

[OBITUARY](#): see metro.net report June 6, 2003: "Ed Vandeventer Led SCRTD Rail Operations During Metro Blue Line Startup"

Remembering Ed Vandeventer

Employees share their memories of working with Ed Vandeventer:

Larry Haynes, Transit Operations Supervisor, West Valley Division 8:

"Father of the Renaissance of Rail in Los Angeles" is an appropriate title for a man who was a tireless and impassioned supporter of rail transit in Los Angeles. In another area of transportation that did not fare as well, I had the good fortune of being recruited by Mr. Vandeventer to provide a few ideas on the ill-fated trackless trolley program, which MTA's forerunner, SCRTD, had hoped to establish on its most heavily traveled routes. During a visit to Division 15, about 12 years ago, Mr. Vandeventer discovered that I'd been a trolley operator in Seattle, Washington, and soon afterwards, invited me to join a group of consultants to contribute my experiences in a quest to bring modern trackless trolleys to Los Angeles, which were last used here in 1963. In short, methanol-powered buses became the vehicle of choice and the notion of electric transportation on the city's streets died. Although he did not succeed in this venture, he will be missed by all who knew and worked with him and all who shared with him his ideals for enlightened transit.

Posted: June 12, 2003

Maria Reynolds, Asst. Transportation Manager, West Valley Division 8:

I have very fond memories of Ed Vandeventer. I recall back in October 1990 when I ran into Ed's office (3rd Floor of the RTD Building on 425 Main Street) to give him the news of my surprise proposal for marriage from my husband, Rich.

I announced my engagement to Ed and he was overjoyed with the news. Ed continued to keep me in his office with useful information about child-rearing. By the way, I live by his advice to this day. Ed shared with me his experiences with his kids and that the key to raising children, was to keep them tired, tired, tired!! These seems to work for my boys!

I have often thought of Ed fondly, in fact, as recently as last month. I will miss him very much, along with many others that were fortunate enough to work with him.

Thank you for the opportunity to travel through memory lane.

Posted: June 11, 2003

Joel Woodhull, retired MTA technical planning manager:

I'd like to add a few more details about Ed Vandeventer's professional achievements. I recruited him from Caltrans in 1975 after hearing about his already legendary transit knowledge. He worked with me until 1986.

While in the Service Analysis Section, he developed the computer software system that generated reports for service performance analysis, including line profiles and area accounts. Thanks to Ed's work, primarily, we knew more about our bus system performance than was known about any other transit operation in the U.S. at that time.

When it came to fare restructuring, Ed was able to use this information to make very accurate projections of fare revenue and ridership changes resulting from complex changes in fare structure.

His masterpiece was the hybrid fare system mentioned in the obituary. What it did was remove the fare system complications from 90 percent of the system operation, where the complexity brought little return, anyway, and put the complexity where it paid off. This brought significant additional revenue with little loss of ridership.

In the Scheduling Department, Ed had primary responsibility for managing the installation of the state-of-the-art computerized scheduling system. The changeover was a little tough on the schedulers, but my impression was that most of them came to like it.

In addition to these major accomplishments, there were countless smaller ones. There were numerous occasions when I would talk to him about something that the department needed. He would frown at first, maybe grumble a little. Then he'd go away for a while. Inevitably, he would return later with an elegant solution.

Alan Weeks, retired MTA schedule maker:

Shirley McKinzie (retired MTA schedules supervisor) told me that many nights she and others stayed until midnight helping Ed install the new MiniScheduler. She said Ed would have pizza brought in for all of them. Bob Holland told me that it would not have worked without Ed.

We all have our different memories. There was the different Ed that I worked with for twenty years at the Railroad Museum. Ed saw the late Louie Maspero and (me) walking around the museum one Saturday.

Ed grabbed Louie and myself and said. "I need you to operate rail cars." So Louie and I went into training and I operated with Ed for twenty years. Ed was a great contributor and will be missed.

Posted: June 10, 2003

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