

THE TRANSIT ADVOCATE

Newsletter of the Southern California Transit Advocates



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Newsletter of the Southern
California Transit Advocates

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On the cover: Amtrak F40PH 408 on the
Amtrak 40th Anniversary Train at Union Sta-
tion on December 11, 2011
—Andrew Novak Photo

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SO.CA.TA officers, 2014

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Vice President: J.K. Drummond
Secretary: Perias Pillay
Treasurer: Dana Gabbard
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Yearly Dues for SO.CA.TA:

Individual Members: \$30.00 (Print or PDF)
Low Income: \$18.00 (Print Newsletter)
Low Income: \$12.00 (PDF Newsletter)
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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 en-
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Next SO.CA.TA Gatherings:

Dec. 6th: Elections and pizza party at 1:00
PM at Angelus Plaza in Los Angeles

Bulletin Board

Bulletin Board:

The election for 2015 will be held Saturday December 6th beginning at 1:00 PM at Angelus Plaza, 255 South Hill Street in downtown Los Angeles.

The election committee consists of Hank Fung (Chair), John Ulloth and Craig Weingarten.

Nominees for officers:

President -- Nate Zablen & J.K. Drummond

Vice President -- Ken Ruben & J.K. Drummond

Treasurer -- Dana Gabbard

Secretary -- Perias Pillay

There will be a transit schedule swap after the election -- a chance to clean out your closets or to acquire those schedules you have long wanted. No selling! Also Steve Crosmer (co-founder) has sent two boxes of transit schedules he has collected in travels around the U.S. that will be for the taking.

Instead of a holiday banquet we'll have an informal pizza party at Angelus Plaza. It will be BYOB (bring your own beverage, or buy one from the onsite mini-market) and \$5 per participant. Plus we'll have the transit trinkets and door prizes for party participants.

Dana will no longer be maintaining the calendar of events. If anyone wants to take over this task please contact Dana Gabbard at: 213.388.2364 or dgabbard@hotmail.com

The calendar is online at:
<http://www.brownbearsw.com/freecal/socata>

Schedule Swap!

After our election on December 6, 2014 we will have another schedule swap. This will be a chance to thin out your schedule collections or add some gems to your collection!



Editor Change at SOCATA

From 2015 Editor John Ulloth:

Until an e-inbox can be set up for the 2015 newsletter, send Original Articles, output on paper to: Transit Advocate Articles, c/o Post Office Box 7232, Van Nuys, CA 91409.

("Original" means you wrote them)

("Articles" are not chunks of paper cut out of somebody else's newspaper!) Print your name as you'd like to see it credited, mailing address, (and phone number if you wish) very legibly at the top. Your 2015 Editor & Publisher is going to Edit & Publish, not Write it. So far, except for formatting, the January issue is blank.

So if you are interested in reading any news, write it up & send it in! If you'd like to be a regular contributor, indicate which department or subject you're willing to write about (such as Updates, Agency News, Map of the Month, providing original dated & captioned photos, writing up what happened on the DAT or other study-tour, etc. These don't have to be long and complicated (short & sweet is better, in fact), or even every month. Officers should consider taking one column. Or you could also suggest a new, never-seen-before column that you're willing to write. We're looking for reporting: mostly news & analysis (not opinions, which are a dime a dozen). Thank you in advance for your contributions!"  

Transit Updates

Anaheim - ARTIC

On December 6th The Anaheim Regional Transportation Intermodal Center (ARTIC) will officially open. The new ARTIC is located east of the current Amtrak/Metrolink Station in Anaheim. Aside from Amtrak and Metrolink the new ARTIC will also be served by Greyhound, Anaheim Resort Transportation (ART) OCTA and Megabus. The new facility is located at 2626 East Katella Avenue and on December 13th there will be an official grand opening. Below is a map showing where ARTIC is and what OCTA routes will serve the new facility.



ARC

Coming Soon! The new Anaheim Rapid Connection (ARC) is a proposed streetcar that if built will connect the new ARTIC with Disneyland, Anaheim GardenWalk and the Anaheim Convention Center. The new route is currently in the environmental review process. For more information visit online at: <http://aconnext.com/arc/>

Culver City Bus

Effective January 12, 2015 Culver City Bus will be making schedule changes on the following lines: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, Rapid 6 and 7. Along with these changes Line 1 will no longer stop at Pacific Avenue at 25th Place and Pacific Avenue at 28th Place. Line 7 will also be extended to the Hayden Tract area during peak hours.

There are also plans in the future to extend Line 4 from the Westfield Culver City Transit Center to Playa Vista/Lincoln Boulevard via Jefferson Boulevard. For more information contact Culver City Bus at 310.253.6500 or online at: www.culvercitybus.com



LADOT

On November 17th the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) made changes to the schedules for Commuter Express lines 422 and 549. To download these new schedules visit www.ladottransit.com.

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Transit Updates Continued

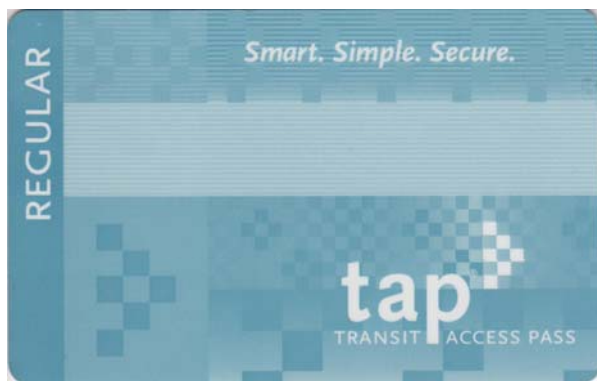
LADOT Continued

On October 29th LADOT added one short trip the afternoon to serve the new Park and Ride lot on Redondo Beach Avenue and Marine Avenue on Commuter Express Line 438. This trip was added in response to increased passenger volume at the Park and Ride lot.

Long Beach Transit

Effective February 18, 2015 Long Beach Transit will be fully on TAP. The agency will discontinue the sale of paper passes at its Transit and Visitor Information Center and at participating vendors. Only the 1-Day and 5-Day passes purchased on Long Beach Transit Buses will still be available, all other passes will need to be purchased on a TAP card. For more information on Long Beach Transit and TAP visit:

<http://www.lbtransit.com/services/TAP.aspx>



LOSSAN Timetable

The Los Angeles, San Diego, San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor (LOSSAN) issued a new combined timetable that includes Amtrak, Metro-link and Coaster services. This schedule is only available on-line at:

http://www.octa.net/pdf/LOSSANSchedule_10614.pdf

Megabus

Effective December 6th the low-cost carrier will begin service from the new ARTIC center in Anaheim. Buses will depart from Dock 11 and travel to San Jose, Oakland and San Francisco. For more information and to view schedules go to megabus.com. If booked early enough passengers can get seats for \$1.00 (plus 50¢ transaction fee). Megabus in California has also begun reserved seating on buses. Passengers can now pay additional for 10 select seats on each Megabus trip.

Metro Purple Line

Recently ground was broken on a 3.9 mile extension of the Metro Purple Line from Wilshire/Western Station to Beverly Hills. This new extension will include stations at Wilshire/La Brea, Wilshire/Fairfax and Wilshire/La Cienega. This segment is expected to be completed in 2023.

OCTA

As part of the opening of the new ARTIC in Anaheim, OCTA will be making the following bus route changes on December 6th to bus routes in Anaheim.

Line 50: Eastbound buses will stop at Dock 6 and westbound buses will stop at Dock 5.

Line 53: The line will now end at ARTIC instead of Main and Struck and will stop at Docks 1, 2 and 3.

Line 153: The line will now end at ARTIC and the stops along Main Street, south of Katella and on Struck will no longer be served by Line 153. Line 153 will stop at Dock 4.

Line 430: Will now end at ARTIC and will use Docks 7 and 8. For more information contact OCTA at 714.560.6282 or online at:

www.octa.net 🚌 🚌

Public and Legislative Affairs By Dana Gabbard

After some 20 years doing this column on a monthly basis, it is coming to a close. Where our region is in terms of transit is a great distance from where it was in 1994. Have we miraculously solved all problems? Of course not, but the progress over that span of years is remarkable.

I plan to continue doing occasional special events for SO.CA.TA and contribute articles for Streetsblog. Assist the Rail Users Network which will be holding their annual conference in Los Angeles next year. And keep an eye on the process to prepare a sales tax measure for the ballot in 2016. Either a new generation will fill the breach and carry forward or not. After all this time consumed with transit advocacy I am going to explore new frontiers.

Hope you found these columns informative. Writing them was an education. Farewell and good luck! 🚗 🚗

Day After Thanksgiving Trip By Dana Gabbard

Since 1995 we have undertaken an annual Day After Thanksgiving (DAT) study tour of bus service in southern California. It was Charles Hobbs who suggested the idea, noting that the Day After Thanksgiving is unique because while it is a weekday, regular service is operated and many get the day off and can do transit riding without taking time off from work. Thus it is an ideal opportunity to ride services that cannot be tried on Saturdays, when we generally engage in transit riding expeditions.

That first DAT trip was to Ventura County. Over the years we have ridden services in such areas as Santa Barbara, Big Bear, San Diego, Bakersfield, Banning, Palm Springs and Victorville plus explored the express services of the Riverside Transit Agency. This year we did something different, riding owl service in the L.A. area, Friday evening into Saturday morning.

In the past we did an owl exploration each summer but had not for the past few years. The reason to re-visit service in the wee

hours is that at a meeting of the Metro Citizens' Advisory Council earlier this year I learned Metro next year will be considering whether to change how it operates owl service. Instead of having most bus lines run into downtown L.A. for the hourly "line'-up" the agency is contemplating having the Red Line operate 24 hours with owl bus service feeding into that.

This would open up possibilities versus the time constraints under which the owls currently operate. It seemed like now was a good time to start contemplating what we think the changes should be and investigate the service operated now — are there gaps in service, or lines with low ridership that may not merit continuation?

Charles Powell created an itinerary that I publicized via an e-mail to our members along with a message on the Facebook social transit fans page and a post on Streetsblog.

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Day After Thanksgiving Trip Continued

November 28th at 9:13 PM Charles Powell, Mark Strickert and myself met up at 7th/Hill in downtown Los Angeles and boarded the first line we wished to explore, the owl routing of Line 83. This route serves Highland Park, Cypress Park and Eagle Rock along Pasadena Avenue, Marmion Way, Monte Vista and York Boulevard. But from 9:00 PM to 4:00 AM it operates an extension past its usual terminus at York and Eagle Rock Boulevard where it runs on stretches of Eagle Rock Boulevard and Colorado Boulevard with several loops and in some cases goes along the same street segments twice with a layover at La Loma and Figueroa.

Why does it do this odd routing? Frankly that is something that has long puzzled me. What possible purpose is served running an empty bus (I have found it carries almost no passengers) up and around Eagle Rock? I have rode this routing several times over the years and always came away from the experience perplexed. With potential tweaks of the owls in the offing I felt this was an opportune time to revisit the mystery routing.

Going northbound from downtown Los Angeles we were on a NABI 7804 with 8 passengers. Ridership along the main segments was light but with boardings and alightings. The bus emptied out as we went along York through Lincoln Heights until it was empty except for the tour participants by the time we reached Eagle Rock Boulevard.

As we rode along the extension and picked up no passengers the driver confirmed it generally runs empty on the owl extension portion. Sometimes there are some boardings along Colorado Boulevard from passengers of the 180 desiring to go south. Ditto

sometimes the 81 while it runs and the 28. But overall the extension seems mostly to serve no purpose.

The layover is adjacent to a McDonald's which provides a convenient place for the operator to get a snack or take a bathroom break until it closes at 2:00 AM. We had one employee of a nearby market board (to ride for about 3 minutes) who normally takes the 81 or 180 but since he got off early was able to ride the 83.

The only theory the operator had for the why the extension is operated is that the late night segment facilitates the timing of the timed transfer with the 28. But after the trip I was looking over the Metro website and when reading the notice of the recent change to the route 83 late night routing to no longer turn on Avenue 37 I was left to wonder has the 28's owl turnaround been extended northward to still meet the 83? Or is there now a gap between the two? Just another unsolved mystery to leave me bewildered!

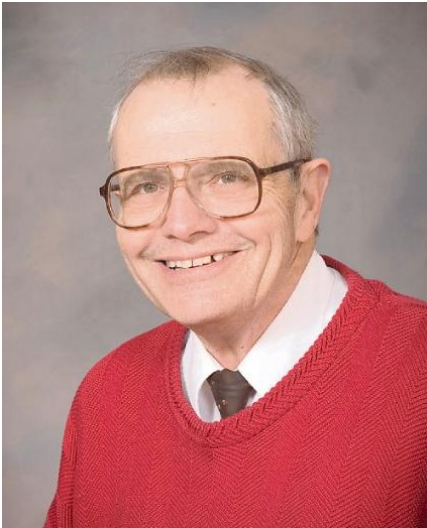
Once the bus resumed running along York we started to pick up some passengers. 11:01 PM we deboarded at Spring/Temple in downtown. This was adjacent to the Grand Park which already had a Christmas Tree with lights on display. Running about 10 minutes late the Silver line showed up at 11:20 PM, NABI 8362. There were 10 passengers, including an obnoxious drunk who had an Omnitrans day pass which he declared entitled him to ride all transit. Because we had a tight connection to transfer to the Green Line Powell suggested we

(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.

Patrick C. Dorin: On November 18th, author and historian Dr. Patrick C. Dorin passed away at age 75 in Superior, Wisconsin. Dr. Dorin was a life-long educator working as a teacher and administrator on the elementary school level. Even after retirement he continued to serve on the Superior School Board and volunteered to teach Senior Citizens transportation classes. Dr. Dorin began writing books in 1969 and wrote 35 books, many on railroad related topics including several on passenger trains in the United States. Dr. Dorin was a dedicated family man and is survived by his wife of 53 years Karen, two daughters, three sons, nine grandchildren, one great grandchild and two brothers. Donations can be made in Pat's name to the Lake Superior Transportation Museum, 506 West Michigan Street, Duluth, MN 55802.



Rapid Transit Press : Our friends at Rapid Transit Press have completed another issue of their famous News and Views. In the grand tradition of "Interurbans," "Western Railroader" and "Western Transit" the latest issue has the following stories: Tramways of Las Vegas, 10 Years of the Metro Gold Line - Part 3, and Notes from the field book. RTP is also working on a 2014 year in review that will be out sometime in January 2015 and a 20 year index of newsletters from Rapid Transit Press also due out sometime in early 2015. For more information contact RTP at: Andrew Novak - Post Office Box 2383 - Downey, CA 90242 or at rtd1121@yahoo.com

Railfan & Railroad: I will conclude with a note of congratulations to Railfan & Railroad Magazine which just celebrated their 40th Anniversary. The first issue was in Winter 1974 and was started by the late Hal Carstens. When the magazine first began it was titled "Railfan." In 1979 Carsten's purchased the old "Railroad" magazine which had recently folded. "Railroad" magazine was started in 1906. The May 1979 was the first issue to carry the combined Railfan & Railroad" name. In June 2009 Hal Carsten's passed away although the publishing company which bore his name continued publishing the magazine. In August 2014 Carstens Publications closed and White River Productions purchased the magazine and is continuing to produce it. You can visit Railfan & Railroad online at: www.railfan.com



Day After Thanksgiving Trip Continued

instead get off at 7th Street and use the Expo Line to reach Vermont. So at 11:30 PM we deboarded at 7th/Flower and made our way to the platform for the Expo Line in the 7th/Metro station.

11:40 PM we boarded car 100A on the Expo Line. Metrorail service has a 10 minute frequency during late night periods and operates later on Friday and Saturday night. The train had some light ridership. We deboarded at Vermont/Exposition at 11:53 PM.

At 12:17 AM we boarded route 204, articulated NABI 9269 northbound on Vermont operated by a friend of Charles Powell. It had robust ridership. We rode all the way to the layover at Vermont/Sunset and then continued south to Wilshire/Vermont where we deboarded around 1:00 AM.

Powell and Strickert took the Red Line while I took route 20 (NABI 8451 with 6 passengers). We met up at the 24 hour Subway Sandwich shop at 7th/Grand. Perias Pillay had been texting me while coming back from San Diego on the Pacific Surliner and arranged to join the tour, meeting up with us at Subway.

2:06 AM we boarded route 37 at Grand/7th southbound (after it participated in the lineup), NABI 8443 with two passengers. There was minimal ridership along Adams. At La Brea we made our way to Jefferson where we became route 38 for the other half of the late night loop run along the two lines. I was discussing Jerard Wright's observation based on his time on the Westside/Central Service Council that the Adams segment carries more passengers than the Jefferson when a rider who regularly rides the 37/38 owl loop combo made an informative

observation: the ridership pattern is more a function of the direction of service than the corridor being served. Most of the ridership is people getting off work needing to get back to South L.A., not to get to downtown. We witnessed at Washington Blvd. a northbound Blue Line train, the last of the night.

After reaching downtown at 3:30 AM the bus became route 14 and with marginal ridership went along Beverly to Vermont where we deboarded.

3:45 AM we boarded route 10, NABI 8558 operated by Powell's room-mate. Via Vermont we went west along Melrose and actually had a few passengers board (more than it usually experiences). 4:03 AM we reached San Vicente/Santa Monica Boulevard.

Just east of the 4 and 10 bus stop on Santa Monica was a signed stop for The Pickup, a Friday and Saturday night shuttle bus operated by City of West Hollywood to serve bars along Santa Monica Boulevard.

At 4:20 AM we boarded our last bus, Line 4 NABI 9581 with about 12 passengers. It had robust ons and offs as we proceeded through West Hollywood, East Hollywood, Silverlake and Echo Park to downtown. Perias got off near Vermont and by 5:00 AM the rest of us were in downtown Los Angeles and via the Purple Line enjoyed breakfast at the Wilshire/Western Denny's.

This trip will provide fodder for any comments we provide if/when Metro undertakes the owl restructuring. It was a long but satisfying night of bus/rail riding and camaraderie. 🚌 🚊

AVTA's New BYD Buses

On October 29, 2014 the Antelope Valley Transit Authority (AVTA) unveiled two zero emissions buses built by BYD in Lancaster. These two full-electric buses have joined the AVTA fleet and will undergo testing over the next twelve months. AVTA is working to install charging stations at their transit centers in Palmdale and Lancaster.



Both photos on this page show the two BYD buses that have recently joined the AVTA fleet.

Both photos are courtesy of Kelly Miller of AVTA.



Photos of the Month

San Francisco MUNI PCC 1074 at Fisherman's Warf in October 2014. This PCC has been painted like a Toronto Transit Commission PCC.

—Wayne L. Doran
Photo



Megabus double-decker DD599 in Anaheim on July 31, 2014.

—Andrew Novak
Photo

Classic Passenger Train



*Southern Pacific
SDP45 3203 is in
charge of the San
Joaquin Daylight in
Fresno, California.*

*This photo was
taken in the early
1970s as the count-
down to Amtrak
was on.*

*-Dave Cameron
Photo/Pacific
Railroad Society
Collection.*



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