

# ***THE TRANSIT ADVOCATE***

Newsletter of the Southern California Transit Advocates

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*Amtrak F59PHI 2001 leads a Capitol Corridor  
Train at the Centerville Station on March 9, 2008.*

*—Andrew Novak Photo*

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

### **Bulletin Board:**

Our thanks to Don Sepulveda, Executive Officer—Regional Rail for Metro, for his lively presentation and question and answer session at our April 13<sup>th</sup> meeting.

The guest speaker at our May 18<sup>th</sup> meeting will be Doran Barnes, Executive Director of Foothill Transit. Our July 13<sup>th</sup> guest speaker will be Diana Kotler, Executive Director at Anaheim Transportation Network. At this time we are still exploring various options for June 8<sup>th</sup> guest speaker.

Our thanks to the Rail Passenger Association of California & Nevada for their generous donation of \$175, which made possible the outreach materials we had for our booths at Fullerton Railroad Days and National Train Days. Thanks as well to RailPAC for sharing our booth at Fullerton and the Sierra Club Angeles Chapter for sharing our booth at National Train Day. Some new websites worth taking a look at:

All Aboard! The Official Amtrak Blog  
<http://blog.amtrak.com/>

TransitWatchLA stressing safety while riding Metro service  
<http://www.transitwatchla.org/>

TransitWiki a new venture aimed at transit professionals  
[http://www.transitwiki.org/TransitWiki/index.php?title=Main\\_Page](http://www.transitwiki.org/TransitWiki/index.php?title=Main_Page)



### **Members in Action:**

Alek Friedman attended the April 10<sup>th</sup> Metro Westside/Central Service council meeting, voicing support for the restoration of Rapid 704 service. Ken Ruben also attended the meeting.

In addition Friedman had an opinion piece published by Streetsblog, "Op/Ed: A Quick-Fix to L.A.'s Mass Transit: Bring Back the Trolleybuses!"

Ruben and Dana Gabbard attended the April 24<sup>th</sup> Metro Citizens' Advisory Council meeting.

Ruben attended the April 17<sup>th</sup> Los Angeles - San Diego - San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor Agency meeting and the reception following with Senator Alex Padilla. He also attended part of the Union Station Master Plan meeting on May 2<sup>nd</sup> and May 8<sup>th</sup> session of the Westside/central Service Council meeting. 🚊 🚊



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*We now offer the SO.CA.TA newsletter in PDF format to our members. The PDF newsletters are available a week before the meeting and are 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

## **Big Blue Bus**

On April 22<sup>nd</sup> UCLA became a Tobacco-Free campus banning all tobacco products from campus and other UCLA properties. With the recent ban, Big Blue Bus reminds passengers that their Code of Conduct prohibits smoking, including electronic cigarettes, on all buses and within 20 feet of all bus stops in the City of Santa Monica.

## **Calabasas Beach Bus**

From June 17<sup>th</sup> to August 16<sup>th</sup>, the City of Calabasas will once again offer beach bus service from Calabasas to Zuma Beach. The service operates Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday with no service on Wednesdays or Holidays. The fare is \$2.00 one-way and \$4.00 roundtrip. There are three trips to the beach and three return trips.

For more information visit:

[www.cityofcalabasas.com/beachbus.html](http://www.cityofcalabasas.com/beachbus.html)

## **Foothill Transit**

Effective April 8<sup>th</sup> the Line 488 bus stops on the corner of Grand Avenue and Cypress Street have been permanently relocated. The new eastbound Line 488 bus stop is located on the northeast corner of Grand Avenue and Cypress Street just after the intersection. The new the westbound Line 488 bus stop is located on the southwest corner of Grand Avenue and Cypress Street, just after the intersection.



## **Flyaway**

Effective April 22<sup>nd</sup> Metrolink passengers can now purchase one ticket that is good for train fare and a one-way ride on Flyaway from Union Station to LAX. To purchase these special tickets passengers just need to select "LAX" as their destination at the ticket machine. The special Flyaway fare can be added to one-way or roundtrip Metrolink tickets for an additional \$7. The special Metrolink Flyaway tickets can also be purchased in advance using the Advanced Purchase ticket option at the ticket machine. These advance purchase tickets can be purchased for any date up to a year in advance. For more information visit:

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

## **Los Angeles County Beach Buses**

Once again the Los Angeles County Public Works along with several county supervisors are offering special summer beach bus service to Santa Monica. Buses will once again operate from Altadena, Castaic, Charter Oak/Duarte, East Los Angeles, La Crescenta/La Canada-Flintridge, Lancaster, Palmdale, and Topanga Canyon. Schedules and fares vary and most of the routes require advanced reservations. Most of the routes operate from mid-June to Labor Day. For more information or to make reservations call 888.769.1122 or online at:

[www.lagobus.info](http://www.lagobus.info)



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## *Transit Updates Continued*

### **Montebello Bus Lines (MBL)**

Effective April 28<sup>th</sup> the eastbound Line 40 stop at Sixth and Grand has been discontinued. Passengers can use the eastbound stops at Sixth and Flower or at Olive and Fifth Streets.

Effective May 2<sup>nd</sup> Line 10 will now be stopping at Bay 7 at the new East Los Angeles College Transit Center. This new center is also used by Metro and Monterey Park Spirit.

### **Riverside Transit Agency (RTA)**

Effective May 12<sup>th</sup> RTA made the following changes to their service. Below is a summary of those changes.

-Route 3: More trips have been added on weekdays between 8:00 AM and 12:30 PM to meet passenger demands.

-Route 7: The last weekday trip going north from Inland Valley Hospital now leaves at 6:54 PM. The last weekday trip going south from the Lake Elsinore Outlet Center departs at 8:00 PM for an improved connection with Route 23.

-Route 10: The weekday schedule has been adjusted to better meet school bell times.

-Route 12: The timepoint at Stephens & Center has been moved to La Cadena & Stephens and the timepoint at Pierce & Sterling has been moved to Merced & Magnolia.

-Route 15: The timepoint at Pierce & Sterling has been moved to Merced & Magnolia. The 6:12 PM trip going east has been adjusted to improve connections to OCTA Route 794.

-Route 16: The weekday schedule has been adjusted to meet train times more efficiently at the Downtown Metrolink Station.

-Route 18: The timepoint at Lasselle & Ca- huilla has been discontinued however the bus stop continues to be served.

-Route 22: The last northbound trip on weekdays now departs at 7:55 PM. The 11:44 AM southbound weekday trip now departs at 11:39 AM. Both of these changes were made to improve connections with routes 7 and 8.

-Route 23: Due to low ridership the following weekday school-days only trips will no longer operate: 6:48 AM northbound trip from Winchester & Nicolas, 6:52 AM northbound trip from Rancho Springs Medical Center, 2:45 PM northbound trip from Vista Murrieta High School, and the 6:51 AM southbound trip from Rancho Springs Medical Center. These changes will take effective on June 12<sup>th</sup>.

-Route 24: For the next seven months detour routing in Old Town Temecula is in effect and the timepoint at Pujol & Main has been temporarily moved to Old Town Front Street & 1<sup>st</sup> Street.

-Route 29: The schedule has been adjusted to improve connections with Route 3, Omnitrans, and Metrolink Trains.

-Route 30: Eastbound detour routing from Ellis & Perris to the Perris Station Transit Center has been permanently changed to travel along Perris Boulevard, 7<sup>th</sup> Street and C Street.

-Route 31: The segment from State & Mayberry to the Hemet Valley Mall has been changed and now travels via Mayberry Ave., Palm Ave., Acacia Ave., Lyon Ave. and Devonshire Ave. The routing to the Courthouse via Fruitvale Ave has also been changed and routing will remain on State St. The Beaumont Walmart timepoint has been removed but the stop will now be served in both directions.

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## *Transit Topics* By Andrew Novak

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

**44 Express:** In April 2013 the Shasta Senior Nutrition program began operation of the "44 Express" Route from Palo Cedro, Millville, and Shingletown to Redding, California. The service is offered to seniors over the age of 60 and disabled and mobility impaired people over the age of 18. The service operates into Redding in the morning and back in the afternoon Monday through Friday. Service to Palo Cedro and Millville operated Monday, Wednesday, and Friday while Shingletown Service is on Tuesday and Thursdays. Fares are \$2 one-way from Palo Cedro and Millville and \$3 one-way from Shingletown.

**Future Bus Stops?:** This unique bus stop signs was recently photographed in Edmonton Alberta Canada and advertises "Future Service." It would appear that the Edmonton Transit System (ETS) is getting stops ready before new bus service starts. This photo was taken by Matthew Dunlop and posted on Facebook.



**NASCAR Express:** On Sunday June 23, 2013 special Amtrak California trains will be operating from Sacramento, Davis and Susan to the Sonoma Raceway for the NASCAR race to be held that day. Recent upgrades to the Northwestern Pacific branch that is next to the raceway. Tickets can be booked through the raceway.

**PE Bridge in Torrance:** I will conclude this month with good news from the City of Torrance. The city recently approved \$391,000 to repair and restore the historic Pacific Electric (PE) bridge which spanned Torrance Boulevard and the Union Pacific Torrance Branch. The bridge was built in 1912 and designed by architect Irving Gill. Gill is also credited with designing PE Stations in Torrance, Alta Loma, Etiwanda, Fontana, Rialto, Upland and Corona. Below is a photo of Southern Pacific SW1500 2643 with a train passing under the historic bridge in March 1984. Photo by Joe Blackwell.



## ***Public and Legislative Affairs By Dana Gabbard***

I wonder if the folks agitating for a station on the Crenshaw light rail line at Leimert Park realize where it would actually be sited — off of 48th and Crenshaw. This is due to topography.

Stupid quote of the month: "A lot of people — if not the majority of people — are not paying their fare" -- Metro Board member Zev Yaroslavsky in the New York Times article "For Los Angeles, the end of the free subway ride". Really? Does he actually believe this claptrap? YEOW!

Two recent online articles worth seeking out and pondering:

- Infrastructure and Democracy on the Pedestrians Observations blog
- It's the System Stupid at the Architects Newspaper

Thanks to Don Sepulveda's presentation at our April meeting I now realize a Red Line extension to the Burbank Airport would be worth including in an amended project list when a Measure R extension effort is mounted since the Airport will be the terminal hub for the initial segment of the bullet train. I also hope we can prioritize the Green Line extension to South Bay Galleria and the transit center planned for there. A key selling point for the revived Measure J is that extension of the sales tax will facilitate action in re the I-405 corridor in our lifetime.

In the transitions Department, Ian Dailey of Torrance Transit at the end of this month is moving to Massachusetts to work in Finance for a school district. Jerard Wright has resigned from the Westside/Central service council due to his increase responsibilities at MoveLA.

I have been keeping an eye on KPBS's coverage of the unfolding North County Transit District Sprinter situation. Oh, my! How long before head's start to roll?

And to conclude this month here is a lengthy quote from Andrew Albert's article "MTA Raises Fares Again, While Increasing Service" in the Rail Users Network Newsletter for Spring 2013. It makes an interesting point about New York transit funding trends -- doesn't it resemble the situation in Los Angeles?

*While the cost of everything continues to go up, and the MTA struggles with inadequate funding from the state and city, while dealing with ever-rising pension and debt-service costs, there is something quite troubling about all this. The MTA has arrived at a formula which sees fare hikes every-other year at a yield of 7 1/2%. If you take these every-other year fare hikes to their obvious conclusion, at some point commuters from Long Island and the northern counties will be paying \$800 per month for their commutes, while tolls on the bridges and tunnels will be \$40! That is simply not sustainable, and has terrible implications for the metropolitan region, as well as the entire State of New York. Clearly, something has to be done to change the way transit is funded in the New York City region, or people will either move out of the region, or choose to drive to work, which is, of course, exactly what we DON'T want to encourage. There are some alternative funding methods, notably an interesting and novel approach by traffic guru Sam Schwartz,*

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

*which is a combination of congestion pricing and easing tolls in areas which are not transit-rich, while raising them in places that have numerous transit options. But whichever option is ultimately chosen, we simply cannot keep asking the riders to pay for the upkeep and capital needs of this vast, sprawling system of subways, buses, and commuter rail. New Yorkers already pay the highest percentage of the cost of their ride than riders anywhere else in the United States. On the subways, it's approaching 71% of the cost of the ride!* 🚇 🚇

### ***The Future of SOCATA***

#### **A message from the Executive Secretary**

I have had been growing concerned at our inability to draw new members and the stagnation in attendance at our monthly meetings despite publicizing them. After 19 years of being the chief administrative force of our organization I worry that too much is dependent on a relative few and that mentoring the next generation is not happening.

As of January 2014 I intend to reduce my role and not seek re-election as Corresponding Secretary. I also recommend that we curtail the meetings and put an emphasis on activities such as study tours and transit yard visits. With exceptions the newsletter should be solely PDF. Occasional speakers can make use of new media platforms. We should explore new paradigms via Nation Builder. This will call for amending the bylaws with a goal of having the changes in place by the end of the year. Even a dues reduction may be called for. We would still have an annual meeting in December along with the annual holiday banquet and Day-After-Thanksgiving transit exploration. Positions on legislation etc. could be handled by e-mail and/or a legislative committee.

We will discuss how to go forward at our May meeting.



## Transit Updates Continued

### RTA Continued

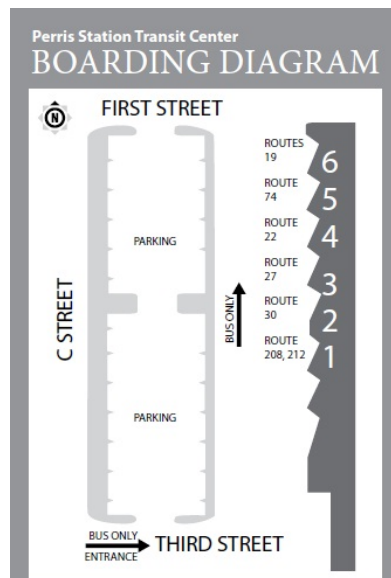
- Route 32: The segment from Mayberry & State to the Hemet Valley Mall has been changed and will travel via State St., Thornton Ave., Gilbert St., Stetson Ave., Lyon Ave. and Devonshire Ave.
- Route 35: The timepoint at Beaumont Walmart has been removed but the route will now serve Beaumont Walmart in both directions. Afternoon trips have been adjusted to better meet school bell times.
- Route 49: The 6:55 AM westbound trip on weekdays has been adjusted for improved connections with Omnitrans routes near Mulberry & Marlay.
- Route 51: The last trip of the day has been extended to Watkins & Spruce. There will be no service from June 17<sup>th</sup> to September 20<sup>th</sup> and will resume on September 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- Route 54: Beginning July 2013, the route will be expanded to operate Monday through Friday.
- Route 55: There will be no service from June 17<sup>th</sup> to August 9<sup>th</sup> and service will resume on August 12<sup>th</sup>.
- Route 61: The end of the route has been moved from Cherry Hills & Bradley to Encanto & McCall.
- Route 74: The weekday schedule has been adjusted to improve connections at Mt. San Jacinto College's Menifee campus.
- Route 79: Detour routing in Old Town Temecula will last for approximately seven months and the timepoint at Pujol & Main has been temporarily moved to 2nd Street & Old Town Front Street. The weekday schedule has also been adjusted for better connections with other routes and a northbound trip has been added at 2:45 PM.

### Commuterlink Service

- Route 202: Additional summer service will be added on seven days a week from June 17<sup>th</sup> to September 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- Route 204: The weekday 5:21 AM northbound and 5:32 AM southbound trips now leave at 5:16 AM and 5:34 AM, respectively to improve connections with Omnitrans routes at Ontario Mills.
- Route 212: The first westbound trip will now leave at 3:56 AM to better connect with trains at the Riverside-Downtown Metrolink Station.

The following routes have had changes made to improve on-time performance: 1, 3, 11, 15, 18, 19, 20, 21, 24, 27, 29, 33, 42, 61, 74, Commuterlink 202, 206, and 208.

Changes were also made to the bus bay assignments at the Perris Transit Center. See diagram below.



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## *Transit Updates Continued*

### **RTC - Las Vegas**

Recently the Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada (RTC) recently broke ground on a new transit center that will be located on the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) Campus. The new 6,460-square-foot facility will be located within walking distance of various UNLV facilities, including the Thomas & Mack Center, Cox Pavilion, and various UNLV academic and administrative buildings. The open-air facility is scheduled to open some time this fall.



### **Vista**

Effective April 1<sup>st</sup> a new bus stop was added at Oxnard College on Brad Street west of Simpson on the CSUCI-Oxnard route. This new stop creates a better connection between the Camarillo Metrolink Station, California Station University-Channel Islands, and Oxnard College.

### **Amtrak's Coast Starlight**

Below are some of the future plans Amtrak has for the Coast Starlight per remarks by Rob Eaton, Director--Government Affairs West, Amtrak, made at the annual All Aboard Washington Conference.

- Convert the arcade area in the lower level of a coach on each train set to an Acela-type business class seating area, with \$5 per meal credit in dining car and access to the Pacific Parlour Car.

- Refresh the Parlour car, upgrade the Wi-Fi and add satellite radio

- Use existing Amtrak space in LA Union Station for a first class lounge. (Rumor has it the LA lounge could open as early as August.)

- Amtrak has had preliminary talks with the city of Seattle regarding installing a first class passenger lounge at King Street Station.

### **PCC for Sale**

The San Diego Vintage Trolley (SDVT) is reducing their fleet of un-restored PCC cars. Car 530 is currently for sale and interested parties should contact Dave Slater at dave-sugi@cox.net to see the car and Harry Mathis at hmathias1@yahoo.com to negotiate purchase. (Serious offers only!)

PCC 530 was built in 1946 by St. Louis Car Company for the St. Louis Public Service (SLPS) as their car 1728. In 1956 the car was sold to the San Francisco Municipal Railway as their 1123. In the early 1980s MUNI sold 1123, along with several other cars to a private party in South Lake Tahoe for a proposed street car line that never materialized. In 2005 the SDVT acquire the car. Originally the car was to be rebuilt for operation on a special loop route in downtown San Diego, but due to space constraints at the San Diego Trolley yard the car will be sold. 🚃 🚃



## *The man with a train in his basement*

Have you ever wanted to have your own train in your basement? Well for Jason Shron on Vaughan, Ontario Canada he is now living his dream. Shron, a self-admitted "train-obsessed nutcase" has built a full-sized replica of a VIA Rail Coach in his basement.

### **VIA Coach 5647**

The story of Shron's coach begins in 1954 at the Canadian Car & Foundry Company in Lachine, Quebec. Coach 5647 was part of a 218 car order for the Canadian Nation (CN) named "EM" coaches for their electro-mechanical air-conditioning. The car operated for CN until 1976 when it was repainted and rebranded for the new "VIA CN" passenger service. It was at this time the car received the new blue and yellow VIA Rail paint scheme. The interior of the car was also rebuilt and upgraded at this time




In 1978 VIA CN became a separate crown corporation and VIA Rail Canada took over all passenger operations on both CN and Canadian Pacific. In 1990 coach 5647, along with many other VIA Rail cars became surplus after the railroad made several service reductions. The car was leased to Montreal's STCUM Commuter service for use until 1995 when the car was returned to VIA Rail and sold to the Rocky Mountaineer excursion train.

Rocky Mountaineer opted not to rebuild the 5647 and in 2010 Shron and one of his associates purchased the car. Unfortunately the car had deteriorated while being stored out of service for 15 years. It was deter-

mined that the car was too badly damaged to save and Shron and his friends took as many parts off the car as they could.

### **Car moves to the basement**

Shron actually began building the replica of a VIA Coach in his basement in May 2008 using various parts of cars he acquired over the years including seats. When he acquired the 5647 in 2010 he was finally able to get many parts he did not have for the project and he finally finished the car in December 2012. Shron did most of the work himself and while the car in his basement is full-size, it is only one end of the car.

When not relaxing in his coach, Shron is running his company Rapido Model Trains which specializes in Canadian passenger cars and trains. 

For more information on Shron visit:

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

For more information on Rapido Trains visit:

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



*Car 5467 in Shron's Basement  
-Jason Shron Photo*

## Photos of the Month

*Complete Coach Works ZEPS demo bus is seen in New York City on Columbus Circle and Broadway on April 11, 2013.*

*—Joe Caronetti  
Photo*



*Metrolink Cab Car 674 is sitting with a display train at the San Bernardino Railroad Days on April 28, 2013. The third car in this train is Metrolink Coach 208 (See April 2013 Transit Advocate).*

*-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](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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Webmaster:	Charles Hobbs

NEXT SO.CA.TA MEETINGS : **May 18<sup>th</sup>** and **June 8<sup>th</sup>** at Angelus Plaza, 4th Floor, 255 S. Hill, Los Angeles

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