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Submission of materials: ALL materials for the TRANSIT ADVOCATE newsletter go to

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SO.CA.TA officers, 2014
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Vice President: Ken Ruben
Secretary: Perias Pillay
Treasurer: Dana Gabbard
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Newsletter Editor:  
Newsletter Prod. Mgr: Dana Gabbard  
Webmaster: Charles Hobbs  
Archivist: Edmund Buckley

Next SO.CA.TA Gatherings:  
**May 2<sup>nd</sup>:** Omnitrans sbX tour  
(For details contact us!)  
**May 3<sup>rd</sup>:** 75th Anniversary of Union Station  
**Month 2014 — Issue 261**



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# THE TRANSIT ADVOCATE

Newsletter of the Southern California Transit Advocates  
January 2015 Vol. 23, No. 1

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Omnitrans New Flyer 0153 at Riverside Avenue and Merill Avenue in Rialto on February 15, 2014.

ISSN 1525-2892

## Bulletin Board

### Bulletin Board:

At the special meeting held February 15<sup>th</sup> Dana Gabbard was elected Treasurer to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of Dave Snowden. Gabbard per the by-laws resigned as Secretary. Perias Pillay was elected as his successor. Both were elected by acclimation. At the meeting Hank Fung moderated a discussion of the Metro fare restructuring proposals and the membership by consensus reached a position mostly on key principles instead of getting bogged down in minutiae. This was posted on our website and presented at the March 29<sup>th</sup> public hearing by Dana Gabbard on our behalf.

Due to our current fiscal condition the Newsletter will be bi-monthly for the balance of this year.

Hank Fung has volunteered to review the member questionnaires sent with the renewal notices and give us a summary of the comments. This should be available in the next month or so.

We will have a booth at National Train Day (in partnership with the Sierra Club) at Union Station on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. This will also be the 75th anniversary celebration for Union Station -- volunteers to assist this outreach effort are actively encouraged to contact Dana Gabbard, who is coordinating.

### Publication Dates for the Newsletter:

With the recent change to bi-monthly I have revised the publication schedule for the newsletter.

I have included up to January of the following year since memberships carry over to that month. Dates are subject to change.

May/June 2014 (257)

Material Deadline: May 26, 2014

Press Date: June 9, 2014

July/August 2014 (258)

Material Deadline: July 28, 2014

Press Date: August 4, 2014

September/October 2014 (259)

Material Deadline: September 23, 2014

Press Date: October 6, 2014

November/December 2014 (260)

Material Deadline: November 24, 2014

Press Date: December 8, 2014

January/February 2015 (261)

Material Deadline: December 22, 2014

Press Date: January 5, 2015

As always material for consideration should be sent to the editor at:

Please enclose a self addressed stamped envelope for returns.

Submission are used at the discretion of the editor and may be edited for space constraints. 🚊 🚊

## Photos of the Month

*MTD E-Bus 15 on State Street near the Santa Barbara Amtrak Station on March 29, 2014.*

—Russ Jones  
Photo



*Recently former San Diego MTS LRV 1018 was donated to the Bay Area Electric Railroad Association and has joined their collection at the Western Railway Museum in Rio Vista Junction California. The 1018 is the second LRV to join the collection, SF Muni Boeing 1258 was the first.*

—Western Railway  
Museum Photo

## Day after Thanksgiving Continued

Four got on at Avenue G and Olive, where the bus became route 45, followed by 5 at Main and I. At this point we were mostly passing through wide open spaces devoid of development.

At 2:30 PM we arrived back at the Victor Valley College bus terminal and transferred to route 43 (NABI 609) which had 2 passengers and then passed in quick succession the College, hatchery, circus and passed over the dry Mojave River. While most of the day was overcast the rain was quite heavy as we travelled between Hesperia and Apple Valley.

We gained 5 passengers at a Mall that included an Applebee's. We also passed a high school and then the Post Office (zip code 92307). 3:00 PM we transferred to route 41 (NABI 602) with 10 passengers. 1 person got off and one got on at the Apple Valley Library/Civic Center.

Continuing we passed the Commons, a dead shopping center. Two came off and five came on (including 3 kids) at Bass Hill Road/Westlund Way. We noted the landscape included large mounds of crumbly rocks, much like what you pass through when one rides RTA's Commuter Link route 202 between Murrieta and Oceanside. We went by St. Mary's Hospital Center then up and over a hill into Victorville.

At the Transit Center we noted it is also served by Greyhound and Amtrak Thruway, and is near the Amtrak train station. Continuing we passed the California Route 66 Museum then Wimpey's Pawn Shop. 3:50 PM we deboarded at 7th/Lorene.

Next we rode route 51 (NABI 605) which had minimal but steady boarding and de-

boarding. At 4:28 PM we got off at B and 7th. At 4:40 PM we caught route 41 with 10 passengers and after an uneventful trip returned to 7th and Lorene to catch the BV Link. Due to equipment problems the bus was about 20 minutes late. We climbed aboard at 5:27 PM with 18 passengers (nearly a seated load) boarding vehicle 2016 (Glaval Bus) for the trip back to San Bernardino.

Charles Hobbs noted that certain areas of the routes we rode (the run to Hesperia and through Apple Valley) were rather rural. Also sometimes wide open spaces would be adjacent to areas that were populated or commercial. The Victory Valley isn't a remote outpost anymore.

It was nice to finally be able to ride on a system that until recently was not easy to access from the rest of Southern California. What should we do for the DAT trip this year? Thanks to Mark Strickert and Charles Hobbs for suggestions and additions that improved this report. 🚌 🚌



NABI 605 at B and 7th -Mark Strickert Photo

## Transit Updates

### Big Blue Bus

Starting March 31<sup>st</sup> the Big Blue Bus (BBB) will begin installing new amenities at bus stops within the City of Santa Monica. Bus stops will be worked on in groups of 6-10 and will be closed for about one month. Temporary bus stops will be established before or after the closed stops. Notices will be posted about the stop closures 10-14 days prior to the closure.

Below are the first group of stops to be closed:

Along Lincoln:

At Ashland Ave heading to UCLA --board at Marine or Ocean Park

At Ashland heading toward LAX -- board at Ocean Park or Navy Street

Along Main Street:

At Hollister heading to downtown Santa Monica-- at Pacific or Ocean Park

At Hollister heading toward LAX—board at Ocean Park or Pacific

At Marine heading toward downtown Santa Monica—board at Ashland or Rose

At Marine heading toward LAX—board at Rose or Ashland

For more information on the Bus Stop Improvement Project contact BBB customer service at 310.451.5444. For construction-related questions, please call 213.820.5889 or 310.740.6277.



### Disneyland Resort Express

Southern California Gray Line made several changes to the Disneyland Resort Express service on March 1<sup>st</sup>. Several trips were cut from the schedule to both LAX and John Wayne airport and the stops in Anaheim were also reduced.

To LAX buses now depart Anaheim every hour on the hour from 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM (except 5:00 PM) and to John Wayne from Anaheim every hour on the half hour from 6:30 AM to 5:30 PM. From LAX buses depart at 7:50 AM, 8:50 AM, 9:50 AM, 10:45 AM, 11:45 AM, 12:45 PM, 1:45 PM, 2:45 PM, 3:45 PM, 5:00 PM, 6:00 PM and 8:00 PM. Buses depart John Wayne at 8:30 AM, 9:30 AM, 10:30 AM, 11:30 AM, 12:30 PM, 1:30 PM, 2:30 PM, 3:30 PM, 4:45 PM, 5:45 PM and 7:00 PM.

Buses now pick up at 13 Stops in the Anaheim area with hourly service from the three Disney Properties and every 2 hours from the other resort stops. For more information or to download a schedule visit:

[southerncaliforniagrayline.com](http://southerncaliforniagrayline.com)

(Continued on Page 4)



## Transit Updates Continued

### Foothill Transit

From March 22, 2014 to March 2016 Lines 178 and 289 will be on detour in Rowland Heights due to the Nogales Street Grade Separation project. Nogales will be closed between San Jose Avenue and Gale Avenue/Walnut Drive. Various bus stops will be closed and or relocated during this two year project. For more information contact Foothill Transit at 800.743.3463 or online at: [www.foothilltransit.org](http://www.foothilltransit.org)



### iShuttle (Irvine)

In conjunction with the April 7th Metrolink schedule changes, the Irvine iShuttle will be adjusting the start times for several trips on Routes A, B, C and D.

For details on these changes contact the iShuttle at 949.724.6287 or via email at [info@irvineshuttle.net](mailto:info@irvineshuttle.net)

### LADOT - Commuter Express

Effective April 7<sup>th</sup> the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) made changes to Commuter Express Lines 423 and 573, below is a summary of those changes.

Line 423: A new 5:27 AM trip has been added from the Thousand Oaks Transit Center. Boarding restrictions are now in effect on the line on both ends restricting local riding in Thousand Oaks and downtown Los Angeles.

Line 573: There is now only one trip in morning from Westwood/Century City to Encino one trip in the afternoon from Encino to Westwood/Century City. (Editors Note: When viewing the schedule online it did not list a trip to Encino in the AM hours.)

For more information contact LADOT at (818, 323, 310, 213) 808.2273 or online at: <http://www.ladottransit.com>

### Metro

Effective April 4<sup>th</sup>, Metro's popular Dodger Stadium Express service returned for the 2014 Dodger's Baseball Season. Buses operated from Gateway Transit Plaza to Dodger Stadium. Buses operate every 10 minutes prior to the start of the game and every 30 minutes during the game. Fares are \$1.50 one-way or same day Dodger game ticket. New for this year the buses used on the Dodger Express are equipped with radios so passengers can listen to the game while on the bus. Also there are two new pick up and drop off locations at Dodger Stadium. The first stop is behind left/center field and the second is on the upper parking deck near Lot P.

(Continued on Page 5)

## Day After Thanksgiving Trip Continued

I spotted what I term a fast food gulch -- a street lined with the usual franchised eateries (Subway, McDonald's, Burger King, etc.). Mark Strickert afterward noted "Sounds like Palmdale Blvd. west of the 10 freeway". We arrived at the Victor Valley hub (7<sup>th</sup> and Lorene) at 9:30 AM. We were going to see a lot of it as the day went on. It is a rather bare bones affair, consisting of a string of shelters with benches for the stops of the various routes that serve it.

At 10:01 AM we boarded route 52, bus 612, a NABI, with 8 passengers (one using the bike rack). We passed Desert Oasis Plaza and Desert Sky Plaza shopping center. 3 boarded at Arlette Drive, then we had 1 on and 1 off at Seneca/El Evado. The streetscape was now suburban.

A regular rider (who chatted with the bus operator) boarded at Manzano/El Evado. Then we passed the Scandia Family Fun Center (which has two mini-golf courses). As we approached the Mall of Victor Valley we had 1 on and 2 off then 7 de-board at the Mall itself (likely to do some Black Friday shopping). After a dash into the mall to use the facilities, we boarded route 53 (NABI 601). We had 1 off and 1 on at Mariposa and Bear Valley then 2 on at Cottonwood and Bear Valley. Now we passed Desert Valley Hospital and the Spring Valley Lake gated community. At 11:17 AM we arrived at the Victor Valley College bus terminal, to transfer to route 45.

The terminal has a large cavernous shelter with seating inside it. At 11:30 AM we departed on route 45, vehicle 714 (Blue Bird). This serves Victor Valley College and passes a fish hatchery. Along the route we also passed an automotive repair shop and the

visiting Grimaldi Circus followed by clusters of retail. Two boarded at Catalpa and I Ave.



VVTA NABI 601 at the Mall of Victor Valley on November 29, 2013 -Mark Strickert Photo

We now passed through a commercial/industrial area with adjacent residential. In the distance we could see the VVTA yard (on Smoketree Street just off I Avenue at E Avenue). 3 got on at Main/I Avenue, 1 of them with a bike. The Main Street Plaza shopping complex consisted of clusters of retail establishments. Upon arriving at the Hesperia Post Office the bus became route 48.

We arrived at E Avenue and Main at 12:08 PM and had lunch at Sizzler, joined by Craig Barnes. After chatting about transit in the VVTA service area Craig went about his business while Mark, Charles and I re-boarded route 48 (NABI 610) at 2:10 PM. A wheelchair user and their companion de-boarded at the G Avenue turn.

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Over the years our day after Thanksgiving bus service explorations have gone to a number of far flung areas: Santa Barbara, Bakersfield, Palm Springs, San Diego and many points in between. One of the last transit systems that until now wasn't easily reachable was the Victor Valley Transit Authority (VVTA). This past October the VVTA BV Link expanded to running Monday through Friday which meant one could now access VVTA via express bus service from the San Bernardino Metrolink station. Mark Strickert put together a proposed itinerary which our informal DAT committee quickly endorsed and communicated to the membership.

November 29, 2013 I awoke at 3:45 AM and because the weather forecast included possible rain I had to return to my apartment and get an umbrella which made me miss my early morning bus connection. I finally caught the Wilshire line 20, a NABI low floor 7064 at 4:54 AM. I arrived at 7th/Metro station at 5:00 AM and then caught the Red Line to Union Station, car 578 with 12 passengers.

5:45 AM I boarded Metrolink car 221, a quiet car. During the trip I spotted the new El Monte bus station, then endured a long wait outside the Baldwin Park station. I arrived at San Bernardino at 7:42 AM. The café in the depot was closed due to the holiday weekend. I met up with Mark Strickert and we boarded the BV-Link 2013 Glaval bus with 4 passengers. One of our fellow passengers expressed to me a desire for the bus to also run weekends. I found it interesting that VVTA's onboard rider alerts are numbered in the form of "#-year". We continued through the Arrowhead transit hub,

then past strip malls and car lots, unincorporated Bloomington, the Kaiser Fontana Medical Center and a shopping mall. In Fontana 2 deboarded, 3 passengers boarded. This included Charles Hobbs who was joining the trip.

Now we were going up the hill, through a landscape consisting of open spaces and sagebrush. We passed pipeline construction adjacent to the road and spotted hillsides green from the recent rain. Then we passed rough looking mountains and spotted the nearby train tracks of the BNSF (former Santa Fe) and Union Pacific (former Southern Pacific).



VVTA 2013 at 7th and Lorene on November 29, 2013. -Mark Strickert Photo

Soon we crested the Cajon Summit, marked by the Summit Café in Hesperia. Charles Hobbs pointed out a billboard that stated we were passing the last Coffee Bean before Victorville.

*(Continued on Page 13)*

### **Metrolink**

Special Angels Express trains have returned for a fourth straight Angels baseball season. Beginning March 31<sup>st</sup> trains will begin operation to all weekday home games that start at 7:05 PM. There are trains from Los Angeles, Oceanside and Friday only trains from the Inland Empire. Train 6502 departs Los Angeles and Train 643 departs Laguna Niguel/Mission Viejo both at 5:50 PM. On Fridays Train 899 departs Riverside at 5:01 PM and terminates at Orange where game passengers can transfer to train 643. Train 6503 (to Los Angeles) and Train 644 (to Oceanside) depart 30 minutes after the game ends. Special Train 898 (to Riverside) departs Orange after passengers arrive on Train 644. Fares for the special Angels Express trains are \$7 round-trip.

Effective April 7<sup>th</sup> Metrolink has made changes to their service to reflect current operating conditions, improve service patterns and support future Positive Train Control operating requirements. The changes will also create a more efficient service and improved rail connections. Below is a list of what routes had schedule changes.

### **Ventura County Line**

Minor changes to Train 108

### **Antelope Valley Line**

Minor changes to Trains 203, 207, 209, 212, 216, 220, 221, 222, 223 and 225 - Mid-day service changes to Trains 205, 210, 211, 214 and 218.

### **San Bernardino Line**

Minor changes to Trains 308, 310, 312, 314, 321, 325, 327 and 329 - Late morning service changes to trains 304, 306, 319 and 323.

### **91 Line**

Changes to Trains 704 and 707

### **Orange County Line**

Monday through Friday service changes on Trains 608, 684 and 687. Weekend service changes to Train 666.

### **Inland Empire-OC Line**

Changes to Trains 800, 802, 803, 806, 808, 812, 813 and 814

Trains 804 and 815 now operate to Laguna Niguel/Mission Viejo instead of San Juan Capistrano

Trains 810 and 817 now operate to Laguna Niguel/Mission Viejo instead of Irvine.

For more information contact Metrolink online at: [www.metrolinktrains.com](http://www.metrolinktrains.com)

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**METROLINK**



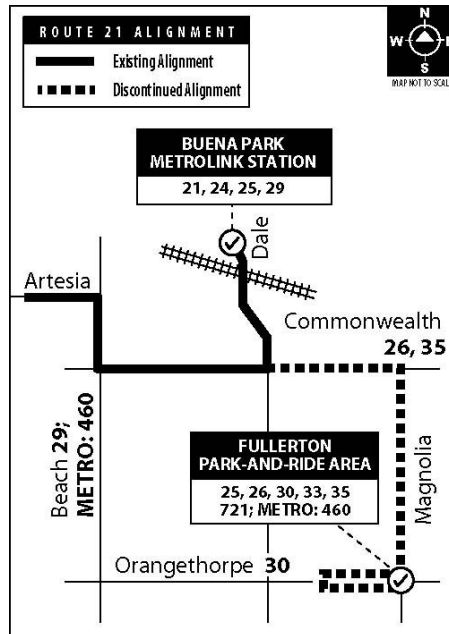
### OCTA

Effective February 9<sup>th</sup> the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) made several changes to their service. Below is a summary of those changes.

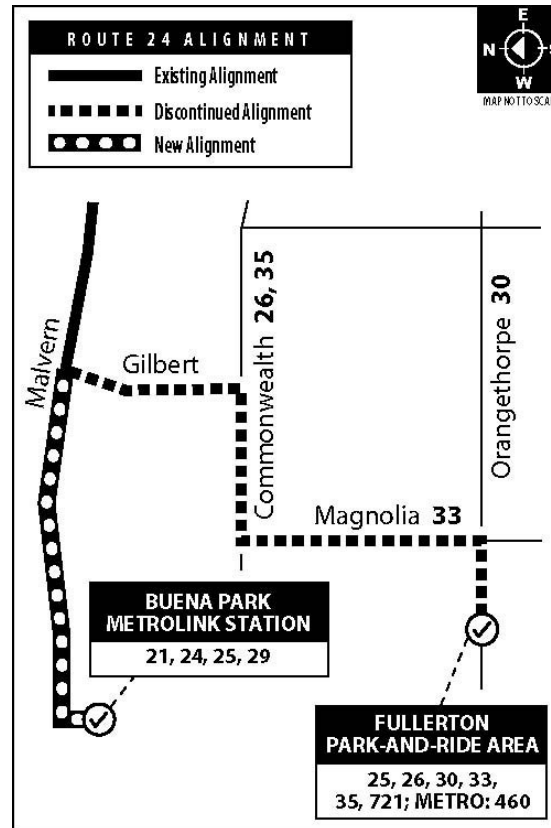
Due to low ridership the agency cut service early morning and late night trips on the following routes: 51, 76, 129, 143 and 153. The service hours will be reallocated to other routes with greater demand.

Route 25: The weekday short-turn trips that operated between the Fullerton Park-and-Ride and the Buena Park Metrolink Station have been canceled due to low ridership. The regular trips on the line will remain intact and adjusted to meet existing demand and Metrolink train times.

Route 21: The segment between Buena Park Metrolink and the Fullerton Park-and-Ride has been discontinued.



Route 24: In an effort to provide more direct service to Cal State Fullerton (CSUF), Route 24 now ends at the Buena Park Metrolink Station and the segment to the Fullerton Park-and-Ride has been discontinued. Service has been discontinued on Gilbert between Malvern & Commonwealth. Passenger traveling from the Park-and-Ride can use Route 26, which serves Downtown Fullerton and CSUF.



For more information contact OCTA at 714.636.7433 or online at: [www.octa.net](http://www.octa.net)

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## San Diego's Big Bay Shuttle

Returning for the 2014 Summer Season is San Diego's Big Bay Shuttle.

This year the service is scheduled to operate from May 23<sup>rd</sup> to September 2<sup>nd</sup>. Buses on the route operate from 10:00 AM to 8:00 PM Sunday through Thursday and from 10:00 AM to 10:00 PM on Friday and Saturday.

Fares are \$3 per person and tickets are valid for an entire day. Buses stop at the following locations: Sheraton San Diego Hotel & Marina\*, The Maritime Museum\*, Wyndham San Diego Bayside\*, Broadway/Navy Piers, The Fish Market\*, Seaport Village/The Headquarters, Hyatt Manchester Grand\*, Marriott Marquis & Marina\* and the Hilton San Diego Bay Front\*.

Indicates a ticket sales location. Tickets can also be purchased at Seaport Village (Destination Travel), Flagship Cruises and Events, Hornblower Cruises and Events and the San Diego Convention and Visitor's Bureau (Waterfront location).

Below is a Map of the shuttle route.

For more information visit: [www.bigbayshuttle.com](http://www.bigbayshuttle.com) or email questions to: [bigbayshuttle@aceparking.com](mailto:bigbayshuttle@aceparking.com)



**Sunshine Shuttle**

Effective February 27<sup>th</sup> the south Whittier Sunshine Shuttle route was modified. The original route is now designated as Route A and no longer serves Amelia Mayberry Park. Amelia Park is now served by Route B which also provides service to East Whittier and the Whitwood Town Center on a clockwise loop. Route A still operates from Sorenson Park in Los Nietos to Whitwood Town Center.



**VISTA**

Effective February 3<sup>rd</sup> the Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC) expanded operation on the VISTA Highway 126 service from Fillmore to Piru during peak hours. Five trips were added in the morning from Piru through to Ventura and three trips in the afternoon from Ventura to Piru. New stops include Via Fustero and Center in Piru and Rancho Sespe. The new Piru extension is being offered on a trial basis and VCTC will evaluate the performance in July.

**Wellness Shuttle**

On March 15<sup>th</sup> the new Wellness Center Shuttle began operation at Los Angeles County/USC Medical Center in Boyle Heights. The service makes four stops at the Wellness Center (old hospital tower), Parking Lot 10, ADA Parking and the Los Angeles County/USC Medical Center. This new service operates Monday through Saturday every 15 minutes from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM. Fare on this new route is Free. For more information contact Los Angeles County at 626.458.3909 or online at:

<http://www.lagobus.info>  



*Photo courtesy Hank Fung*

## ***In Memory of Dave Snowden 1945-2014***

On February 10, 2014, our former Treasurer Dave Snowden passed away from cardiac arrest. Dave was born on November 2, 1945 in Providence Rhode Island and was an only child. Dave served in the United States Army during the Vietnam War. In the 1970s he went to work for El Camino College as a Student Services Specialist, a position he held until his passing. Dave had a life-long love of transportation, especially trains and was very active in the YMCA and the Veteran of Foreign Wars. Dave also refereed various swim meets including the 1984 Olympics. Dave will be laid to rest at St. Anne's Cemetery in Cranston, Rhode Island. The Dave Snowden Memorial Veterans Scholarship has been established in his name at El Camino College to assist Veterans. For more information or to contribute visit [www.elcaminocollegefoundation.org](http://www.elcaminocollegefoundation.org)

From Socata President Nate Zablen:

"We have lost a truly wonderful human being and a long time transit advocate in the passing of Dave Snowden. He served selflessly for many years as our Treasurer and as head of our Bylaws Committee. He had a tremendous interest in public transit systems throughout the world and loved to share with us his collection of priceless historical photos on his laptop. Dave was soft spoken and extremely knowledgeable in many areas but was always modest and polite. It was a privilege to have worked with him and he gave his all to our organization. He will be greatly missed by all of us. Our next meeting will be dedicated to the memory of Dave by the Beach. May he rest in Peace." 🚊 🚊

