

# ***THE TRANSIT ADVOCATE***

**Newsletter of the Southern California Transit Advocates**  
**October 2012** **Vol. 20, No. 10**



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*West Covina bus 501 on Pacific Avenue in West Covina on September 7, 2012.*

*—Photo by Andrew Novak*

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

### **Bulletin Board:**

Our thanks to the guest speaker at our September 8<sup>th</sup> meeting David Rutherford of Omnitrans for an illuminating presentation on the sbX Bus Rapid Transit project.

At our October 13<sup>th</sup> meeting Metro Executive Director, Countywide Planning Martha Welborne will provide a Metro Planning Update. At the November 10<sup>th</sup> meeting Macy Neshati Vice President, Sales & Marketing for Complete Coach Works, will make a presentation on the 100% electric Zero Emission Propulsion System for remanufactured transit buses. We are already making preparations for guest speakers for next year, including Linda Culp of SANDAG on the new management of the Pacific Surfliner plus speakers from Big Blue Bus and Foothill Transit. We anticipate in 2013 having booths at Fullerton Railroad Days, National Train Day and the Banning Train Festival.

Our thanks to Culver CityBus for the August 24<sup>th</sup> tour of their yard led by Brian Haskins and arranged by Paul Condran. Attendees included J.K. Drummond, Craig Weingarten, Perias Pillay, Lisa Taylor, Ken Ruben, Dominick Falzone and Dana Gabbard.

President Zablen has announced some initiatives to streamline the monthly meeting: If we have a guest speaker he'll limit the President's remarks to 10 minutes. If there are no new attendees we can dispense with introductions. The guest speaker could begin at 2:00 PM rather than 2:15 PM as they usually arrive early. The open forum does not require minutes and will continue but does not need to be a part of the formal meeting.

A reminder: our annual holiday banquet is being held Saturday December 8<sup>th</sup> beginning at 5:00 PM at Taix, 1911 West Sunset Boulevard (east of Alvarado).

We have learned via Ken Ruben that the Torrance City Yard Open House event is becoming bi-annual (every other year). Linda G. Fischer of the Torrance City Manager Office confirmed "Yes, that is correct. Most likely it will be June 2014".

### **Members in Action:**

Ken Ruben attended the Westside Cities Governance Council meeting and the Metro Citizens' Advisory Council meeting on September 12<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> respectively. He also attended the Special Assemblyman Davis Rail Hearing in Expo Park on September 27<sup>th</sup>. Finally Ruben attended The Westside Transit Forum sponsored by LADOT on October 4<sup>th</sup>.



### ***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)

# ***Transit Updates***

## ***Flyaway***

The Irvine Flyaway was officially canceled on August 31<sup>st</sup>. The cancellation of this service came after former contractor Coach America was given permission from the bankruptcy court to abandon the contract. Currently there is no replacement contractor for this service. The Los Angeles World Airports is encouraging passengers to use Amtrak or Metrolink from Irvine to Los Angeles to connect with the Union Station Flyaway.

## ***Foothill Transit***

The Foothill Transit Store at El Monte will be moving into the new El Monte Station on October 15<sup>th</sup>. The current location will close on October 9<sup>th</sup>. The new station is scheduled to open on October 14<sup>th</sup>.

## ***iShuttle (Irvine)***

The iShuttle will be making changes to their schedules effective October 8<sup>th</sup>. The new schedules can be downloaded on line at: <http://www.irvineshuttle.net/>



## ***Metrolink***

Effective October 1<sup>st</sup>, Metrolink made several changes to their service. These changes coincide with Amtrak changes made along the LOSSAN corridor.

Weekday changes include the following: Train 682 now arrives at Laguna Niguel at 8:15 AM. Train 302 arrives in San Bernardino at 9:30 AM and Train 335 may depart

Fontana up to five minutes ahead of the advertised.

On weekends the following changes were made to Orange County Line Service: Train 661 now departs Oceanside at 8:15 AM and arrives in Los Angeles at 10:30 AM. Schedule for Train 665 has changed at various stations and now arrives in Los Angeles at 1:35 PM. Train 663 and 667 now arrive in Los Angeles at 3:35 PM and 7:50 PM respectively. Train 667 departs Oceanside at 5:30 PM. Train 660 now arrives at Oceanside at 11:05 AM. Train 662 departs Los Angeles at 10:45 AM and arrives Oceanside at 12:55 PM. Both Trains 666 and 664 now arrive in Oceanside at 4:15 PM and 7:00 PM respectively. Trains 660, 662, 664, and 666 may depart San Clemente and San Clemente Pier up to five minutes ahead of the advertised.

On weekends the following changes were made to Inland Empire -Orange County Line Service:

Trains 857 and 859 now arrive at Oceanside at 10:20 AM and 11:45 AM respectively and may depart San Clemente and San Clemente Pier up to five minutes ahead of the advertised.

Trains 858 and 860 now arrive at San Bernardino at 5:35 PM and 7:15 PM respectively and may depart Anaheim Canyon, West Corona, North Main Corona, Riverside-La Sierra, and Riverside-Downtown up to five minutes ahead of the advertised.



*(Continued on Page 4)*

## ***Transit Updates Continued***

### **Montebello**

On September 9<sup>th</sup> Montebello Bus Lines issued a new weekend schedule Line 10.

### **OCTA**

Effective October 14<sup>th</sup>, OCTA will be making the following changes to their service.

Route 1: The Sunday schedule will be identical to the Saturday schedule.

Route 29: Service south of Knott's Berry Farm will operate every 15 minutes and north of Knott's Berry Farm every 30 minutes from 6:00 AM to 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM to 6:00 PM Monday through Friday.

Route 50: Service will now operate every 50 minutes on Saturday and Sunday.

Route 57: On Saturday mornings two trips will be added in each direction. On Sunday the 9:23 PM southbound trip will now begin at 9:06 PM at Brea Mall and will end at the Newport Transportation Center.

Route 60: On Saturday mornings two trips will be added in each direction.

Routes 453, 454, 462, 463, 464, and 473: A trip will be added to serve Metrolink IEOC Train 815 and a trip to serve Metrolink IEOC Train 812.

### **OCTA - ART Transfer Agreement**

Effective October 1<sup>st</sup>, OCTA and the Anaheim Resort Transit (ART) entered into a transfer agreement. Passengers are now able to transfer at no additional cost between OCTA and the ART Routes at connecting bus stops.

Transferring to Anaheim Resort Transit ART will honor OCTA fare media at all bus stops along the line on the following ART routes: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19 or at bus stops where ART directly connects with OCTA.

Transferring from Anaheim Resort Transit

OCTA will honor ART fare media at all bus stops along the line on the twenty OCTA routes that serve the Anaheim Resort Area (29, 30, 33, 35, 37, 38, 42, 43, 46, 47, 50, 53, 54, 56, 57, 83, 430, 453, 454, and 757) or at bus stops where OCTA buses directly connect with ART buses. Passengers transferring to Route 757 will need to pay an additional \$1.50, or \$2.10 for seniors and persons with disabilities with proper identification.



### **Palos Verdes**

The Palos Verdes Peninsula Transit Authority (PVPTA) is the newest agency to add their information to Google. The transit directions are already working and soon the bus stop icons will appear.

### **Palo Verde Valley (Blythe)**

The Palo Verde Valley Transit Agency (PVVTA) is now on social media to increase awareness of public transit in the region and to provide up-to-date transit information.

On Facebook search: "Palo Verde Valley Transit Agency"

On Twitter Keyword: #pvvtablythe



*(Continued on Page 8)*



## *Transit Topics* By Andrew Novak

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

**BART turns 40:** On September 11, 1972 the Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART) began operations from the Mac Arthur Station in Oakland to the Fremont Station 28 miles to south. Today BART operates 104 miles of track with 44 stations and crosses under the San Francisco Bay in the Transbay Tube. Congratulations BART!



**Amtrak History Site:** Recently Amtrak has launched a new History website to celebrate the railroad's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The new website contains vintage photographs, route guides and other interesting artifacts from Amtrak's past. You can visit the history site at: <http://history.amtrak.com/>

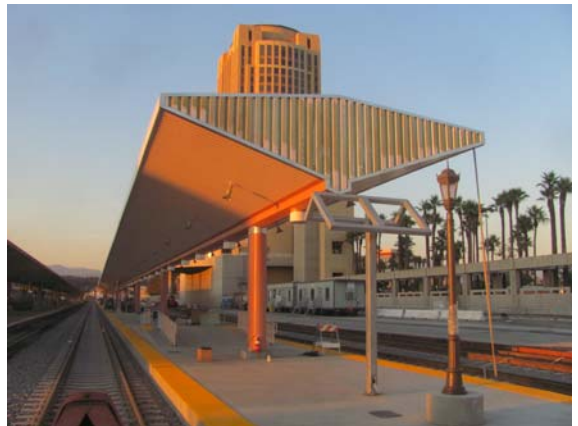


Jim Walker Photo

**Railroad Trivia:** Amtrak's Sunset Limited has the distinction of being the oldest named train in continuous operation in the United States. The Sunset Limited first began operation in 1894 as a Southern Pacific train.

**Marin Water Taxi:** Recently the Tideline Marine Group of Sausalito was granted authority by the San Francisco Port Commission to operate a water taxi service between San Francisco and points in Marin County. Tideline has the authority to operate for a five year period with an optional extension to operate an additional five years through 2021. The new service is by reservation only and the boats can handle up to 12 people. Fares for this dock-to-dock service runs anywhere from \$65 to \$95 from San Francisco to Marin County. If successful Tideline hopes to expand service to San Rafael and operate addition boats. For more information visit <http://tidelinesf.com>

**Platform 7:** I will conclude this month with a photo of re-constructed Platform 7 at Union Station in Los Angeles taken on September 15<sup>th</sup>. This project has restored tracks 13, 14, and 15 to service. 🚆 🚆



There is now a Ventura County Bus Riders Union (VCBRU), an organizing project that the Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy oversees with the Alliance for Sustainable and Equitable Regional Transit (ASERT). The coalition is working diligently to organize a collaborative of transit users, bicyclists and pedestrians to improve the various forms of transportation used throughout Ventura County. Further details at <http://vcbru.wordpress.com/>

You could knock me over with a feather. I was reading Metro's blog The Source ("Metro Board committees tackle TAP issues, Expo safety and phone theft") and learned at a recent Metro Board Committee meeting that "the [Los Angeles Sheriff's Department] introduced a new team of deputies who have been assigned to riding buses and dealing with issues at bus stops. They will be in both uniform and plain clothes and the program is designed to increase the presence of police on the bus system". I don't know when I last saw any police presence on a Metro bus--this is long overdue!

I had a rueful laugh at L.A. County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky's blog noting the confusion for tourists and others that the Transit Access Pass is causing ("What's on TAP? For some, confusion"). The Board didn't show any interest when informed anyone wishing to use Metrorail must now purchase a TAP card even for a single use ride. Now that this is causing displeasure the Metro Board members act surprised? Who do they think they are kidding?

So Governor Brown at the 11th hour signed the bills to have local agencies take over managing the Pacific Surfliner and San Joaquin intercity Amtrak routes. I have several

posts on this at Streetsblog which are easy to find by Googling my name and surfliner. The next step of the process for the Surfliner will be on October 15<sup>th</sup> when the Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor Agency Board meets. This is when the touchy issue of the composition of the reconfigured joint powers board that will assume control of the service will be met head on after being avoided during the time the bill worked through the legislature. That process will lay bear what level of mis-trust, suspicion and regional tensions exist among the key players in this drama. You can be sure I'll be keeping an eye on this process.

Uplifting statistic of the month: In fiscal year 2012, North County Transit District recorded more than 12 million passenger boardings, up from 11.5 million in FY 2011.

Some opponents of the 710 tunnel under South Pasadena proposal have convinced themselves that defeating Measure J on the November ballot equals killing the 710 big dig. This is an erroneous equation; in fact enactment of J would put in place the Fasana amendment which actually facilitates the syphoning of money from the 710 to the Foothill Gold Line extension project. Hopefully my friends in South Pasadena will soon wise up and switch to supporting J.

Depressing statistic of the month: The draft Environmental Impact Report estimates nearly 18,000 daily boardings on the Azusa to Montclair segment of the Foothill Gold Line extension by 2035 ("Brown Signs Off on Bill Extending Gold Line to Montclair" San Bernardino Sun Aug. 27, 2012) 18,000? Oy!

*(Continued on Page 7)*

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

Santa Monica's Big Blue Bus has appointed Suja Lowenthal Transit Government & Community Relations Manager. Currently, she serves as a member of the Long Beach City Council and member of the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Water District.

I'll conclude by belatedly noting the sad news that Linda Somilleda, Director of Customer Service and Operations for Foothill Transit, died of complications resulting from treatment of a rare disease on Tuesday, July 24, 2012. I know she was a key reason for the success of Foothill. Foothill Transit Executive Board Chair Patricia Wallach noted "We are devastated, shocked and collectively we mourn her loss with deep sorrow." My condolences to her family, friends and co-workers. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made in Linda's name to City of Hope. 🚌 🚊

*As part of the proposed fare increase at OCTA, the agency added this table to their website comparing the various fares of transit agencies in California. Below is a copy of that table.*

CITY	TRANSIT AGENCY	CASH FARE	DAY PASS	30-DAY PASS
Los Angeles	Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority	\$ 150	\$ 5.00	\$ 75.00
Oakland	Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District	2.10		80.00
San Diego	San Diego Metropolitan Transit System	2.25	5.00	72.00
San Diego	North County Transit District	1.75	5.00	59.00
San Jose	Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority	2.00	6.00	70.00
Long Beach	Long Beach Transit	1.25	4.00	65.00
Riverside	Riverside Transit Agency	1.50	4.00	50.00
San Bernardino	Omnitrans	1.50	4.00	47.00
San Francisco	San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency	2.00		64.00
Sacramento	Sacramento Regional Transit	2.50	6.00	100.00
Ventura	Ventura County Transportation Commission	1.25		50.00
Average		\$ 1.78	\$ 4.88	\$ 66.55
Orange County	OCTA (current fares)	\$ 1.50	\$ 4.00	\$ 55.00
Orange County	OCTA (proposed fares)	\$ 2.00	\$ 5.00	\$ 69.00

### ***Speakers wanted!***

FOR TRANSIT INDUSTRY READERS OF THIS NEWSLETTER

We are now arranging our guest speakers for our monthly meetings for 2013.

We invite newsletter readers from the transit industry to contact us if they are interested in making a presentation. Meetings are the second Saturday of the month at 255 South Hill Street in downtown Los Angeles. Presentations start at 2:15 PM. We have access to a projector for Power Point. We also are hoping to undertake occasional tours of local transit operating facilities; if you agency would like to give a behind the scenes tour contact us:

[dqabbard@hotmail.com](mailto:dqabbard@hotmail.com) or 213-388-2364.

## ***Transit Updates Continued***

### **RTA**

Route 14 will be on detour from September until December. Construction will close Brockton Avenue between Arlington Avenue and Indiana Avenue and it will also close Iowa Avenue between Palmyrita Avenue and Spring Street.

The map for Route 12 in the Ride Guide effective September 9<sup>th</sup> has changed. Westbound buses traveling on Main Street from timepoint 9 will turn left on Russell, right on Orange, and right on 1st streets to regular routing on Market Street. Eastbound buses departing the Riverside Downtown Terminal on Market Street will turn right on 1st Street and left on Main Street to regular routing.



### **Santa Barbara MTD**

Effective August 27<sup>th</sup>, the agency made changes to Lines 1&2, 6, 11, 23, & 25. For more information contact MTD at: 550 Olive Street, Santa Barbara CA 93101 Online at: <http://www.sbmtd.gov/>

### **Santa Clarita Transit**

On September 1<sup>st</sup> Santa Clarita Transit discontinued the use of paper Interagency Transfers. Interagency Transfers will now be loaded on the passengers TAP card and will remain 55¢. Santa Clarita will continue to accept paper transfers from other agencies.

### **VVTA**

Effective October 1<sup>st</sup>, Victor Valley Transit Authority (VVTA) extended their BV Link service into the San Bernardino Valley make stops at Fontana Metrolink, Kaiser Hospital Fontana, Arrowhead Regional Medical Center, San Bernardino Metrolink and the 4<sup>th</sup> and G Street Transfer Center in downtown San Bernardino. The extended service operates four round-trips a day on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday. Fare is \$6 one-way from the San Bernardino Valley to Victorville. For more information and a schedule visit [www.vvta.org](http://www.vvta.org) or call 760-948-3030.



### **Horizon Coach Lines**

In mid-September, Transportation Management Services (TMS) completed their purchase of select Coach America properties. Included in this purchase were several Amtrak Thruway contracts and Airport Bus of Bakersfield. TMS is now operating under the name Horizon Coach Lines.

### **Gateway Plaza Closure**

Effective October 4<sup>th</sup>, Metro has closed off the entrance from the eastbound El Monte Busway into Gateway Plaza for construction work on the new Metro Express Lanes. Foot-hill Transit Line 699 will no longer be stopping the plaza due to this closure and will instead be using the Silver Streak Union Station Stop. 🚌 🚌



## ***South Pasadena Clean Air Show*** *By Dana Gabbard*

We had a booth Sunday September 16<sup>th</sup> at the South Pasadena Clean Air Car Show & Green Living Expo. The day of the event I was up by 4:30 AM and attached with bungee cords to a hand truck our banner, the study mobile chair and a bag with flyers to give to attendees.

By 5:15 AM I was at the nearby bus stop, taking Metro route 20 westward. To minimize schlepping getting to the Gold Line I had worked out a circuitous routing, taking advantage of the recent extension of route 30 to West Hollywood.

By 5:55 AM I arrived at San Vicente & Wilshire. Crossing to the southwest corner I waited to catch the 30 at 6:22 AM, the first eastbound trip on Sunday. Via the Pico corridor (with the bus getting fair ridership) I made my way to Little Tokyo, arriving at the stop adjacent to the Gold Line station at 7:00 AM just as a northbound train arrived.

After an uneventful trip I deboarded at Mission Street station. I then crossed the street which was closed to traffic for the classic car show being put on as part of the event. I grabbed a cinnamon role and hibiscus iced tea at Buster's Bakery then made my way down Mission to the School District parking lot where the event was being held.

I found our booth, put out the flyers, set up my chair, used some sun screen and settled in. The actual event began at 10:00 AM but folks started strolling in before then. It turned out the neighboring booth was the anti-710 tunnel folks who had a very active presence.

There were lots of electric & hybrid vehicles on display plus Complete Coach Works had their Zero Emission electric rebuilt transit

bus (a former Long Beach Transit diesel low-floor) for attendees to board and explore.



*(Complete Coach Works ZEPS Bus)*

After a bit the school district opened their snow cone booth, and ally Warren Quon kindly bought me a strawberry cone which I much appreciated as it was a fairly warm day (albeit not too hot).

Around 11:00 AM Jerard Weight from Move L.A. turned up and for the rest of the event our emphasis was selling Measure J on the November ballot. Eugene Salinsky dropped by to say hello and around 2:00 PM. Director Ken Ruben helped out with the booth for its last hour before the event ended at 3:00 PM.

The event had good attendance and the attendees were having fun. Afterward Ken and I made our way to Buster's for some ice cream (from Fosselman's of Alhambra) and then via the Gold Line and Purple Line had dinner in Koreatown.

It was a good day. 🚌 🚌

## Day After Thanksgiving Trip

This year for our Day After Thanksgiving Trip we will be traveling to western San Bernardino County to ride Omnitrans and the OmniGo service in Chino Hills.

Below are the details of our trip which will be on Friday November 23<sup>rd</sup>.

We hope to see you there!

Our trip begins at Los Angeles Union Station and we will meet between 7:00 AM and 7:30 AM at the fish tank under Gateway Plaza.

Metrolink Train 302

Departs (DP) LA: 7:45 AM

Arrives (AR) Montclair 8:46 AM

Omnitrans Route 68

DP Montclair: 8:59 AM

AR Chino Hills TC: 9:28 AM

OmniGo Route 365

DP Chino Hills TC: 10:04 AM

AR EOL: 10:59 AM

DP EOL: 11:01 AM

AR Shops at Chino Hills: 11:30 AM

LUNCH 11:30 AM to 12:30 PM

(Lunch will be at the Shops at Chino Hills)

Omnitrans Route 65

DP Grand/Civic Center: 12:43 PM

AR Montclair TC: 1:43 PM

Omnitrans Route 68

DP Montclair TC: 1:55 PM

AR Chaffey College: 2:46 PM

Omnitrans Route 81

DP Chaffey College: 3:03 PM

AR Ontario: 4:22 PM

Omnitrans Route 80

DP Ontario: 4:52 PM

AR Montclair TC: 5:24 PM

Metrolink Train 333

DP Montclair TC: 5:56 PM

AR LA: 7:05 PM

### Projected Cost:

Metrolink: Round Trip to Montclair \$18.50 (\$9.25 one-way) (In years past Metrolink has offered the \$10 weekend pass on the day after Thanksgiving.)

Omnitrans Day Pass \$4.00

If you do not want to take Metrolink you can take Foothill Silver Streak and meet the group in Montclair. Fares on Silver Streak to/from Montclair is \$2.75 one-way.

To download complete schedules and get information on senior/disabled fares visit:

[www.metrolinktrains.com](http://www.metrolinktrains.com)

[www.omnitrans.org](http://www.omnitrans.org)

[www.foothilltransit.org](http://www.foothilltransit.org)

As always you are welcome to join us for all or any portion of the trip. 🚌 🚌



## *Photos of the Month*

*Omnitrans New Flyer 6001 at the OmniTrans yard on October 3, 2012. This is the first of the new buses for the sbX Rapid Bus that is coming soon to San Bernardino.*

*—Photo by  
Janice Kuhn/  
Omnitrans*



*Old vs. New  
Metro's Historic Bus  
5193 (1958 GMC)  
and one of their  
brand new 45-foot  
NABI's 8503 at the  
Central Maintenance  
Facility on Septem-  
ber 27, 2012.*

*-Josh Thurman  
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.

**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, 2012**

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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
	(Vacant)

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Newsletter Editor: Andrew Novak  
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Webmaster: Charles Hobbs

NEXT SO.CA.TA MEETINGS : **Oct 13<sup>th</sup>** and **Nov 10<sup>th</sup>** at Angelus Plaza, 4th Floor, 255 S. Hill, Los Angeles

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