As do I.

In the minutes of the March 9th Metro South Bat Cities Service Council meeting Lt. Diane Holloway of the L.A. Sheriff's Department reports in January, on the Blue Line alone, 6,000 non CVC (California Vehicle Code) citations were issued and 500 people were arrested which included 73 felonies.

Via the Eye on L.A. Aviation blog [<http://eyeonlaaviation.blogspot.com/>] I came across a May 9th Seattle Times article on SeaTac Airport consolidating rental car firms into a single building served by a dedicated shuttle ("Sea-Tac airport shows off \$400 million rental-car hub"). I years ago stumbled across this concept and have long wondered why LAX doesn't adopt it. The peplemover to connect the Crenshaw line to the airport should have a stop at such a facility. That would eliminate all those car rental shuttles that congest LAX.

There has been some talk about such a facility, but I have heard little about it of late. What I have heard is that for reasons that I can't fathom the Los Angeles Mayor's office is pushing the modified Light Rail trunk alternative for connecting LAX to Metrorail. This entails dumping travelers at one stop in the middle of the horseshoe, far from any terminal -- and for some reason Metro staff claim this would have the best potential ridership. Does that appear credible? I am suspicious the peplemover option is being given the bums rush because the current proposal only provides two-three stops, and therefore lowered ridership potential. There is no reason a peplemover couldn't provide direct service to all the terminals.

*(Continued on Page 7)*

## ***Public and Legislative Affairs Continued***

Looks like L.A. World Airports is again trying to play games, with Metro going along with this charade. YEOW!

I'll conclude by noting Cara Rice is no longer in charge of Carson Circuit. I only recently learned of her departure and have no clue as to the circumstances under which it occurred. Oh, well. 🚊 🚊

## ***Members In Action***



Our booth at the recent Fullerton Railroad Days. Photo by Carl@TrainWeb.com

A full report on our booths at Fullerton Railroad Days and National Train Day will be in our June Issue.

## ***Expo Line Preview Tour By Dana Gabbard***

On April 17th mid-morning our members assembled on Platform 1 on the mezzanine level of 7th/Metro station to have a preview tour of the Expo light rail line. While waiting we spotted member Erik Griswold on the opposite platform, about to board the Blue Line, who waved and took a picture of the about to depart car as we filed aboard. This was car 125A which departed on time at 10:02 AM Excitement mounted as we passed through the intersection of Washington and Flower where the line enters its own trackage. Soon we were looking out the window as we passed through 23rd Street, Jefferson and Expo Park stations. At Vermont the guide pointed out the station is split with an eastbound platform on one side of the street and westbound the other. Continuing past Western then Crenshaw it was noted the station design is very utilitarian. Then we passed over La Brea and finally arrived at the temporary La Cienega terminus. At the platform edge we discovered the walkway has art celebrating the old Red Cars. After 15 minutes exploring the station we boarded car 124A at 10:48 AM to make our way back to 7th/Metro which we reached in 32 minutes at 11:20 AM Members and guests who attended included Ken Landfield, Frank Wada, J.K. Drummond, Ken Ruben, Warren Quon, Kirk Schnieder, Eugene Salinsky, Perias Pillay, Joe Dunn, Craig Weingarten, Chaffee Yiu, Samuel James, Charles Powell, Carlos Osuna, Dominick Falzone, Nate Zablen and Dana Gabbard. Our thanks to Metro staffer Jacqueline Martinez for arranging our "windsheld" tour of the new line. 🚃 🚃

*(Below is the group after the preview tour on April 17, 2012. Photo from Chaffee Yiu)*





## Transit Updates Continued

### NCTD Continued

To accommodate the Last Chance Boarding stall, NCTD moved the locations of several others routes at various transit centers. Below is a list of those changes.

At Plaza Camino Real Route 323 now boards at Stall 1 and southbound Route 309 boards at Stall 2.

At Encinitas southbound Route 101 now boards at Stall 2.

At Escondido Route 388-389 now boards at Stall 14 and Flex 370-371 boards Stall 15.

### Omnitrans

Effective May 7th OmniGo Route 310 began operation in north Yucaipa. The new route operates every 30 minutes from 6:00 AM to 9:00 AM and every 60 minutes from 9:00 AM to 7:00 PM Monday thru Friday. OmniGo Route 308 will operate every 30 minutes from 6:00 AM to 9:00 AM and every 60 minutes for the rest of the day. OmniGo Route 309 continues to operate every 30 minutes.

Other service enhancements at Omnitrans: Routes 3-4: Frequency increased to every 15 minutes from 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM.

Route 65: Timepoint D at Chino Hills City Hall has been moved to Grand Avenue and Civic Center Drive.

Other schedule adjustments have been made to routes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 66, 68, 80, and 308.

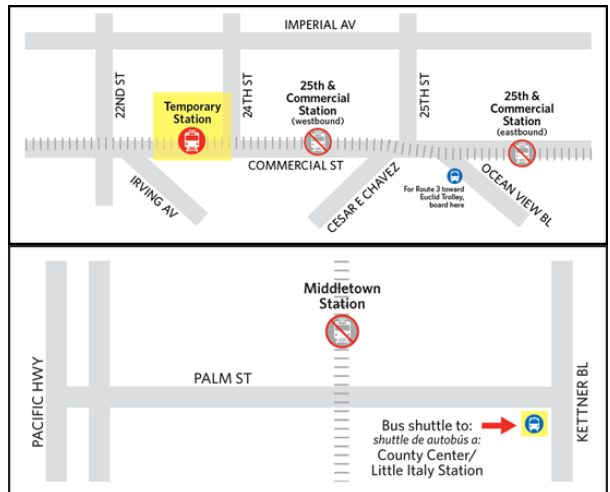


### RTA

Starting April 11th, RTA will begin operation of temporary Line 54 between Riverside-Downtown Metrolink Station and the Riverside County Administrative Center. The free service operates every 15 minutes between the following hours: 6:30 AM to 8:30 AM, 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM, and 4:30 PM to 6:30 PM. The service operates Monday through Thursday and is expected to operate for 2 years due to construction on State Route 91 through Riverside.

### San Diego Trolley

During the month of May, San Diego Trolley will be closing the following stations as part of the ongoing Trolley Renewal Project. Civic Center Station closes May 14th for approximately three months, 25th and Commercial will be relocated (see map below) starting May 16th for three months, and Middletown closes May 21 for two months. A temporary bus shuttle will run between the County Center/Little Italy Station and Middletown Station during the closure, see second map.



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## *Transit Updates Continued*

### **Sun Line (Palm Springs)**

On May 1st Sun Line celebrated their 35th Anniversary. Happy Birthday Sun Line! Below are two Sun Line buses in 1978. Photo from the Jim Husing Collection.



### **Waterfront Trolley**

The San Pedro waterfront trolley will be closed from May 14 to June 28, 2012 as a safety precaution while work is done on a water inlet cut near the Maritime Museum. During construction a bus service will connect passengers to various locations along the line.

### **VVTA**

Effective May 14th VVTA will begin operation of the new NTC-Commuter service from Victorville and Barstow to Fort Irwin. This weekday peak hour service is being operated on a six-month demonstration. For more information and schedule details contact VVTA at <http://www.vvta.org> or at (760) 948-4021.



### **Foothill Transit Fare Reduction**

Foothill Transit is proposing a fare reduction on the Silver Line between El Monte and downtown Los Angeles in an effort to create a seamless travel on the "Silver Corridor" with Metro's Silver Line. If approved cash fares would drop from \$2.75 to \$2.45 (\$1.15 for senior/disabled).

Foothill will be conducting public hearings at the below locations:

May 23rd at 6:30 PM at the El Monte City Hall (Council Chambers) at 11333 Valley Boulevard.

May 24th at 6:30 PM at Pomona City Hall (Council Chambers) at 505 South Garey Avenue.

Comments can also be sent to Foothill at:

Email: [silverstreak@foothilltransit.org](mailto:silverstreak@foothilltransit.org)

Fax: 626-967-4608

Mail: Silver Streak @ Foothill Transit  
100 S. Vincent Ave., Suite 200

West Covina, CA 91790 🚌 🚌

### ***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](mailto:rtd1121@yahoo.com)

## *Photos of the Month*

*A Greyhound Mercedes Benz bus (operated by Americanos) departs the San Ysidro Transit Center in May 2012.*

*-Wayne Doran  
Photo*



*Santa Monica Blue  
Bus articulated  
5302 in downtown  
Santa Monica in  
April 2012.*

*-Richard Silagi  
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](mailto: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.

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

NEXT SO.CA.TA MEETINGS : **May 19<sup>th</sup>** and **June 9<sup>th</sup>** at Angelus Plaza, 4th Floor, 255 S. Hill, Los Angeles

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**Southern California Transit Advocates**  
**3010 Wilshire #362**  
**Los Angeles, CA 90010**

213-388-2364  
<http://www.socata.net>  
[dgabbard@hotmail.com](mailto:dgabbard@hotmail.com)

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