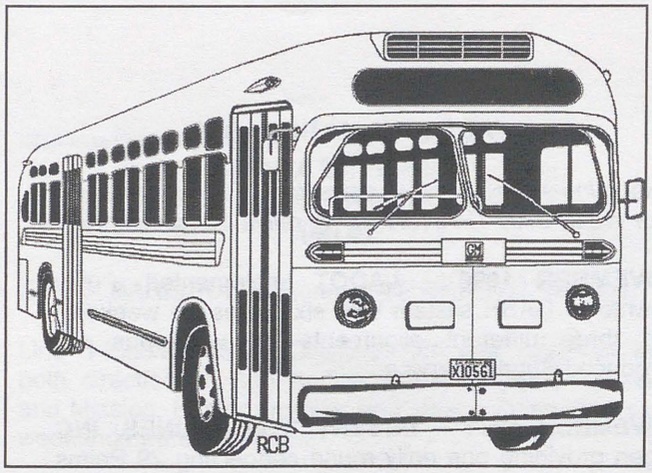
Western Transit

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VOL. 39, NO. 11 **November 2001**



VENTURA INTERCITY TRANSIT TRANSIT AUTHORITY (VISTA)

VENTURA: **VISTA** added one new program, COASTAL EXPRESS, and made changes in several others on August 6th.



COASTAL EXPRESS, originally called SANTA BARBARA-VENTURA EXPRESS BUS *(WT 4/01, 5/01),* is a daily freeway based service connecting Ventura, Carpinteria and Santa Barbara with a weekday peak hour extension to the University of California campus in Goleta.

Like other **VISTA** fixed routes, CE is operated by COACH USA/ANTELOPE VALLEY BUS (with a fleet of **VISTA** painted MCI 102C3s) under contract to the Ventura County Transportation Commission. However, this route is partially funded by Santa Barbara County.

CE operates ten weekday and nine Saturday round trips between Ventura and downtown Santa Barbara. Two weekday morning and two weekday afternoon trips are extended to/from UCSB. The adult and student one way fare is $2, seniors/disabled are $1.

A casualty of the new CE is the former VENTURA-SANTA BARBARA-GOLETA route of the **CLEAN AIR EXPRESS,** previously sponsored by the Santa Barbara Air Pollution Control District and operated by **SANTA BARBARA AIRBUS** *(WT 10/99).* Operations have been transferred to Santa Barbara Council of Governments.

Within a few weeks of the start up of the new service, former CAE riders chartered a **SBA** bus creating a new route between Camarillo's Las Posas Road Park and Ride and Goleta stopping at the County Government Center and downtown Ventura. One trip in the morning and one in the late afternoon are offered with a $135 a month fare, $35 more than CAE and $60 more than CE. So far, 40 people have signed up for the 47 passenger bus and **SBA** absorbed any extra costs thru October.

Other changes include an extension of the CONEJO CONNECTION route from the Esplanade Mall to the Oxnard Transportation Center, but with a reduction from four weekday morning and afternoon round trips to two trips each way in each peak period. In addition, CC was rerouted onto Highway 101 no longer serving Oaks Mall, but now serving Thousand Oaks Transit Center on Rancho Road, just south of Highway 101.

VISTA EAST COUNTY was also rerouted to serve TOTC and was converted into a one way loop at the south end. Buses from Moorpark operate to T.O. Library as before, then to Oaks Mall, TOTC and Westlake & Townsgate, returning via Highways 101 and 23 to Janss Road and T.O. Library.

VISTA HIGHWAY 101 now also serve TOTC. Buses from Ventura operate to Pardee Plaza in Camarillo as before, then via Hwy 101 to TOTC returning via 101 and Moorpark Road to Oaks Mall, then to Pardee Plaza and onto Ventura, as before. i

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PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION (PUC)

SAN FRANCISCO: Below are applications to and decisions of the California Public Utilities Commission:

APPLICATIONS

Mark and Marie Joiner dba LUXURY TRANSPORTATION for TCP-14758-B (former 9539-B) with home terminal in Ceres.

Sarcaceno Investments dba CALIFORNIA LIMOUSINES CORPORATION for TCP-14658-A with a terminal in Folsom.

Jose Oliver and Nestor Hernandez dba OLIANT CHARTER SERVICES for TCP-14701-B, terminal in Los Angeles.

Morgan & Roberta Brown and Ross Jaramello dba ETA TRANSPORTATION, LLC for PSC between points in San Diego, Orange and Los Angeles Counties and San Diego, Carlsbad, Orange County and LAX Airports and to establish a Zone Of Rate Freedom.

Chris Johnsen dba J C TOURS for TCP-14722-B with home terminal in San Bernardino.

DECISIONS

ALL AREA SHUTTLE SERVICE, INC, granted PSC between points in San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara and Alameda Counties and Bay Area airports and to establish a Zone Of Rate Freedom.

CATALINA RED & WHITE CRUISES, INC., now known as *CATALINA CLASSIC CRUISES, INC.* , on 3-2 vote, granted interim authority as a vessel common carrier between Long Beach and/or San Pedro and Avalon on Santa Catalina Island. (*CCC had requested greater authority to serve all points and places on the Island).*

Resolutions TL-18943 and TL-18944 approved which allows PSCs to adjust their fares without specific approval of the Commission.

WT NEWS

MTA Library Service Manager (and *WT* subscriber) Dorothy Peyton Gray passed away on October 19th from a condition which had affected her lungs.

In the October 2001 issue, the Roster Of The Month listed an incorrect company name – it should have been **SHUTTLEPORT AZ.** Our apologies for this mistake.

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"PAGES FROM THE PAST"

(Headline stories or other news items from past issues of WESTERN TRANSIT as we relive transit history)

NOVEMBER 1996 – LADOT implemented a new Downtown DASH system with six routes on weekdays and three different alignments on weekends and introduced Sunday service.

NOVEMBER 1991 – DESERT STAGE LINES, INC. began providing one daily round connecting 29 Palms, Palm Springs, Palm Springs Airport, San Bernardino, Ontario Airport, West Covina and Los Angeles Airport.

NOVEMBER 1986 – TRAILWAYS LINES, INC. fled an application with the Public Utilities Commission to discontinue most of its California routes, retaining only those between Los Angeles and the Arizona line via I-10 and via Blythe and its charter party certificate. *(Ed. Note – the following August GREYHOUND LINES, INC. took over TWI and, in that merger, eventually reduced the duplication in routes and schedules).*

NOVEMBER 1981 – The **FILLMORE AREA TRANSIT CORP,** after operating for one year between Fillmore and Ventura was required to obtain a Passenger Stage Certificate. **SOUTH COAST AREA TRANSIT** requested **FATC** operate "closed doors" in their operating area.

NOVEMBER 1976 – OMNITRANS made a number of changes in routings of the local San Bernardino area lines and also began numbering the original **OT** lines (Fontana – 20s, Redlands – 30s, Yucaipa – 40s, West Valley – 50s and Victor Valley – 60s). Barstow was considering joining **OT** at the time.

WT STAFF FOR THIS MONTH

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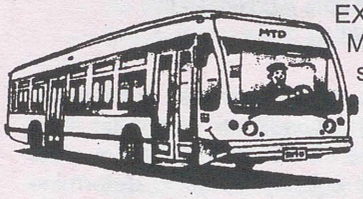
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SANTA BARBARA METROPOLITAN TRANSIT DISTRICT (MTD)

SANTA BARBARA: September 4th saw **MTD** changes.

Line 1-EAST/WEST CONNECTION now operates in both direction on San Andres Street between Carrillo and Mission. Earlier morning and later evening trips on weekends were also added.

Lines 11- DOWNTOWN-UCSB, 12-UCSB/GOLETA EXPRESS and 17-SBCC-MESA LINK all received span improvements and Express routes are now signified with an "X".



Former 20-CARPINTERIA express trips (weekday peak hours) are now provided by the new 21X-CARPINTERIA EXPRESS including timed connections with Carpinteria's SEASIDE SHUTTLE.

The DOWNTOWN-WATERFRONT SHUTTLE and SEASIDE SHUTTLE now both operate on a trimmed down, fall schedule while the WHARF WOODY, a free shuttle connecting waterfront parking with Stearns Wharf was reduced to weekends only thru October 27.

MTD recently placed 5 more Nova Bus LFS, presumed to be 429-433, into service. These buses have 35 mostly forward facing, upholstered, suburban seats, overhead package racks & a rack to sell newspapers. i

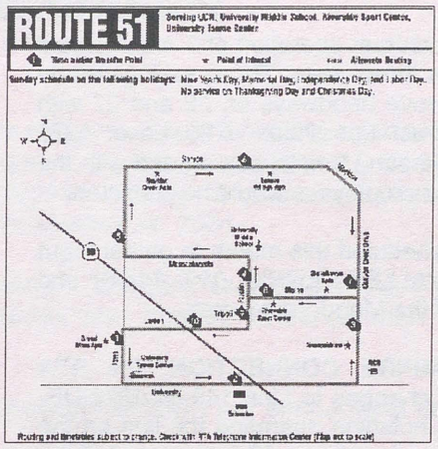
RIVERSIDE TRANSIT AGENCY (RTA) INLAND EMPIRE CONNECTION (IEC)

RIVERSIDE: Three NEW lines and 26 NEW buses are in **RTA** news.

Line 50-FAIRMOUNT PARK-COURTHOUSE (originally to be Line 2 – *WT 8/01)* runs weekdays only between the jury remote parking in Fairmount Park and the County Courthouse at 12th & Main via Market, 3rd, Orange, 12th, Main, returning via 10th and Market to Fairmount Park. TRANSIT WAYS, INC. operates Line 50 using one Chance Trolley.

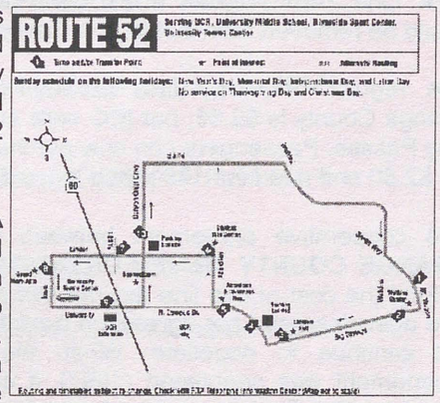
In August, the first 26 of 94 NABI 40-LFW model buses (likely to be numbered 2101-2147 and 2201-2247) began arriving and went into service from Riverside Division in September. The CNG powered units feature 40 blue fiberglass with padded insert seats, 2 wheelchair stations, front door ramp, black interiors, Stop Requested sign and Talking Bus feature.

RTA began demonstration routes 51-UCR-BLAINE-SPRUCE and 52-UCR-WATKINS-BIG SPRINGS (formerly the U C R **HIGHLANDER HAULER's** GREEN and GOLD Routes, on October 1st. These routes are on the north side of the University of California at Riverside's campus. They serve campus and also serve the neighborhoods and commercial areas surrounding UCR. Over 238,000 passengers boarded **HH** in the past year. Lines 51 and 52 are directly operated by **RTA.**



Line 51 runs every 10 minutes 713AM-323PM (4 buses) and then every 20 minutes until the last bus at 503PM.

Line 52 operates on a staggered 10/20 headway between 722AM and 352PM (2 buses).



Regular **RTA** fares apply and UCR identification cards are also honored for fare. UCR is paying a portion of the $242,480 cost of the six month demonstration.

Remaining routes of the **HH** system continue using a fleet of mostly white and yellow Bluebird CS buses.

While **RTA** will continue to publish its Bus Book each service change, they have again (September 01) started printing individual timetables for each line.

The **RTA** Board recently held hearings to gather input on changes in the Lake Elsinore area. Proposed changes include rerouting 7-ELSINORE WEST and 8-ELSINORE EAST to serve the Wal Mart Center and shortening the current loops. Also proposed are headway changes on 22-RIVERSIDE-PERRIS-LAKE ELSINORE and 27-TYLER MALL-PERRIS-HEMET. An extra bus would be added to each of these lines to offer hourly headways on weekdays and 75 minute headways on weekends.

Operation of Lines 7 and 8 would be transferred to TRANSPORTATION CONCEPTS, INC. Comparing TCI

(Continued on page 4)

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and in-house costs, contract operation of 7 and 8 would save $1.4 million over three years. Those savings would be reinvested to improve headways on 22 and 27 with the start up of contract operations. ATU Local 1277 representing **RTA** operating employees agreed with the changes as no current employees would be impacted.

A public hearing is scheduled this month to gather input on Line 41-MEAD VALLEY-PERRIS *(WT 11/00)* and other transit needs of the Mead Valley area.

As the **INLAND EMPIRE CONNECTION,** the **RTA** Board is considering changes to Line 149-RIVERSIDE-MALL OF ORANGE including operating the line on the 91 Freeway between downtown Riverside and Tyler Mall, then via Magnolia, 91 Freeway, serve the Corona Park N Ride at Main, return to the Freeway and then use the 91 Freeway FasTrak lanes and Newport Fwy, Lincoln and Tustin to the Mall of Orange.

These routing changes would mean less service in the Arlington and Home Gardens areas **(**frequent service on **RTA** Line 1-MAGNOLIA would continue) and service would be removed from Santa Ana Canyon Road.

The regular one way fare between Riverside and Orange County is $2.65, but **IEC** sells and honors **RTA** Day Passes. Passengers can now purchase a Day Pass for $2.50 and ride Line 149 round trip, a $5.30 value.

The cooperative agreement between **RTA** and the **ORANGE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY** to fund the cost of this line expired this past June 30th. The agencies have not agreed on a contract extension, but continue to negotiate. When the last contract amendment was negotiated (1997), it was expected it would be the final amendment and future intercounty bus service would be provided and funded by the originating county's transit agency. Since July, **IEC** buses no longer honor **OCTA** Monthly or Day Passes.

(Ed. Note – Express Bus service is one part of the Riverside/Orange Counties Congestion Relief Action which also includes expanded METROLINK service including fully funding the line to Los Angeles, expansion of freeway capacity including a possible connection between the FasTrak lanes and Highway 241 Toll Road and access at intermediate points to the FasTrak lanes. OCTA is also considering implementation of express buses between Riverside, Corona and the Northeast Anaheim Industrial Area).

RTA has announced plans to again provide a holiday shuttle in Temecula *(WT 1/01)* and is studying both a commuter route on I-15 north to Corona *(WT 2/91 – Line 28)* and, in conjunction with San Diego County officials, a possible express bus south on I-15 between Temecula and Escondido. i

SUNLINE TRANSIT AGENCY (STA)

THOUSAND PALMS: **STA** made a number of changes starting in August including doubling the frequency on Line 50-PALM DESERT LOCAL while discontinuing Line 12-MORONGO BASIN-YUCCA VALLEY and changes involving expansion of 91-INDIO-THERMAL to a two hour headway, serving Oasis and Mecca and the two Casinos in Indio and discontinuation of Lines 86-INDIO-OASIS-MECCA & 92-NORTH COACHELLA. i

LOS ANGELES COUNTY METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (MTA)

LOS ANGELES: The **MTA** Board approved substitution of 20 composite (fiberglass) buses for traditional steel frame and sheet metal units as part of its 370 bus order *(WT 5/00)* with NABI. The agency wants to determine whether the composite buses could stand up to the demands of revenue service.

These buses will have a single-piece body consisting of glass-fiber reinforced, vinyl-ester resin laminate. Since they are lighter, the buses should use less fuel, body damage should be easier to repair and the composite material resists corrosion.

The Operations Committee was asked to approve a one-year contract for the purchase of ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel from Southern Counties Oil Co. Starting next July, the California Air Resources Board will require all transit buses to use this type of fuel. An eighteen month test of diesel buses at Division 5 showed a significant reduction of vehicle emissions on buses with particulate filters. The **MTA** Board has directed that all diesel buses in the fleet after January 2003 be equipped with filters. Some 400 diesel buses will continue in service after all current CNG bus procurements are completed.

A meeting was held in mid October to publicly discuss the creation of the San Fernando Valley Transportation Zone and its plans to operate current **MTA** services in that portion of the City of Los Angeles generally north of Mulholland Drive, Burbank, Glendale, San Fernando, Hidden Hills, Calabasas, Agoura Hills, Westlake Village and unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County.

Zone consultants made a presentation which indicated that the zone could run buses at a cost of $82 an hour versus **MTA's** $98 rate, would employ 1066 persons, 96 per cent of them current **MTA** employees, and take between 350 and 400 buses from **MTA.**
Speakers, including representatives of the Southern California Transit Advocates, Transit Coalition, Amalgamated Transit Union and United Transportation

(Continued on page 5)

METROLINK's HOLIDAY TOY EXPRESS TRAIN BEGINS ITS ANNUAL RUN ON NOVEMBER 24 TH

LOS ANGELES: Monday, October 29, 2001 – For the fifth year, Santa is trading in his sleigh for a 450-ton Metrolink train. The 2001 Holiday Toy Express, standing more than 15 feet high and sparkling with oversized garland and animated, lighted holiday displays will begin visiting Southern California Metrolink Stations on Saturday, November 24, 2001.

This extra special train will stop at 46 stations located on Metrolink lines presenting a free live-action holiday musical production on Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings from Nov. 24 through Dec. 16.

At each Holiday Toy Express Train station stop, audience members are encouraged to get into the holiday spirit and donate unwrapped toys.

Holiday Toy Express 2001 Schedule

Saturday, November 24 – Burbank – 630PM, Sylmar/San Fernando – 730PM, Newhall – 810PM and Santa Clarita – 845PM

Friday, November 30 – Union Station – (display only) 400PM-640PM, Glendale – 700 PM, Van Nuys – 745PM, Northridge – 825PM, Chatsworth – 900PM

Saturday, December 1 – Montclair – 530PM, Upland – 600PM, Rancho Cucamonga – 645PM, Fontana – 725PM, Rialto – 755PM, San Bernardino – 825PM

Friday, December 7 – Riverside – 600PM, La Sierra – 635PM, West Corona – 710PM, Fullerton – 800PM, Norwalk – 845PM

Saturday, December 8 – Via Princessa – 600PM, Vincent – 710PM, Lancaster – 810PM

Sunday, December 9 – Oceanside – 520PM, San Clemente Pier – 715PM, San Clemente North Beach – 740PM, San Juan Capistrano – 840PM

Friday, December 14 – Irvine – 645PM, Tustin – 725PM, Santa Ana – 800PM, Orange – 830PM, Anaheim – 900PM

Saturday, December 15 – Pedley – 540PM, East Ontario – 615PM, Downtown Pomona – 700PM, Industry – 735PM, Montebello – 820PM

Sunday, December 16 – Simi Valley – 545PM, Moorpark – 645PM, Camarillo – 715PM, Oxnard – 800PM, Montalvo – 830PM

THE ABOVE INFORMATION COPIED FROM METROLINK PRESS RELEASES ADVERTISING THE HOLIDAY TOY EXPRESS AND PROVIDED FOR THOSE READERS WHO WISH TO ATTEND THE EVENTS.

(Continued from page 4)
Union, questioned the financials as well as zone advocates apparent lack of understanding of how fragmentation of the transit system does not serve the passenger's best interests.

Those comments will be included in the final zone operational and financial plan expected in December. i

METROPOLITAN TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT BOARD (MTDB)

SAN DIEGO: **MTDB** is currently requesting technical proposals and price bids for management and operation of its fixed route system for a five year contract to begin next July 1st. Proposals are due by mid month.

Presently **SAN DIEGO TRANSIT CORP** operates Lines 8, 21, 22, 23, 29, 31 and 60 from their own facilities while **ATC/VANCOM OF SAN DIEGO, INC.** runs Lines 13, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 916, 932, 933, 934, 936, 980, 990 and 992 under three separate contracts from the **MTDB** owned South Bay Maintenance Facility on Main Street in Chula Vista.

Only one contract is proposed with all these operations to be housed at the SBMF, which will be expanded. i

CALIFORNIA NEWS BRIEFS

TORRANCE TRANSIT SYSTEM recently held hearings on plans to reduce or discontinue Line 4-RIVIERA-NADINE CIRCLE, a weekday only hourly line, to provide offset funding for enhancement of the Torrance Senior Ride Taxi program.

MODESTO AREA EXPRESS has issued a Request For Proposal for a management and operations contract for this city bus system.

The two routes of the **SOUTHSIDE SMART SHUTTLE** *(WT 1/01)* continue to operate *(Ed Note – when asked, SSS staff was unable to advise how long they would continue).* i

BAY AREA RAPID TRANSIT DISTRICT (BART)

OAKLAND: After three months of "will they or wont they (go on strike)" actions, the 238 members of Local 3993 of American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees were ready to walk off the job October 24th when a last minute agreement was reached with **BART.** AFSCME members include train controllers, supervisors and other professionals.

Both the Amalgamated Transit Union and Service Employees International Union had said they would honor any picket lines established while **BART** said they would operate the trains with managers and any employees who crossed the lines.

Although several Bay Area legislators attempted to involve themselves, both union and management credited the final after-midnight session, without mediators or politicians, and a desire to avoid a walkout with finally ending the dispute.

AFSCME members will receive the same 22 per cent in raises over 4 years other employees will. Wages were not the major issue, however, Protecting the specific jobs and types of work performed by its members from being assigned to consultants, contractors or employees who are members of another union was.

Union officials said the local was being eroded by the process and its members in danger of losing their jobs. **BART** officials claimed they needed flexibility to assign jobs to operate more efficiently.

The dispute was settled when the parties agreed to a process under which disputes over where new and existing jobs are placed will be resolved. The process establishes time lines and gives final decision to a state mediator, if need be. i

ALAMEDA-CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT DISTRICT (ACT)

OAKLAND: **ACT** implemented a number of changes on August 19th including reducing service on Transbay Line A-SAN FRANCISCO-OAKLAND-OAKLAND AIRPORT to operate between 1230AM and 600AM on weekdays and until 800AM weekends, its original hours.

Pending approval by the **ACT** Board, Transbay Line KH-BANCROFT-HAVENSCROFT-SAN FRANCISCO is to be rerouted to serve portions of Oakland's Jack London Square area.

Line 10-ALAMEDA POINT– DOWNTOWN OAKLAND was replaced by an expanded Line 50-OAKLAND-ALAMEDA FERRY-BART/FRUITVALE operating along Webster and thru the Webster/Posey Tubes.

Line 353-FRUITVALE SHUTTLE was replaced as Line 53-FRUITVALE was extended to serve Fruitvale Station Shopping Center and Super K Mart.

AC is now selling "31-Day Passes" which allow passengers to buy their prepaid transportation at any time. The "first use" and expiration" information is imprinted on the magnetic strip passes the first time a rider uses the pass. i

(Continued from page 5)

COMMUNITY TRANSIT
(Snohomish County PTBA dba)

LYNNWOOD, WA: Snohomish County voters recently approved an 0.3 percent increase in the county's sales tax, making it the highest in Washington, but allowing **CT** to expand transit service, much of it eliminated following passage of Initiative I-695 *(WT 11/99, 1/00)* which cost the agency more than $18 million annually.

The agency plans include restoration of Sunday **CT** bus service, purchase of additional van-pool vehicles and expansion of park-ride facilities. If the tax had been rejected, further reductions were forecast.

CT has issued a Request For Proposals to firms interested in operating inter-county commute service from numerous Snohomish County points to both Seattle and Bellevue. **COACH USA** is the current contract operator. i

PUGET SOUND REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY
(SOUND TRANSIT – ST)

SEATTLE, WA: The **ST** Board recently voted 12 to 4 to press ahead with plans for an initial, 14 mile light rail system between downtown Seattle and South 154th Street in Tukwila *(WT 9/01)*.

The starter line would stop about one mile short of Seattle-Tacoma International Airport. The Board also directed staff to explore ways to reach the airport and to evaluate routes heading north to Northgate.

The approved project is a scaled-down version of the plan included in the 1996 vote, approved by Pierce, King and Snohomish County voters to run light rail from the city of SeaTac in south King County through downtown to the University District in Seattle.

ST had to cut back after revealing the project was more than $1 billion over budget. Even the scaled down version will cost $150 million per mile and will require $500 million in federal funds.

Because of issues related to the original cost estimates, the inspector general of the U. S. Department of Transportation recommended **ST** not receive federal money until it proved the accuracy of its numbers. The scaled back effort is subject to those recommendations.

ST is requesting proposals for the purchase of one 40-foot diesel/electric low floor bus and one 40-foot CNG/electric low floor hybrid bus. These buses will be tested on the various **ST** routes and services. i

KING COUNTY METRO
TRANSIT DIVISION
(METRO)

SEATTLE, WA: On September 13th **METRO** officially inaugurated a 1.3 mile extension of overhead on trolley coach Line 36 along Beacon Avenue from Dawson Street to Othello Street and used the ceremony to display the first of 100 new trolley coaches on delivery.

The new buses, a few of which are on the property and undergoing acceptance testing, are officially rebuilt as their electrical equipment was taken from the 1979 model AM Generals and completely reworked by Alstom. The bodies are Gillig Phantoms *(WT 9/01)*.

Trolley coaches will continue to serve alternate trips on the 36 with other trips provided by diesels which continue to/from Rainier Beach.

METRO has requested proposals for 132 40-foot diesel powered, low floor buses. Bids will be awarded through a two step, competitive negotiation process. i

NAVA-HOPI TOURS, INC.
(NHT)

FLAGSTAFF, AZ: **NHT,** who was also the **GRAY LINE** affiliate in Flagstaff, ceased operations as of 900PM on October 24th, a victim of rising operating and insurance costs coupled with a dramatic slowdown in travel after the World Trade Center destruction.

With a fleet of primarily intercity buses, **NHT** was the WT's Roster Of The Month in March 1995.

The company had operated **AMTRAK** Thruway Buses 8583/8584 between Flagstaff and the Grand Canyon and Buses 8503/8504/8583/8584 between Flagstaff and Phoenix. (**GREYHOUND LINES** still operates Buses 8703/8704 to and from Phoenix and **GRAND CANYON RAILWAY** runs a van shuttle/train connection between Williams Junction and the Grand Canyon). i

FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D.C.: **FTA,** through its International Mass Transportation Program, has developed another trade mission to promote U. S. public transportation related companies in overseas markets.

Building on the era of cooperation between the Bush and Fox Administrations, the trade mission will visit Mexico City, Guadalajara and Tijuana next month.

Tijuana, Mexico's fourth largest metropolitan area, is now in the advanced planning stages of a light rail

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)
system that would connect with the **SAN DIEGO TROLLEY** in San Ysidro. The **MTDB** recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Mayor of Tijuana promising technical assistance for development of the 10-mile elevated line. This system should offer significant opportunities for U. S. consultants and providers of equipment and services. i

FORTY YEARS OF FLXIBLES IN LOS ANGELES – PART 11

In mid 1992 **SCRTD** had a total of 329 Flxible Metros, including 215 diesels with Cummins engines, 104 diesels with Detroit Diesels and ten CNG powered Cummins.

As part of its alternate fuels program, **MTA** operated a fleet of 333 methanol powered TMC RTS buses for several years, finally deciding that the costs and operational problems were more than reasonable.

Still committed to alternative fuel, compressed natural gas became the fuel of choice and, in mid 1994, **MTA** placed an order for 196 CNG powered buses. Flxible was one of three bidders, Neoplan and New Flyer the others. This would be the final **MTA** procurement to include Flxible. Neoplan USA was awarded the nearly $6 million order for 4500-4695.

During 1995 General Automotive Corporation, parent of The Flxible Company, signed a memorandum of understanding with Western Star Trucks Holdings, Ltd. (B. C.) to sell it fifty per cent interest in Flxible through Western Star's United States subsidiary, Orion Bus Industries, Inc.

By August 1996, The Flxible Company filed for protection under Chapter 11 of the Bankruptcy laws. The company reportedly had assets of $33 million and liabilities of $90 million. Company officials indicated they were actively looking for a buyer and that they had a backlog of orders.

In March 1997, Flxible Metro 2715 was one of the first buses to appear in the then-new "Service Of Gold" paint scheme – bright white accented in gold trim, the **M** logo with an orange background, upper and lower case words "Metro Bus" in the rear half of the bus and "Travel Smart – Ride Metro" on the front half.

Since that time, all of the 2900s, most of the 2800s and many of the other Flxibles have been also painted.

Since the beginning of the program in 1996, the **MTA** contracted bus service fleet consisted primarily of 1981 GMC RTS 04s. These buses proved expensive to operate and maintain. As part of a program to upgrade and improve contracted bus service, beginning in the spring of 1999, the fleets were modernized including sending 38 Flxible Metros (a mix of 25, 26 and 2700s) to FIRST TRANSIT, INC. Nine 2800s, added with the June 2000 expanded contract, were returned in the spring of 2001 with the arrival of the 67 new Orion VI buses.

COACH USA started its contract in June 2000 with a fleet of 22 2800s for Lines 96 and 167 adding 5 more in October with Line 214. Thomas TL-960s (9950-9969) and Econoline/Aerotechs (12530-12534) replaced the Flxibles this year.

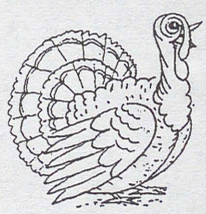
M. V. TRANSPORTATION, INC. began with a fleet of seven (then six) 2800s in November 2000. These buses were replaced by six new Bluebird CSREs (9970-9975) during the summer.

As this story is written, a number of Flxible Metros have been sold, others are now in the contingency fleet and 94 are still active. These include 17 25/2600s, 37 2700s, 7 2800s and all 33 2900s (2900-2932).

We will never know what transit history in Los Angeles would have been without Don Belding's splitting the order of 175 buses in 1960 between Flxible and General Motors. However, what we do know is that his actions paved the way for 1716 products from Loudonville and Delaware, Ohio and Evergreen, Alabama to travel many miles on Los Angeles area roadways carrying millions of transit passengers. i



1988 Flxible 2555 is now assigned to the Instruction Department, among the last assignments for active buses.
Photo by Guillermo Merino



Happy Thanksgiving!

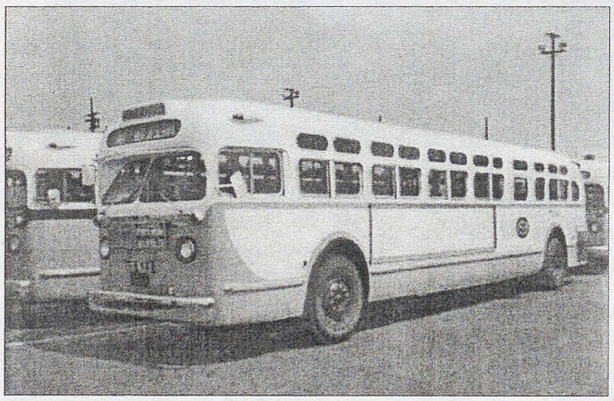
EQUIPMENT REPORT

(All properties are located in California unless otherwise noted)

PROPERTY	FLEET #'S	BUILDER	MODEL/VIN #'S	DATE	NOTES
-NEW-					
Victor Valley Transit Auth	301-302	Bluebird	CSFE2409/XF089744, 743	1999	
Americanstar Tours	STAR 6	Dina	Viaggio 1000/VS001723	1998	1
LADOT	20006-20008	Ford/El Do	Econ/Aerotech/—, —, 1HA06482	2000	
LADOT	01001-01003	Supreme	Classic Trolley/10A30162, —, —	2001	
Coach USA /AVBI	63175-63176	Van Hool	C2045/—, —	2001	1
Butte County Transit	2K1-2K7	Orion	05.501/1651420-426	2001	
COTPA (OK)	0120-0122	Orion	05.501/16501490-492	2001	
	0123-0129	Orion	05.501/16501494-500	2001	
	0130-0131	Orion	05.502/16501501-502	2001	
Roseville Transit	01-47, 02-47	Orion	05.503/16501545-546	2001	
Butte Transit (MT)	B-3—B-6	Orion	05.502/1650598-601	2001	
-USED-					
Victor Valley Transit Auth	707	Bluebird	QBRE2903/VF077872	1997	2
LADOT	85001-85002	Gillig	40102TB6V92T/F1081322-323	1985	3
Omnitrans	5876	GMC	TDH-4801/498	1958	4
Tres Estrellas De Oro	170	MCI	102C3/MP043724	01/91	5
Frontier Tours (NV)	74617-74618	Dina	Viaggio 1000/TS000970-971	1996	6
	74619	Dina	Viaggio 1000/TS000985	1996	7
	74620	Dina	Viaggio 1000/TS001036	04/96	8
	74621	Dina	Viaggio 1000/VS001184	1997	9
	74622	Dina	Viaggio 1000/VS001225	1997	10
County Of Orange	6018	Super Bus	Cosmos/5-88-003	1988	11
-DISPOSITIONS-					
Coach USA /AVBI	6906-6907	MCI	102C3/KP042670, 42687	1989	12

-NOTES-

1. In California AMTRAK colors for AMBUS contracts.
2. Renumbered from 8747.
3. Renumbered from 5488-5489 a part of a total rehabilitation project.
4. OT Historical bus "Old Blue" - originally LAMTA 661/5191.
5. Ex —.
6. Ex T & C Transportation & Travel Service (CT) 80, 78.
7. Ex Imani Tours —.
8. Ex Quality Tour & Transport (VA) 9111.
9. Ex Golden Horse Tours —.
10. Ex Brown Coach (NY) —.
11. Ex OCTD/OCTA 8000 – originally a demonstrator.
12. To ABC Bus Sales in Garden Grove.



5191 - LAMTA 5191 in the Division 1 yard in 1964, shortly after being repainted into the then-new light green and white colors.



5876 - 36 years later, LAMTA 5191 at its current home in OMNI-TRANSland as 5876. (Bus built in 1958 and OT started business in 1976). Nicknamed "Old Blue, it is considered a historical vehicle.