

TRANSIT UPDATES

BREA TROLLEY

Lunchtime shuttle route from Birch/Ranger to Walnut/Birch (Downtown Brea) now operates only M/W/F. Tuesday and Thursday trips run between the Union Plaza shopping area (Imperial Hwy west of Kraemer) and Olen Pointe business and restaurant complex (Pointe Dr. north of Lambert). Both routes share one stop, WB Birch/nearside Associated.

WHITTIER TRANSIT


Per Russ Jones: Operator Norwalk Transit made their anticipated route and schedule adjustments, effective 1/8/07. Route 1 has been slightly straightened, and some duplication with Route 2 was removed. They now also accept EZ Pass. Details at <http://www.whittierch.org/content/CS02.html>.

SANTA MONICA BIG BLUE BUS

Big Blue Bus is holding a series of community meetings in March. Among the topics are a possible fare restructuring, changes to Route 10, and a new "Community Transit Service." Meeting times and places:

Saturday, March 10th, 10:00 AM to Noon
Ken Edwards Center (Room 100 A-B), 1527 4th Street (Served by BBB 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, and 9)
Monday, March 12th, 6:00 - 8:00 PM
Virginia Park (Thelma Terry Center), 2200 Virginia Avenue (Served by BBB 7 and 11)

AMTRAK

Via Dana Gabbard: Through April 29th, all Metrolink and Amtrak Pacific Surfliner Monthly Pass Holders can enjoy free Friday/Saturday/Sunday travel on Pacific Surfliner trains to destinations north of Los Angeles. Details <http://www.metrolinktrains.com/weekend/> 

BULLETIN BOARD

Our scheduled March speaker, LADOT's Phil Aker, will have to postpone his appearance. We instead vote on proposed bylaw revisions (see pg. 3), and discuss this year's study tour(s).

Members wishing to assist the series of Wilshire corridor meetings we are holding should contact the Executive Secretary: dgabbard@socata.net or (213) 388-2364.

Work is underway on the 2007 Transit Guide, SO.CA.TA's annual reference book of all the transit agencies in Southern California. Details next month.


We are sad to announce that member James Gusky passed away Dec. 20, 2006. Our condolences to his wife Marilyn.

Ms. Mary Cragin recently sent us a card of appreciation in response to the sympathy

card we sent her on the recent death of her husband James Cragin, who sat on the MTA Board for many years.

The Los Angeles Neighborhood Councils Congress has formed a Transportation Committee; for details on meeting days and times contact Brady Westwater at bradywestwater@gmail.com. Website: <http://lacowboy.blogspot.com/2007/02/how-to-fix-la-traffic-la-transportation.html#links>

Westside officials are forming a coalition to advocate for extensions of the Green Line: www.greenlinecoalition.com

The 5th annual Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative Community Forum will be held Thursday May 17 from 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the USC Davidson Conference Center (Figueroa and Jefferson). To register for the free event call (213) 627-1822 ext.20 or at <http://www.lani.org> 

BY-LAWS REVISIONS

Proposed changes to the By-Laws, as discussed and voted on individually at the February meeting, subject to final approval at the March meeting:

The second paragraph of Section 3.4.3 is renumbered 3.4.4 and reads:

The Corresponding Secretary (also known as the Executive Secretary) shall conduct official correspondence for the organization as directed by the President or the Executive Committee, and shall preside over all meetings when the President and Vice-President are absent.

Existing Sections 3.4.4 through 3.4.10 are renumbered 3.4.5 through 3.4.11, respectively.

New sections 3.4.12 through 3.4.15 are added as follows:

3.4.12. The Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, and Treasurer may delegate their responsibilities for the general membership meeting as needed, and may delegate their other duties with the approval of the Executive Committee.

3.4.13. The Newsletter Editor and President emeritus have a vote to break ties only if they do not separately hold office as a Director or officer.

3.4.14. All vacancies shall be filled by an immediate election at the next general membership meeting. Only those members who meet the eligibility requirements defined in Section 4.2 may be thus elected.

3.4.15. When an officer or Director misses

three (3) general membership meetings consecutively, a letter of inquiry shall be sent. The response (or lack thereof) shall be considered by the Executive Committee. At the Executive Committee's discretion, the office can be declared vacant and filled by the same process as for other vacancies.

Section 4.2 is reworded as follows (changes in *italics*):

Nominations for Officers and three (3) Directors-At-Large shall be held annually in November by the membership at the monthly meeting supervised by the Election Committee. There shall be no nominating committee. Members in good standing who will have been members for twelve (12) months *at the time of assuming office* shall be eligible to be nominated for President, Vice-President, Secretary or Treasurer. Members in good standing who will have been members for six (6) months *at the time of assuming office* shall be eligible to be nominated for Director-At-Large. Any candidate must have attended one-third (1/3) of the scheduled membership meetings, at a minimum, in the previous twelve (12) months *at the time of assuming office*.

Section 4.4.4 is added as follows:

Once the Election Committee commences counting the ballots, no further votes can be cast.

A comma is added to Section 7 after the words "on the last day", reading as follows:

The Fiscal Year for SO.CA.TA shall commence on the first day, and end on the last day, of each calendar year. 🚗



This has been a strange month--full of stupidity, rants and surprises. Sort of like a roller coaster ride.

For instance, when was the last time you heard of a newspaper reporter actually riding transit? Sue Doyle of the *Daily News* has done it a few times, the result being her Feb. 24 article "MTA's Drivers Breaking Rules". She recounts drivers running hot, passing up people at stops and overall rude and often callous toward their duties. The article quotes Goldy Norton, spokesman for the United Transportation Union, as calling the rule violations witnessed disturbing and noting that MTA has a responsibility to make sure bus drivers are doing their jobs. The *Daily News* is encouraging bus riders to share stories of their experiences by e-mailing them to: alongfortheride@dailynews.com

In the category of stupidity is the proposal to set up yet another separate construction authority, this one to extend the Green Line to LAX. Are we still buying the myth of faster, cheaper, better after the recent discovery of concrete chunks falling from the Gold Line Chinatown station structure?

Meanwhile at the last MTA Citizens' Advisory Council I was seated in the audience next to a gentleman who started attending about a year ago. During public comment he suddenly went all angry white guy, haranguing the Council about the hang-up over the funding of HOV lanes along the 405, with withering denunciations of MTA staff as the culprits. Excuse me? And what does he expect to accomplish by venting at a group of people whose ability to effect the things he yells about is zero? I guess he believes the parochial ravings of the *Daily News* editorial

page. Egads!

Speaking of the *Daily News*, on Feb. 13 they published my letter responding to their Feb. 9 anti-Wilshire subway extension editorial ("Subway to Nowhere II"):

"Your latest editorial against the extension of the subway under Wilshire is breathtaking in its shortsighted and ill-informed arguments. The mention of earthquakes and explosive natural gas is a regrettable scare tactic. Also, if one includes land-acquisition costs, the Orange Line easily cost more than \$400 million. Plus, given various limitations, I doubt we'll be having further such busways crisscross our region. Yes, addressing our short-term gridlock and bus-service needs is prudent. But we also need to look at the long term. The subway extension is a prudent investment that will help fuel the region's economic engine for decades to come".

But meanwhile the *L.A. Times* on Feb. 11 published yet another wrong-headed op-ed by USC Professor James Moore, this one ranting against the bullet train proposal ("Bullet trains won't get us anywhere"). He actually promotes the idea of eventual expansion of LAX: "... the day will come when regional and national interests will require greater airport capacity, and cities and counties may have to use eminent domain to expand their metropolitan airports. If we feel civic guilt about this, displaced residents should receive a premium above market value for their property. Such generosity would still cost only a small fraction of a statewide high-speed rail system." I'd bet the folks living in Westchester and Inglewood would love to tell the good Professor their reaction to his smug opinion. But you

might want to clear the room of children and the faint hearted first.

Quiz: Which three cities in Los Angeles County is Access Services wooing to join their Joint Powers? Answer after the next item:

How does one react to Robert L. Rosebrock? In his commentary "Cars Vs. Mass Transit: The Case for Each Person Being in Control" posted on the Culver City news website *The Front Page* [http://www.thefrontpageonline.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=878&Itemid=43], Rosebrock rants against what he sees as a conspiratorial "pro-transit" cabal, with special venom aimed at Transit Coalition Executive Director Bart Reed. Chill out, Mr. Rosebrock--there is no socialist conspiracy planning to confiscate your car (and freedom?).

Answer: Huntington Park, Palos Verdes and Monrovia (per item 8-d at the Jan. 22, 2007 ASI Board meeting).

In the good intentions department, we note Mayor Villaraigosa's prompting of a recent one week promotion of transit by having a 50 cent fare on 18 mostly low productivity MTA lines. Some of which likely will soon be discontinued under Metro Connections. Oh, well...

To my despair, L.A. County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky persists in pushing his Super Metro Rapid Express concept despite clear signs it will create havoc in the Wilshire corridor if/when implemented in June. I guess his zeal for another trophy to parade in front of cameras (a la the Orange Line) trumps sanity. Talk about dysfunctional politics!

At least I was able to give the Bus Rider's Union a kick in the teeth when the *L.A. Business Journal* published my letter ("Bus Is-

sue") on Feb. 19 in response to a recent op-ed in the Journal published by BRU spokesman Manuel Criollo:

"How typical Manuel Criollo of the Bus Riders Union should need to rewrite history and mis-state facts in order to push their myopic and short sighted public transit stances ("The Priority Should Be Placed on Doubling the Number of Buses", 2/5/2007). It is comical for the BRU to now praise the Wilshire Rapid Bus, given in the past they denounced Metro Rapid on the surreal basis that allegedly Metro Rapid was an excuse to funnel money to rail projects. And how does one react to the economic model that promotes increasing bus service while demanding bus fares not increase ever? It is unsustainable and the current bus service adjustments MTA is proposing are the consequences of the BRU's voodoo economics" coming home to roost".

Surprise of the month: MTA hopes Metro Connections will by June 2009 reduce service hours by 350,000 while increasing bus and rail ridership by 20 million (source: Ed Clifford's presentation at the Feb. 21 MTA Citizens' Advisory Council meeting).

AVTA contractor Veolia continues to struggle with performance issues. Martin Tompkins, who oversees the contract for Veolia, astonishingly at the Jan. 22 Board meeting admitted the problem is partly due to a lack of support from Veolia management for his efforts to fulfill promises made when they got the contract. I'll be curious how these difficulties work themselves out.

We'll conclude by noting the clueless op-ed by D. Malcolm Carson, who is a member of the Los Angeles Board of Transportation Commissioners, in the Feb. 25 *L.A. Times*.

Cont'd Pg. 6 ☞

PUBLIC AFFAIRS cont'd from Pg. 5

The headline for his piece says it all:
"Eliminating subway and bus fares could put

local mass transit on the road to success". No wonder my impression has always been the members of the Commission know zero about transportation. 🚗

MEMBERS IN ACTION

An addenda to the list of attendees of the Dec. 2 banquet: Nate Zablen was among those present.

On 02/02/07, Ken Ruben attended a presentation by Joseph P. Schwieterman at the Santa Monica Public Library, entitled "Trains, Planes & Automobiles; Perspectives on Santa Monica's Rich Transportation History." Railroad and transit items were covered, including the Expo Line.

Ken attended the Westside/Central Sector Governance Council meeting on January 10th, featuring the a review of proposed MTA changes for June, and plans for the public hearing in February. There was also an extensive Metro Connections and marketing report by MTA Chief Communications Officer Matt Raymond. Earlier that same day, Ken attended the reopening of the Customer Service Center at Wilshire and La Brea.

Joe Drummond, Lionel Jones, and Ken Ruben attended the South Bay Sector Governance Council meeting on January 12th.

Ken Ruben attended the January 18th Westside Cities Council of Governments meeting. Culver City Councilwoman Carol Gross, and Los Angeles City Councilman Bill Rosendahl, pushed for extending the Green Line to LAX, and for agenzizing such for the March Westside Cities meeting.

Dana Gabbard, Damien Goodman, Bart Reed, and Ken Ruben attended the MTA Board Meeting on January 26th.

Ken Ruben and Hank Fung attended the January San Gabriel Valley Sector Council Meeting.

Bart Reed has also been busy of late. He was quoted in both the LA Times and the Ventura Star on the Governor's plan to rob the spillover account, attended the Metro San Fernando Val-

ley Governance Council Meeting Jan. 10, Metro Committee Meetings Jan. 17 & 18, Metro Board Jan. 25 and the Metrolink Board Jan. 26. Additionally, he met with Ron Kaye, Editor of the Daily News to discuss bus service cuts and a proposal to enhance Metrolink service in the San Fernando Valley. And finally a PowerPoint on the Green Line to the Transit Working Group of the South Bay Council of Governments on Jan. 25.

Mark Strickert spoke for SO.CA.TA at the February MTA Gateway Sector public hearing, where many (most?) of the regular 275 riders made comments. Ken Ruben made a "statement" for SO.CA.TA at the Westside/Central hearing. Lionel Jones made comments at each hearing.

Roger Christensen had a letter in the Feb. 13 *Daily News* in response to a previous editorial against the Wilshire subway extension. Roger promoted the construction of the proposed 2.4-mile northeast extension of the Red Line to the Metrolink station at Burbank Airport, which Metro studies rank high as to boardings per mile and cost-effectiveness.

Mark Panitz was quoted in article "Center of Attention" on the soon to open Santa Monica Big Blue Bus Customer Center in the Feb. 8 *Santa Monica Daily Press*.

Damien Goodman's letter ("A Better Solution") appeared on the *Lookout Santa Monica* news website responding to columnist Frank Gruber on the need for a mass transit connection between the San Fernando Valley and Westwood:
http://www.surfsantamonica.com/ssm_site/the_lookout/letters/Letters-2007/February-2007/02_12_07_A_Better_Solution.htm

The first installment of Andy Novak's article on RTD and the 1984 Summer Olympics appeared in the Dec. 2006/Jan. 2007 issue *The Paddle*, newsletter of the Pacific Bus Museum. 🚗