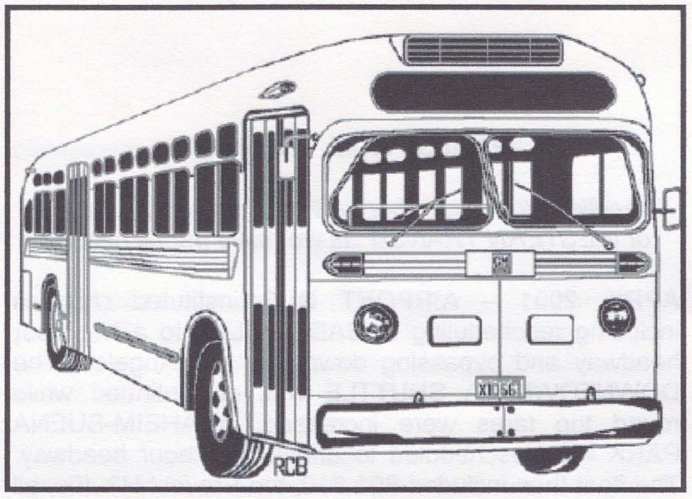


Western Transit

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VOL. 44, NO. 4 **April 2006**

FOLSOM STAGE LINE (FSL)

FOLSOM: April 1st brought a new fare structure at **FSL** including increases in both cash fares and monthly passes and the establishment of a new Daily Pass.

Regular riders saw an increase from $1.50 to $1.75 and students, seniors and disabled persons had their fares raised from 50 cents to 85 cents.

Monthly pass prices are now $80 for regulars, $24 for students and $40 for seniors and disabled.

Daily Passes are NEW and priced at $4.50 for regular riders and $2.25 for all others

Dial-A-Ride fares also rose, from $2.50 per ride to $3.00 with $75 monthly passes now priced at $80.

Service wise, **FSL** operates two weekday only fixed routes — A or 10-IRON MOUNTAIN STATION-HISTORIC FOLSOM-BROADSTONE and B or 30-GLENN STATION-FOLSOM PRISON-LAKE FOREST.

Line 10 operates generally hourly (two buses) beginning at 641AM and ending at 932PM. Beginning at 630PM this is a "deviated" route which allows for one deviation per hour, up to 3/4 mile from the regular route to pick up or discharge passengers. Deviation requests need to be received the previous day.

Line 30 operates half hourly (two buses) starting at 655AM and ending at 556PM.

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY – SACRAMENTO (CSUS)

SACRAMENTO: The Sacramento Area Council of Governments has approved a $924,000 capital grant for the planned "*SAC STATE TRAM",* a bus rapid transit system that would serve as a people mover loop around the CSUS campus and connect the University with the **RT's** 65th Street light rail station.

The *TRAM I*s modeled after a system in Portland with modern design, low-floor, rubber tired vehicles with doors opening on both sides. The vehicles can operate on either dedicated roadways or existing streets.

The SACOG grant is for design and engineering work on the campus loop, at this point envisioned as circling the perimeter of the campus on its own dedicated lanes.

The *TRAM* would take passengers to campus from the 65th Station along Folsom Boulevard, entering the campus at the south end at University Drive East and then traveling on the dedicated roadway. With an estimated price tag of $20 million, *TRAM* could begin service in 2008 and be completed two years later.

SACRAMENTO REGIONAL TRANSIT DISTRICT (RT)

SACRAMENTO: Over the last three months, **RT** has discontinued three lines, one neighborhood circulator and two school service lines.

These include 17-D.P.H.-RIO LINDA BLVD and School Service 235 and 239. The school lines were duplicated, to some extent by Lines 72, 261 and LIGHT RAIL.

In This Issue

San Joaquin Regional Transit District	3
Victor Valley Transit Authority	3
Omnitrans	3
Los Angeles World Airports	4
Los Angeles Department Of Transportation	4
Santa Monica Big Blue Bus	5
Santa Barbara County Association Of Governments	5
San Mateo County Transit District	5
Golden Gate Transit	5
Regional Transportation District (CO)	6
Mountain Line (AZ)	6
Veolia Transport/Connex Transit, Inc.	6
ROTM – Mountain Area Regional Transit Authority	7
2006 APTA International Bus Roadeo	7

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION (PUC)

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

DECISIONS

Yoseph Hiwot dba EAGLE AIRPORT SHUTTLE authorized a PSC between points in Alameda, San Mateo and Alameda Counties and San Francisco, Oakland and San Jose Airports and establish a ZORF.

L. A. MEX TOURS, INC. authorized to operate as On-Call PSC-19285 between San Ysidro, El Monte and Los Angeles charging $13 one way/$26 round trip (also $7 El Monte-Los Angeles) and operating a fleet of 14-passenger vans and establish a ZORF of $5 above and below the proposed fares.

LORRIE'S TRAVEL AND TOURS, INC. authorized to extend its On-Call PSC to include service between all points in the City of San Francisco and SFO.

Fekadu Keremo dba AAA-SUPER AIRPORT SHUTTLE granted PSC between points in Contra Costa, Alameda, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara and Solano Counties and Bay Area Airports and a ZORF.

Yohannes Workneh dba 1A AAA SUPER EXPRESS SHUTTLE granted PSC between points in Solano, Contra Costa, Alameda, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties and Bay Area Airports and establish a ZORF.

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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)

APRIL 2001 – AIRPORT BUS instituted changes including rescheduling PASADENA-LAX to a two hour headway and bypassing downtown Los Angeles. The DOWNTOWN LA SHUTTLE was discontinued while round trip fares were increased. ANAHEIM-BUENA PARK was rescheduled to offer a two hour headway. The fleet then included 601-610, ten Prevost H3-40s, all wrapped advertising Orange County venues.

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APRIL 1996 – The **FAIRFIELD-SUISUN TRANSIT SYSTEM** numbered the "City Link" service into 20-FAIRFIELD-VACAVILLE and 30-FAIRFIELD-DIXON-DAVIS as it inaugurated 40-SOLANO BART EXPRESS (Vacaville-Fairfield-BART/Pleasant Hill).

APRIL 1991 – The RUNABOUT came to downtown Long Beach **(LONG BEACH TRANSIT)** on April 1st, a two route, ten bus **(LBT** 101-110, Orion IIs) circulator system.

APRIL 1986 – The financially strapped City of South Lake Tahoe turned over operation of **SOUTH TAHOE AREA GROUND EXPRESS** to *AREA TRANSIT MANAGEMENT, INC.*, an employee cooperative, including a new route and service structure.

APRIL 1981 – PALO VERDE VALLEY TRANSIT AGENCY converted the BLYTHE FIXED ROUTE into a Dial-A-Ride as the County RIPLEY-BLYTHE route stayed as fixed route. Cash prices and monthly pass rates were all increased to achieve the ten per cent farebox recovery ratio needs.

WT STAFF FOR THIS MONTH

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(Continued from page 1)

SAN JOAQUIN REGIONAL TRANSIT DISTRICT (RTD)

STOCKTON: Phase I of the Downtown Transit Center *(WT 5/05)*, located on the block bounded by Weber, California, Channel and Sutter, opened for business on March 19th.

The main transfer location for **RTD** buses, DTC replaced an on-street transfer point at Channel & Sutter.

The Passenger Boarding Area consists of two boarding platforms with 15 bus stops. Five **RTD** lines (4, 6, 16, 35–COUNTY HOSPITAL-WEST LANE and 37) also stop in a block long turnout along Channel Street. The platforms are fully covered by canopies which area also includes signage and lighting.

Until Phase II of the center (a two-story transit building and a third bus lane) is completed, buses on several lines including 18-DAYTIME TROLLEY, 19-NIGHTIME TROLLEY, 23, 26 and the five HOPPERS (90-94) will stop along Channel between Sutter and San Joaquin.

April 9th saw changes in the Downtown Trolley system. 18-DAYTIME LOOP continues to operate but on an expanded route and schedule. Line 18 now operates hourly between 700AM and 600PM and serves Market Street, downtown businesses and the **GREYHOUND**, **AMTRAK** and **ACE** stations (1 bus).

Formerly operating on weekdays between 1100AM and 600PM and on Friday and other nights until 1100PM, when special events occurred downtown, Line 19-NIGHT TIME LOOP was revised to operate Monday thru Saturday between 600PM and 1000PM on a 15-minute headway (1 bus). On Sundays, the Trolley will operate for scheduled special events, from one hour before until 30 minutes after the event.

RTD operates a fleet of three Chance model AH-28 motorized trolleys, N 01-N 03.

VICTOR VALLEY TRANSIT AUTHORITY (VVTA)

VICTORVILLE: (Ed. Note – the cost of fuel and its recently increasing prices dramatically affect transit's operational costs, especially at smaller systems. ***VVTA*** *recently approved a $386,000 amendment to its budget to reflect needed changes in funding).*

The **VVTA** Board approved a staff recommendation to adopt an amended FY 05-06 budget, Transit Operations Capital Plan and TDA claim to reflect changes in local funding related to fuel costs and fare revenues.

Since the beginning of this fiscal year, fuel prices have increased significantly and projecting the average price for unleaded gasoline and diesel fuel is speculative.

VVTA pays retail prices less than those at the corner station based on its multi-year contract with Goodspeed Fuels, Inc. It is also exempt from the 14 cent per gallon federal excise tax.

Occasionally, different types of vehicles operate on the different services but, for budgeting, **VVTA** projects all CNG on fixed routes, diesel on County Routes and unleaded on Paratransit.

Complementary Paratransit *(DIRECT ACCESS)* buses, 97 percent unleaded, are expected to travel the same number of miles in the second half of the fiscal year but at a cost of $2.35 (was $2.19) per gallon.

County Routes (21-TRI COMMUNITY, 22-HELENDALE and 23-LUCERNE VALLEY), 99 percent diesel, are also expected to travel the same number of miles but at a cost of $2.49 versus $2.42.

For the first half of the year, over 70 percent of CNG Regional Fixed Route fueling was performed at **VVTA's** fueling station on Business Center Drive at an average cost of 83.4 cents per gallon with the remaining fuel purchased at the Victorville owned CNG stations at $1.99 per gallon. The city found they were getting better quality fuel and higher pressure for less money and were able to drop the price to $1.50 per gallon. If the expenses for the maintenance and utility costs of Business Center Drive were taken into consideration, the cost per gallon would appear much less dramatic.

Last October, there was a small engine fire at the **VVTA** owned station which forced its closure. The second fueling unit at Business Center will soon be operational allowing some on-site fueling, but **VVTA** has purchased all of its CNG fuel from Victorville for nearly six months.

It is presumed the same amount of CNG fuel will be consumed in the second six months, but at a higher combined rate per gallon. Fuel costs should exceed FY 05/06 budget numbers by $152,000.

OMNITRANS (OT)

SAN BERNARDINO: The 25 new Econoline/Aerotechs on order *(WT 3/06)* will arrive in a new color scheme of red, blue and white. The new colors will continue to increase as new vehicles are purchased.

The red and blue will echo the future *sbX* colors and the blue matches the existing **OT** blue. The red tops are

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)
expected to make the vans more distinctive. Keeping the bottom half white will keep maintenance costs down as this is the area most likely to experience damage.

The **OT** Board has approved service changes to take effect on May 1. Included will be discontinuation of 30-RED LINE (REDLANDS TROLLEY NORTH) and the one-trip-per-weekday-peak 140-FONTANA-CHAFFEY COLLEGE. As well, the Montclair — 19th & Euclid segment of 64-MONTCLAIR-CHAFFEY COLLEGE will be combined with 62-MONTCLAIR-ONTARIO-CHINO to form the NEW 62 line.

LOS ANGELES WORLD AIRPORTS (LAWA)

LOS ANGELES: The Board of Airport Commissioners unanimously approved policies encouraging the consolidation of hotel courtesy bus trips *(WT 3/06)* that will ease traffic congestion and improve air quality in the Central Terminal Area of LAX.

The program includes increases in trip fees from 32 cents to $1.60 per circuit for hotels that operate smaller shuttles, requires hotels to convert new or replacement shuttles to alternative fuels, sets trip reduction targets and establishes financial penalties for excess trips. The Board also approved an amendment requesting a study to determine if a bus consolidation program could be made mandatory for all area hotels.

A Memorandum of Understanding with *DESTINATION SHUTTLE SERVICES, LLC* to operate a consolidated shuttle for nine Century Boulevard corridor hotels *(WT 3/06)* was okayed. To maintain a high quality service, one bus route would be provided for every three hotels - a bus could stop at up to three hotels, depending upon demand and location. Passengers would not need to change buses or transfer luggage and new, larger alternative fuel buses will be purchased.

Current drivers for the nine hotels will receive job offers from *DSS* at higher salaries and better benefits and promotional opportunities as dispatchers and assistant managers will also be available.

The hotel shuttle consolidation program was developed through a partnership with L.A.Inc/The Convention & Visitors Bureau. **LAWA** will not be involved in any payments for the consolidated buses or operations.

In other LAX related matters, the route of the *UNION STATION FLYAWAY* buses is from Gateway Transit Plaza via Vignes, Hollywood Freeway, Harbor Freeway (including Harbor Transitway), Century Freeway (including HOV lane), Sepulveda and LAX roadways *(Ed. Note – when roadways are clear, the trip takes no more than 30 minutes).*

The *ALAMO* and *NATIONAL RENT-A-CAR* companies are operating a joint shuttle service using a fleet of Transmark REs and 29 foot low floor Gilligs painted green in front and blue in the back.

THRIFTY RENT-A-CAR and ADVANTAGE RENT-A-CAR have both added new buses to their fleets in the form of Dennis Thomas SLF230s.

LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (LADOT)

LOS ANGELES: Teamsters Local 848, representing the *FIRST TRANSIT, INC.* employees at the San Fernando yard on Ilex Street, former *COACH USA* contract, who operate the four San Fernando Valley DASH lines (VAN NUYS-STUDIO CITY, VAN NUYS-PANORAMA CITY, NORTHRIDGE and WARNER CENTER) walked off their jobs on March 20 to protest the high cost of health insurance. *(Ed. Note – this is the first work stoppage in **LADOT's** history).*

FTI has continued to operate some level of service, using supervisors and employees from other locations.

Elsewhere on the **LADOT**/*FTI* front, the City Council has authorized issuance of new RFPs for operation of Community DASH Packages 1 (Mid City), 2 (Northeast Los Angeles/Westside) and 3 (San Fernando Valley) with contracts to have a term of three years with two one-year renewable options.

FTI will continue to operate thee programs until August 31, 2006 when the City will terminate the contract for the purpose of mutual convenience and the City will not pursue legal action against the firm for the inability to complete the contract. *FTI* will not bid on the new RFP.

The DASH Package 5 contract *(WT 2/06)* still has not been awarded and all current contracts were extended.

New El Dorado National 32-foot EZ Riders, in new **LADOT** colors and with redesigned front ends, are now in service on DASH/LOS FELIZ and BEACHWOOD CANYON. 06301, 06302, 06315 and 06317 have been spotted.

SANTA MONICA BIG BLUE BUS (BBB)

SANTA MONICA: Earlier this year **BBB** held a series of community meetings to receive input on proposals related to both service and fares.

The need to reduce expenses and increase revenues this year is driven primarily by ever increasing fuel costs

(Continued on page 5)

and the need to fund a new program, to be called *COMMUNITY TRANSIT (Ed. Note – program details are not currently known by WT).*

Discussions are still underway over institution of a Day Pass (Local $3/$1.50 and Express $5/$2.50) and elimination of local transfers. Public hearings have yet to be scheduled.

June 2006 service changes will include — The terminal for Line 4-CARLYLE AVE will be changed to 2nd and Colorado while Line 9-PACIFIC PALISADES Sunday headway will change from half hourly to hourly. Line 12-AIRDROME-CHEVIOT HILLS will begin/end at Pico and Robertson at all hours with no weekday peak period extension to/from Pico and Rimpau.

Line 5-OLYMPIC BLVD trips, after 700PM, will begin/end at Pico & Beverly Drive and, after 800PM, the headway will be hourly, all days of the week.

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS (SBCAG)

SANTA BARBARA: **SBCAG** recently approved transfer of $500,000 of regional Measure D money to the popular but expensive to run *CLEAN AIR EXPRESS (*Lompoc, Santa Maria, Goleta, Santa Barbara weekday peak hour bus system). Measure D is a half-cent sales tax that funds local and regional transportation projects.

Since **SBCAG** is not a formal transit authority, it cannot receive money set aside for transit projects from either state or federal agencies. The Board again discussed its continued desire to determine whether another agency could fund *CAE* more efficiently.

A North County Transit Plan is currently underway, to be completed later this year, which will look at other funding possibilities for the bus service as soon as FY 07/08. Fifth District County Supervisor Joe Centeno suggested examining the combining of all current North County bus services into one provider and creation of a board to oversee the funding issues.

SAN MATEO COUNTY TRANSIT DISTRICT (SAMTRANS)

SAN CARLOS: Due to the closure of State Highway 1 at Devil's Slide for an indefinite period following heavy rains, **SAMTRANS** is not presently operating along Highway 1 between Pacifica and Half Moon Bay.

Route 294-DEVIL'S SLIDE SUPPLEMENTAL SERVICE has been adjusted with weekday buses operating between Hillsdale Shopping Center in San Mateo and 7th & Main in Montara. Buses are scheduled every ninety minutes between 600AM and 900PM.

On weekends, buses operate between BART/Daly City and Montara along I-280 to Highway 92 and the regular route to Montara. On Saturday, there is a two-hour headway between 600AM and 600PM while on Sunday there is a 3-hour headway between 800AM and 500PM.

Regular route stops continue to be serviced in Half Moon Bay, El Granada and Moss Beach.

The annual Bay to Breakers footrace in San Francisco is scheduled for May 21st and **SAMTRANS** plans to operate three special service lines to carry both runners and spectators to and from the race.

Route 853 will travel on El Camino Real stopping in San Mateo, Burlingame, Millbrae and San Bruno.

Route 870 will pick up riders only at Canada College.

Route 881 will serve Palo Alto, Menlo Park, Atherton, Redwood City, San Carlos, Belmont, Hillsdale and the Park & Ride at the junction of Highways 92 and 101.

Buses will arrive 2nd and Folsom, a few blocks from the starting line, at 710AM and will then arrive Sunset Blvd at 740AM.

The first bus will return beginning at 1000AM and the round trip fare is $12.50. While advance registration to ride is not needed, it is recommended.

GOLDEN GATE TRANSIT (GGT)

SAN RAFAEL: The **GGT** Board approved the Transit Fare Increase Program, which will increase fares 5 per cent each year for five years beginning this July 1.

The program is intended to raise $9 million and is part of a series of cost cutting and revenue generating items designed to reduce an expected $79 million deficit.

The fare increase will apply to all trips but those entirely within Marin County. The **MARIN COUNTY TRANSIT DISTRICT** sets those rates.

As an example, the current $3.95 fare between San Rafael and San Francisco would increase to $4.15 this July, followed by $4.35, $4.55, $4.80 and $5.05 in 2010.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT (RTD)

DENVER, CO: The "Mile High City" recently experienced a five day strike by 1750 members of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1001 against **RTD**, the first work stoppage since 1982.

(Continued from page 5)

Prior to the walkout, ATU members voted down a pact with raises of up to $1.80 an hour over three years made up of quarterly 15 cent raises, a $250 one-time bonus, increased contributions to the health and welfare fund and sharing any increases in health insurance premiums between the workers and the agency in the last two years of the contract.

On the second day of the walkout, ATU called for binding arbitration, but **RTD** rejected the suggestion saying that it could not add any more money to the wage offer *(Ed. Note – in the 1999 negotiations which included binding arbitration, **RTD** was forced to pay more than it had originally offered).*

At the beginning of the walkout, **RTD** bus operator top rate of pay was ranked 75th in a survey of 163 transit agencies by ATU at $18.05. **MBTA** in Boston, MA was the top at $26.55 with **VALLEY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY** of San Jose, CA second at $26.12.

During the strike, **RTD** deployed contractor operated buses to the 22 lines with the highest number of riders. These included 0-BROADWAY, 15-EAST COLFAX and 16-WEST COLFAX.

Local routes that ran were 1, 3, 6, 7, 10, 12, 21, 30, 31, 38, 40, 51, 65, 66, 76, 83, 92, 100, 105, 112, 121, 153, 203, 204, 205, 206, 228, AS, JUMP and BOUND.

Limited Service routes that operated included 16 Ltd, 80, 120, 125, 128, 201, 208, 209, 225, 301-303, 323-327, AVA and Y. Also operating were LINK, HOP, access-a-Ride and call-n-Ride.

Following a series of meetings with representatives of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, headed by Mediator Christel Jorgensen, ATU and **RTD** both agreed to submit a revised contract for a vote of the union membership and then the **RTD** Board.

The revised agreement included the same $1.80 over three years, but with an initial 50 cents, retroactive to March 1st, and smaller quarterly increments.

More money up front was a big issue as employees had just experienced a three year wage freeze.

ATU members voted heavily in favor on April 7th and the Board unanimously approved it the next day. The strike was over beginning April 9 and workers returned over a two-day period.

The **RTD** work stoppage situation may not be over. During negotiations supervised by Mediator Jorgensen last month, employees of contractor *FIRST TRANSIT, INC.* who are represented by ATU Local 1755 and *FTI* failed to reach agreement on new contract terms and authorized the union to call a strike. Operators have been working under extensions of an agreement that expired last November. Under terms of their contract, ATU could walk out on May 10th, if further talks fail.

By Colorado state law, half of **RTD** bus service must be operated under contract. At this time, *FIRST TRANSIT, INC., CONNEX TRANSIT* and *LAIDLAW TRANSIT SERVICES* each operate a portion of the system.

Only *FTI* is unionized and its starting pay is $11.50 an hour, compared to **RTD** at $13.69. Top *FTI* pay is 16.00 an hour after ten years.

ATU Local 1755 has been pressuring **RTD** Directors to set $13.50 as a minimum wage when the transit agency next bids out contracts.

MOUNTAIN LINE (ML)

FLAGSTAFF, AZ: Two new bus stops were recently added on **ML's** ROUTE 66 (which travels along the namesake road) near Enterprise.

Stop 20B is located adjacent to the Front Row Seat Video Store for the westbound route while stop 12B, its companion, is located directly across the street and is served by eastbound buses.

ML will soon be purchasing new hybrid/electric buses for the five route system. These vehicles will operate on a combination of diesel fuel and electricity and are expected to reduce emissions by 75 per cent.

The *VAN GO* division of **ML** (paratransit services) will begin service for ADA eligible community members (the elderly and persons with disabilities) on May 1st within the Kachina Village. This will allow passengers accessibility to much needed services available in the Flagstaff area.

Kachina Village is in unincorporated Coconino County and the City of Flagstaff based **ML** had withdrawn the program. KC *VAN GO* fares will be $5 and the buses will operate on weekdays with trips available at 900AM, 200PM and 600PM.

VEOLIA TRANSPORTATION NORTH AMERICA/ CONNEX TRANSIT, INC. (VT/CTI)

CONNEX TRANSIT, INC. has recently been renamed *VEOLIA TRANSPORTATION.*

CTI/VT is the United States subsidiary of **VEOLIA TRANSPORT**, the transportation division of **VEOLIA**

(Continued on page 7)

MOUNTAIN AREA REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY
Big Bear Lake, California

FLEET NOS.	BUILDER	MODEL	VIN NOS.		YEAR	NOTES
M-23	Ford/Goshen	Econ/GC III	THA41277		1998	
M-24 – M-27	Ford/Startrans	Econ/—WHB53833, 832, 830, 831		1998		
M-31	Ford/Startrans	Econ/—XHB67349		1999		
M-32 – M-35	ElDo National	Transmark	YC084155, 158, 156, 157		2000	
M-36 – M-38	Ford/ElDo	Econ/Aerotech	YHB82852, 851, 853		2000	
M-39 – N-40	Ford/ElDo	Econ/Aerotech	YHB83247-248		2000	
M-41	Ford/Goshen	Econ/GC III	3HA77628		2003	
M-42	Ford/Goshen	Econ/GC III	3HB05702		2003	
M-43	Ford/Goshen	Econ/GC III	3HB18287		2003	
M-44 – M-48	Ford/ElDo	Econ/Aerotech	6HA93080-084		2006	
T-01	Freightliner	Trolley	4CM67027		2004	

M-32 thru M-48 and T-01 are active while M-23 thru M-31 are inactive

MARTA is a joint powers agency operating in the 640 square mile mountainous area immediately north of the San Bernardino Valley area offering local fixed route and Dial-A-Ride service in Crestline, Lake Arrowhead, Big Bear Lake, Big Bear City and Off The Mountain (to San Bernardino) intercity service.

ENVIRONMENT, a world leader in environmental services. *VT* operates in 25 countries with a work force of 61,000 people and operates 27,000 road and rail vehicles.

As *CONNEX*, the firm has recently been awarded first time contracts from the **VALLEY METRO/CITY OF MESA** in Arizona and the **ORANGE COUNTY (CA) TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY.** The **OCTA** pact is effective July 1st and includes all *ACCESS* paratransit service and 23 contracted fixed routes utilizing a fleet of El Dorado National EZ Riders and Econoline/Aerotechs.

Excluding the ATC/VANCOM agreements, in the west *CONNEX* presently has contracts with **LADOT** for COMMUTER EXPRESS and both DASH/VERMONT/ MAIN and CHESTERFIELD SQUARE), **METROLINK** and the National Park Services' PARK LINK

AC TRANSIT WINS TOP HONOR AT 2006 INTERNATIONAL BUS ROADEO

IRVINE: **AC TRANSIT** won the Grand Champion Award at the prestigious 31st International "Bus Roadeo" held at the OCTA Irvine facility in conjunction with the APTA Bus & Paratransit Conference in Anaheim.

This honor, recognizing the men and women who keep North America's bus system safe is given to the operator and maintenance team that has the highest score of all bus transit systems in this year's competition.
The First Runner-Up was OCTA; Second Runner-Up was the Delaware Transit Corporation in Wilmington, DE; and, Third Runner-Up was Oahu Transit Services in Honolulu, HI.

Among 40-foot bus operators, Matt Chomjak of Snohomish County PTBA (Community Transit) in Everett, WA placed first in the Operator Competition. Second place was captured by Rendol Whidden of Broward County Transit in Pompano Beach, FL, while Jesse De La Cruz of AC Transit was awarded third place honors.

In the Operator Competition for 35-foot buses, Phillip Patterson from Central Midlands RTA in Columbia, SC won first place. Julian Carranza, Jr., of Corpus Christi RTA in Corpus Christi, TX won second place, and Kevin Grady of San Francisco MUNI won third place.

In the Maintenance Competition, first place went to the LYNX team from Orlando, FL. The OCTA team earned a second place finish. Third place went to the team from Coast Mountain Bus Company in Vancouver, BC. Maintenance teams are judged on their ability to trouble-shoot maintenance problems.

This year two new events were included in the program. The MCI I/O Controls multiplex trouble-shooting event went to Valley Metro in Phoenix, AZ. A pre-trip inspections for operators went to Rendol Whidden of Broward County, FL..

This year, a new best customer service award was created. Judged on the competitor's professionalism, body language and problem-solving creativity, the

(Continued on page 8)

EQUIPMENT REPORT

(All properties are located in California unless otherwise noted)

PROPERTY	FLEET #'S	BUILDER	MODEL/SERIAL#'S	DATE	NOTES
-NEW-					
Elk Grove Transit	201-202	Chevy/El Dorado	GMT560/AeroElite/5F515775, 5499	2005	
	203	Chevy/El Dorado	GMT560/AeroElite/5F515044	2005	
	301-303	Ford/El Dorado	Econ/Aerotech/5HA09810, 02322-323	2005	
LADOT	06301-06302	El Dorado/National	EZ Rider II/6C084061-062	2006	
	06303-06317	El Dorado/National	EZ Rider II/—	2006	
MARTA	M-44 – M-48	Ford/ElDo	Econ/Aerotech/6HA93080-084	2006	
Gardena Muni Bus Lines	703-721	New Flyer	GE40LF/—	2005	
-DISPOSITIONS-					
San Diego MTS	2711	Ford/ElDo	Econ/Aerotech/—	—	1
Long Beach Transit	9301	TMC	T80208/PR829209	1993	2
	9302	TMC	T80208/PR829289	1993	2
	9303-9310	TMC	T80208/PR829310-317	1993	2
	9311-9320	TMC	T80208/PR829319-328	1993	2
Norwalk Transit System	7052	Gillig	G18D102N4/T1070000	1996	3

-NOTES-
1. To *LAIDLAW* operated **MONTEREY PARK SPIRIT.**
2. Off **LONG BEACH TRANSIT** active roster.
3. For sale at Nationwide Auction Systems.

OCTA is expected to increase from 50 to 80 the number of New Flyer CNG powered buses *(WT 6/05)* in the first year of a multi-year purchase. This will allow for retirement of some older buses (GMC RTS and Gillig Phantoms) and for some service expansion.

Almost all of the **OCTA** 6301-6312 series Chevy GMT560/El Dorado Aero Elite 25-passenger cutaways with suburban interiors are on the property *(WT 2/06)*. Presently painted all white, there are plans to wrap the units in a special blue and orange "O. C. EXPRESS" design prior to entering service in July.

UTAH TRANSIT AUTHORITY of Salt Lake City recently purchased ten additional under-30-foot Opus low floor buses bringing the total number of Optima brand buses to 43. They are used primarily on downtown area circulators.

(Continued from page 7)

Customer Service Challenge Award went to Patricia Lock of AC Transit. Alex Alban of the Chicago Transit Authority earned second place.





LEFT: *OCTA 5345 and MTA 4409 were used as the Maintenance buses at the Roadeo.* ***RIGHT:*** *MTA 4401 and 4408 are entering the course to begin the 35' competition. 4427 was also used. OCTA 5327, 5328, 5339 and 5373 were used for the 40' competition. On display were OCTA 5310, 5321, 5382 and MTA 4418.. Both Craig Barnes photos.*