

THE TRANSIT ADVOCATE

Newsletter of the Southern California Transit Advocates
March 2013 **Vol. 21, No. 3**



Inside This Issue:

- Bulletin Board (pg. 2)
- Members in Action (pg. 2)
- Transit Updates (pg. 3)
- Transit Topics (pg. 5)
- Public/Legislative Affairs (pg. 6)
- Map of the month (pg. 7)
- Day After Trip - Part 2 (pg. 9)
- Metro TAP LAB Photos (pg. 10)
- Photos of the month (pg. 11)

Long Beach Transit RTS 4703 in downtown Long Beach in the 1980s. Congratulations to Long Beach Transit on their 50th Anniversary!
—Steve Hoskins Photo

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Bulletin Board / Members in Action

Bulletin Board:

Our thanks to Dave Sutton of Metro for arranging our visit to the TAP lab and Dave Snowden for his digital presentation on the 100th anniversary of MUNI (San Francisco) at our meeting, both on February 9th

The guest speaker at the March 9th meeting will be Dave Cook of Energy Conversions with an updated presentation on CNG/Hybrid Commuter Locomotives.

We are currently exploring having Diana Kotler, Executive Director at Anaheim Transportation Network, as a speaker at an upcoming meeting. We are also making contacts for a possible next field trip to Santa Monica Big Blue Bus yard. As always we welcome suggestions for speakers, field trips and transit study tours.

Bus fan Chuck Conrad is soliciting donations to defray the cost of the restoration of a 1949 Flexible bus that was originally sold and outfitted to be a TV mobile unit for Channel 8 in Dallas (aka The DuMont Telecruiser): <http://www.telecruiser.com/donate>



The Amtrak Police Department is a national police force committed to protecting the passengers, employees, and patrons of Amtrak. For more on it see their website: <http://police.amtrak.com/>

The California Rail Map shows 500+ destinations you can reach right now on the train or connecting bus or ferry around the state. It can be downloaded free as a PDF at <http://californiarailmap.com/>

Per Metro's blog The Source the Denny's near Union Station across from Pat-saouras Plaza on Ramirez Street gives a 10% discount for patrons who show a TAP card when ordering. The location is open 24/7; the discount is valid at this Denny's location only. Metro and a number of other agencies (Long Beach Transit, Foothill, Metrolink) have rewards programs for pass holders with discounts, special ticket deals for events, etc. Generally details can be found on the respective websites of the agencies.

Members in Action:

Andrew Novak and Mark Strickert were judges at the Victor Valley Transit Authority (VVTA) Bus Rodeo on February 24, 2013 in Adelanto at Maverick Stadium.

Photos by John Ulloth appear in the January 2013 issue of Wheel Clicks, newsletter of the Pacific Railroad Society.

Dana Gabbard and Ken Ruben attended the February 27th meeting of the Metro Citizens' Advisor Council. Ruben also attended the February 20th meeting of the Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN) Rail Corridor Agency Joint Powers Board. 🚂 🚂



Transit Updates

Anaheim Resort Transportation (ART)

Effective February 25th ART began operation of new Route 20 from the Anaheim Canyon Metrolink Station to the Anaheim Convention Center via Anaheim City Hall and several businesses on the east side of Anaheim. There are four trips from the Metrolink Station to the Convention Center in the morning and three trips to the station in the afternoon. For more information visit: www.rideart.org or call 888.364.2787



Big Blue Bus

Effective February 10th, Santa Monica Big Blue Bus made several changes to their service. Below is a list of those changes.

Routes 1, 8, 11 and 12: The southbound bus stop at Westwood Boulevard and Massachusetts Avenue has been removed.

Route 2: The trip departing 4th Street at Civic Center Way at 3:23 PM has been discontinued.

Routes 2 and 3: From Westwood to downtown Santa Monica, buses will now turn right on Lindbrook Drive, left on Gayley and right onto Wilshire to avoid the congested intersection of Westwood and Wilshire Boulevards.

Route 7: The local stop westbound on Pico Boulevard and Stewart Street has been combined with the Rapid 7 stop just west of Stewart Street.

Routes 8, 12 and Rapid 12: The bus stop northbound on Westwood Boulevard at Santa Monica Boulevard has been removed.

Route 9: Route and schedule has been modified in Pacific Palisades.

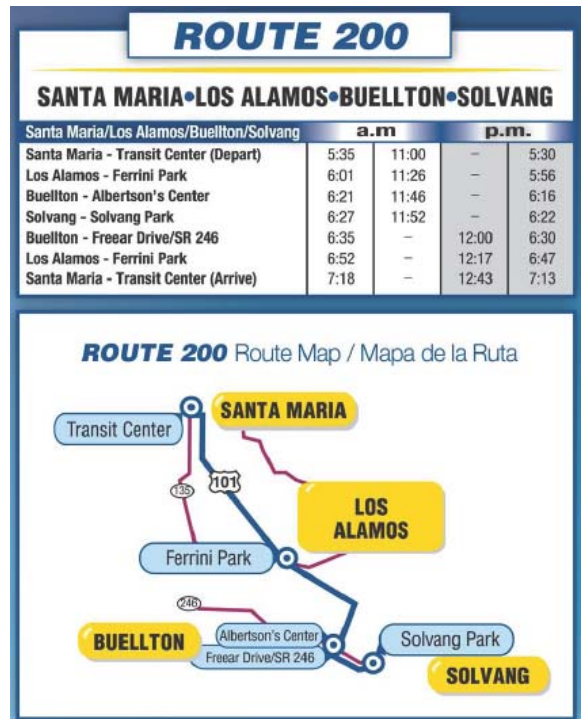
Route 14: Buses departing Paul Revere Middle School now turn from San Vicente Boulevard onto southbound Bundy Drive and no longer continue east of Bundy Drive.

Rapid 20: A new stop has been added eastbound at National and Venice to better serve the Culver City Expo Line Station.

For more information visit: www.BigBlueBus.com or call 310.451.5444

Breeze Bus

Below is the schedule and map for new Breeze Bus Route 200 which operates three trips per day between Santa Maria and Solvang.



(Continued on Page 4)

Transit Updates Continued

Cudahy Area Rapid Transit

The city of Cudahy has recently posted the schedule for their fixed route service on line at: http://www.cityofcudahy.com/srv/Bus_Schedule.asp

CUDAHY AREA RAPID TRANSIT (C.A.R.T.) SCHEDULE						
City Hall	Cudahy Plaza	Atlantic Clara	Market Place Shopping Center	Elizabeth Otis	Cudahy Plaza	Cecelia Wilcox
7:00 AM	7:05 AM	7:15 AM	7:23 AM	7:35 AM	7:38 AM	7:45 AM
8:00 AM	8:05 AM	8:15 AM	8:23 AM	8:35 AM	8:38 AM	8:45 AM
9:00 AM	9:05 AM	9:15 AM	9:23 AM	9:35 AM	9:38 AM	9:45 AM
10:00 AM	10:05 AM	10:15 AM	10:23 AM	10:35 AM	10:38 AM	10:45 AM
11:00 AM	11:05 AM	11:15 AM	11:23 AM	11:35 AM	11:38 AM	11:45 AM
12:00 PM	12:05 PM	12:15 PM	12:23 PM	12:35 PM	12:38 PM	12:45 AM
1:00 PM	1:05 PM	1:15 PM	1:23 PM	1:35 PM	1:38 PM	1:45 PM
2:00 PM	2:05 PM	2:15 PM	2:23 PM	2:35 PM	2:38 PM	2:45 PM
3:00 PM	3:05 PM	3:15 PM	3:23 PM	3:35 PM	3:38 PM	3:45 PM
4:00 PM	4:05 PM	4:15 PM	4:23 PM	4:35 PM	4:38 PM	4:45 PM
5:00 PM	5:05 PM	5:15 PM	5:23 PM	5:35 PM	5:38 PM	5:45 PM

Foothill Transit

From February 5th to June 30th, the east-bound Line 492 stop on the southeast corner of Santa Anita Avenue and Valley Boulevard will be closed due to construction. Passengers can board the 492 at the southeast corner of Santa Anita and Valley Mall.

Glendale Beeline

Effective February 1st, Glendale Beeline issued new schedules for Routes 3 (31, 32), 33/34, 5, 6 and 7. The schedules reflect minor changes made to improve on time performance. For more information visit: www.glendalebeeline.com or call 818.548.3960



Gold Coast Transit

Effective February 10th Gold Coast Transit (GCT) made several changes to their system. Below is a summary of those changes.

Route 21: This new route provides direct service between the Centerpoint Mall and the Ventura Transit Center along Channel Islands Boulevard, Victoria Avenue and Telegraph Road. This line operates Monday thru Friday from 5:40 AM to 8:44 PM.

Route 6: This line will now have different schedules on weekdays and weekends. The line will now turn around on Ventura Avenue at Cope Center instead of Dakota Avenue.

Route 11: This line will now serve Community Memorial Hospital at Main Street and Borchard Drive. The route now longer stops at Valentine and Knoll.

Route 19: The line now serves the Veterans Affairs Clinic along with other medical offices along Gonzales Road between Rose and Rice Avenues. Service operates later now with the last trip departing the Oxnard Transportation Center at 8:00 PM.

Metrolink

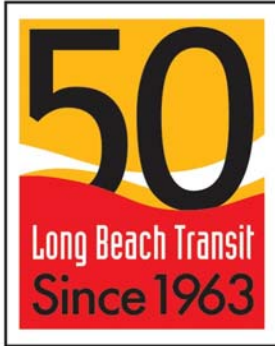
Effective January 25th, Metro Ducks Express trains returned for select weeknight home games for Orange County Line Stations south of Anaheim. Passengers can purchase specially priced round-trip tickets for these trains on game day. The special fares are valid on Trains 808 and 643 for travel to the game and Train 644 from the game. A free shuttle bus is provided from the Anaheim Station to the Honda Center. The shuttle will depart the Honda Center 15 minutes after the game ends and Train 644 will hold for the shuttle bus on game days.

(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.

Long Beach Transit at 50!: On March 15th Long Beach Transit will celebrate their 50th Anniversary. Congratulations!



PDRTA at the end of the line?: South Carolina's oldest and largest regional transportation authority, Pee Dee Regional Transit Authority (PDRTA), could cease operations if they can not find new funding sources. The agency has already made changes and service reductions to help save the agency. PDRTA provides bus service in Florence South Carolina, the surrounding Pee Dee Area, and Myrtle Beach.



UTA FrontRunner expands: Recently the Utah Transit Authority (UTA) began operation of new commuter rail service from Salt Lake City to Provo Utah. This new 45-mile extension south has doubled the length of the FrontRunner service which began operation in 2008. The northern portion of the line operates from Salt Lake City to Ogden Utah.



Greyhound Bus Model: I will conclude this month with a new "model" bus that is available. Classic Metal Works has recently released their HO Scale version of the classic Greyhound Scenicruiser. The Scenicruiser was an iconic bus built especially for Greyhound between 1954 and 1956 by General Motors. 1001 of the model PD-4501 buses were built and they operated into the 1970s before being replaced. These HO Scale models can be purchased at local hobby stores or through major on-line retailers. For more information on other bus models from Classic Metal Works visit:

<http://classicmetalworks.com/site/>



Public and Legislative Affairs By Dana Gabbard

I am rather proud of the question I contributed on our behalf to the Streetsblog Video series of interviews with the 5 leading candidates for Mayor of Los Angeles recently posted consisting of question contributed by key local transportation stakeholder groups. "The Wilshire bus lane project is due to be ready by late 2014. If after a period of a year or so it is judged a success (improving transit patron's travel times, luring auto riders to switch to mass transit) would you support considering such lanes for other arterial streets in Los Angeles?" It was the only one dealing with transit service improvement. The Bus Riders Union wasted their question on pointless grandstanding by asking "Will you commit to restoring the monthly bus pass to \$42 (currently \$75) and not raise fares?" Even the newbies among the five steered well clear of making that commitment.

It is sobering to note the growing concern about the state of transit security in San Diego County ("Security Breach: Are You Safe On SD Trains and Trolleys?" KPBS) contracted to private firm Universal Protection Service (UPS). Whistleblowers among the security agents employed by UPS complain of long hours and low pay to perform a job with lots of risks and wide ranging responsibilities. The agents also "worry every day about how ill-equipped, untrained and unprepared they are to respond to even relatively routine emergencies, let alone a train collision or terrorist attack". We'll keep an eye on this troubling situation.

I have had a wide range of responses to my Streetsblog editorial "What Is It with Metrolink?", an indictment of its insular culture and the Board's persistent pattern of evad-

ing responsibility for failures of oversight. Even to having one well regarded local regional rail observer dub it "half wrong". Well at least it may help initiate a dialogue and some soul searching. Please?

Per the agenda for the Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District Board of Directors January 8th meeting, item #9 "Ridership on Line 15x, which provides direct service linking the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB), the Isla Vista community, and SBCC, has grown significantly over the past few years (e.g. 22.3% in fiscal year 2012). This growth is due in large part to the increasing number of Santa Barbara City College (SBCC) students that are choosing to live in the Isla Vista area. SBCC ridership accounted for 77% of Line 15x ridership in fiscal year 2012." Impressive!

Noel T. Braymer's commentary "Why Not Lease the Coast Line?" (posted on the Rail Passenger Association of California website) is an interesting perspective well worth reading; its emphasis is the 360 or so miles of the Coast Rail Line between Ventura County and San Jose.

From the State Legislative Activities report in the January Access Services Board Box (item #1):

Access is in the process of sponsoring a proposal that would make small changes to state law when it comes to our ability to oversee the criminal background check process conducted by our providers. Currently, while Access can require and verify that our providers are conducting the necessary background checks on their drivers,

(Continued on Page 6)

Public and Legislative Affairs Continued

we are technically not allowed to see the results of that background check. Our proposed legislation would exempt us from this prohibition and allow us to have more oversight over this process. We are working with our state advocate, Jason Gonsalves, to find a sponsor for this legislation.

And I'll conclude by extending kudos to Metro on a savvy hiring: Ellen Isaacs (formerly Transportation Deputy at the field office of now former Assembly Member Mike Feuer) as its Liaison to Los Angeles City Hall. Smart move! 🚇 🚇

Map of the Month - Anaheim Resort Transportation Route 20



Transit Updates Continued

Metro

Effective February 18th, Metro Line 720 has been re-routed in downtown Santa Monica due to the permanent closure of eastbound Colorado Avenue between 4th and 5th Streets due to Metro Expo Line construction. Westbound buses will travel on Ocean Avenue then east on Santa Monica Boulevard, north on 6th Street, east on Wilshire and south on 7th Street to the terminal at 5th and Colorado. The eastbound buses will depart the terminal and go north on 5th Street and the west on Broadway to Ocean and back to regular route.



Norwalk Transit

Effective February 17th Norwalk Transit Route 3 has been routed off of Shoemaker Avenue due to the closure and removal of the Shoemaker Bridge over Interstate 5. The route will now travel on Rosecrans and Bloomfield to Alondra Boulevard. This detour is expected to last one year while the bridge is rebuilt as part of the Interstate 5 widening project. For more information contact Norwalk Transit at 562.929.5550 or email at transportation@norwalkca.gov

Omnitrans

Due to construction on 5th Street, Route 80 is on detour until further notice. From Palo Verde buses will go right on Benson, left on San Bernardino and right on Mountain back

onto regular route. From Mountain buses will go left on 4th, right on Benson and left on Palo Verde and regular route.

Riverside Transit Agency

Effective February 11th, Route 40 has resumed regular service to both east and westbound stops on Railroad Canyon Road. The line no longer detours into the Canyon Lake Towne Center. On February 18th Route 74 now has an additional westbound trip departing at Mt. San Jacinto College at 8:57 AM and two eastbound trips departing the Perris Transit Center at 7:00 AM and 10:45 AM.



Santa Barbara MTD

Effective February 18th, MTD, issued new schedules for Routes 6, 11, 22, 23, and 25. (Route 22 took effect on the 19th.) For more information contact MTD at 805.963.3366 or online at: www.sbmtd.gov

Santa Clarita Transit (SCT)

The Railroad Café in Newhall has discontinued sales of and reloading on TAP cards. For more information contact SCT at 661.294.1287 or online at: www.santaclaritatransit.com

Victor Valley Transit Authority (VVTA)

VVTA does not accept Metrolink Tickets as fare on the BV Link service to San Bernardino. Credit Card sales at VVTA will no longer be processed after 4:50 PM and American Express and Discover cards are no longer be accepted. 🚌 🚌

Day After Thanksgiving Trip Continued from February

We alighted to wait for our last bus of the day. The daylight was fading, and we had about a 45 minute wait. Some dashed across the street to nearby Andy's Burgers for a soda, snack, or comfort stop. The rest waited at the bus stop and watched some guy working his karate moves on the bus shelter (what the heck?) (The bus stop we waited at is part of the new Ontario Transfer Station that was dedicated in December 2012.)

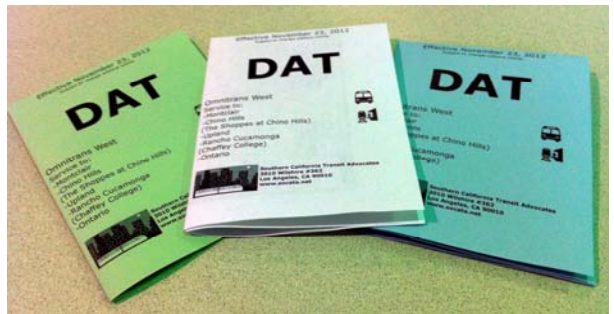
Finally, our last bus, New Flyer 0167 on Line 80 pulled up a few minutes late. We boarded, while Karate Man said he was trying to get to LA, and was taking Line 61 to Pomona, perhaps to transfer to Foothill's Silver Streak. It was now totally dark, and we mostly chatted among ourselves on the short trip to Montclair. We did notice a "London Burgers," complete with English double-decker bus, somewhere on Mountain Avenue.

While waiting for the train back to Los Angeles several of us took photos of the various Omnitrans and Foothill buses that serve the transit center. Also meeting us was Ken's friend Curtis Raymond who came out from L.A. on Metrolink. Our train back to Los Angeles, Train 333, was very crowded. After arriving in Los Angeles we dispersed to enjoy the rest of the holiday weekend.

Now the million dollar question, where should SOCATA go next year on the Day After Thanksgiving? 🚌 🚌



*Omnitrans New Flyer 1243 at the Chaffey College Transit Center on November 23, 2012.
-Andrew Novak Photo*



Our newsletter editor made these nice handouts for our trip. Designed to look like a bus schedule the inside contained an itinerary of the days trip, possible lunch locations, and an Omnitrans System map. Mr. Novak printed them on green white and blue paper in honor of Omni's new colors.

Visit to the Metro TAP Lab

Before our meeting on February 9th, several members had a chance to visit the Metro Transit Access Pass (TAP) test lab located inside the Metro Headquarters building. In the TAP lab Metro staff can test the latest in TAP cards, fareboxes and fare gates. Below are photos taken by our newsletter editor Andrew Novak during the visit.



Photos from inside the TAP Lab. A row of ticket machines behind a set of fare gates (above-left), on the Ticket machines (above) and a row of fareboxes (left).



Photos of the Month

Metro 40 foot NABI 8999 at the Central Maintenance Facility on February 5, 2013.

This is a 40ft Compo Demonstrator and is one-of-a-kind bus.

*—Andrew Novak
Photo*



Victor Valley Transit Authority (VVTA) NABI 615 on display at the VVTA Roadeo in Adelanto on February 24, 2013. This was the first time VVTA had a Roadeo with 40 foot buses. Previous roadeos were only for paratransit buses.

-Andrew Novak 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 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 : **March 9th** and **April 13th**
at Angelus Plaza, 4th Floor, 255 S. Hill, Los Angeles

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