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Southern California Rapid Transit District



# HEADWAY

Volume 7, Number 11

November 1980

## Board OKs operator use of tear gas

Following more than two hours of debate, the Board of Directors voted to authorize the voluntary use of protective tear gas canisters as a means of self-defense for District bus operators.

Operators wishing to use the devices will be required to complete a two-hour state-approved training course and be licensed by the state before they are allowed to carry the devices. And then, only state-approved tear gas canisters may be used.

The Board's action came in the wake of growing unrest among operators caused by the increasing incidence of crime and violence on District buses.

Just as crime is on the rise throughout the city, it is increasing on buses. The District logged a nine per cent increase in crime incidents through the first eight months of this year, compared to the same period last year. In round numbers that works out to 639 reported incidents this year compared to 584 for the same period last year.

Crimes against passengers were up in all categories with 272

incidents reported this year, as opposed to 182 last year. The biggest increase in crimes against passengers came in the categories of robbery (120 compared to 72) and assaults (37 compared to 16). There have been two homicides.

Surprisingly, for the first eight months of the year, crimes against

### Undercover cash

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors approved a motion by Supervisor Baxter Ward giving the RTD \$150,000 to be used to hire off-duty law enforcement officers to ride undercover on District buses.

"These undercover officers will be deployed in areas where we see fit," said Transit Police Chief Jim Burgess, who said the officers will be used to combat a variety of crimes that occur on buses, not just robberies.

Board President Thomas Neusom said the District will ask the city for matching funds to help extend the program.

operators were down, with 277 incidents reported this year compared to 334 for the same period last year.

However, in some categories the figures were up. Drivers have been robbed more often (34 to 17) and assault with deadly weapons was up, also (33 to 22).

Angered by the general increase in violence aboard buses, the United Transportation Union (UTU) threatened the District with a one-day work stoppage or a selective boycott of problem lines unless its 4,800 members received additional protection through additional security being placed on the buses, allowing operators to protect themselves with chemical sprays or some other means.

UTU General Chairman Earl Clark said the union wants to encourage operators to maintain order on the buses and assist passengers in trouble, but not at the risk of personal injury.

"We're not going to relax our efforts on this until we have adequate protection for our operators," Clark told the Board at an early hearing on the use of tear gas

canisters. "If the numbers (of assaults) don't come down, we'll make a mass demonstration against this property."

However, such threats proved unnecessary.

RTD Acting General Manager Richard Powers told the Board he felt the problem was serious enough to demand immediate action by the Board, which took less than two weeks to study the legal ramifications involved in arming operators with tear gas canisters, evaluate the devices available and select a plan for implementing the use of such devices.

"We are taking this action at the request and concurrence of the UTU," said Thomas Neusom, RTD Board President, "and we hope the use of these devices will reduce assaults on our buses. We reluctantly take this step in an effort to combat increasing crime and violence on the buses and the District hopes this program is effective and provides greater security for our bus operators and passengers."

The measure approved by the board, one of four alternatives  
**(Please turn to page 2)**

## RTD, UTU join forces to curb crime

In an effort to reduce bus crime and vandalism, the RTD and the United Transportation Union (UTU), which represents the District's 4,800 bus operators, have joined We TIP, a state-wide program insuring anonymity to witnesses of crime.

"This is a joint effort of labor and management to fight crime and vandalism on District buses and to provide greater security to our bus operators and patrons," explained RTD Board President Thomas Neusom during a press conference at the Los Angeles Press Club. "We are pleased to jointly present a check for \$2,000 to We TIP and become a part of their crime fighting efforts."

We TIP, founded in 1972 and originally designed to fight drug pushers (the letters stand for we turn in pushers), now works to solve and prevent major crimes including arson and gang violence.

Rewards of up to \$500 in cash  
**(Please turn to page 3)**



UNITED WAY — Joining forces to combat crime on buses are (from left) WeTIP President Jim Vigneau, Los Angeles Police Chief Daryl Gates, County Supervisor Kenneth Hahn, RTD President Thomas

Neusom, UTU General Chairman Earl Clark and Sheriff's Inspector Allen J. Hansen. RTD and UTU combined to donate \$2,000 to WeTIP. Group offers rewards to witnesses of crimes who come forward.

# TRIPPERS

## People moving

Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley has announced the receipt of a \$16.7 million federal grant to plan and build the Downtown People Mover (DPM). The feds have committed to spending more than \$143 million on the \$175 million project, which is expected to be in operation by spring, 1984. The recent grant will enable work to begin on final design, right-of-way acquisition and the four-year construction phase of the project. Another \$44 million is expected from UMTA in 1981.

The DPM is a system of electrically powered and automatically controlled transit vehicles which run on their own elevated guideway. The proposed 60-car, 13-station system would meander 2.9 miles between the Convention Center and Union Station and include parking facilities for 3,750 cars. The system would be one element in a proposed downtown transit improvement plan that includes the proposed Wilshire Corridor Subway, a three-level bus station at Union Station and a regional rail center, also at Union Station.

## Higher 'n higher

On Monday, September 22, and Wednesday, October 1, RTD buses carried 1.38 million boarding passengers. The District's all-time high ridership record was set on May 14, 1979, at the height of the gasoline shortage when District buses carried 1.47 million boarding passengers.

## New arrivals

Special agent and Mrs. Don Davis were presented with their fourth grandchild September 25 by their daughter, Pam. Heather Ann Thompson weighed in at 7 pounds, 5 ounces. Proud papa Tom is stationed at Mountain Home Air Force Base in Idaho. It is the Thompson's first child.

## Bunny hugs

It's always rough when you reach the big Three-Oh in years, but Mechanic C Jim Lane of Division 9 will look back on his 30th birthday with extreme fondness. Jim, who has worked for the District six years, was serenaded with the traditional birthday song, performed by an untraditional singing Playboy bunny. In the photo below, Jim's the one on the right with the pointed hat and the big smile. It was hard to tell who enjoyed the treat more, Jim or his mechanical co-workers. Incidentally, Jim is part of a large RTD family that includes two sisters-in-law, Information Operator Veronica Byrd and Dispatcher Kathy Coffey, and a brother-in-law, mechanic Jerry Swain of Division 3.



(Please turn to page 10)

## HAPPINESS IS . . .

# Artist lives up to his name

Alegria is a Spanish word meaning happiness and Division 9 operator Hector Alegria is one man who lives up to his name. He pursues his alegria through oil painting when he's not driving a San Gabriel Valley bus.

And one of the things Hector

likes about his work is that he has the time to dabble in oils. It's one of the advantages of working the extra board at Division 9.

As most District employees know, the extra board is a pool of drivers at each division, main-

tained to fill assignments and vacancies caused by sickness, missouts, vacations, leaves and the like. While working the board, an operator may arrive at his division early in the morning, not knowing which line he may work. There may be several hours between assignments, and he may work a variety of lines late into the evening.

Between assignments, some operators take naps, some play table games, some read or some just watch television. Hector Alegria creates in oils. And more and more, friends and co-workers are buying his landscapes, seascapes and portraits.

Hector did not seek out to make art a second career, but he says that now he sells everything he can because his closets can't hold any more paintings.

Alegria became interested in art when he was seven. His family fled Castro's Cuba when he was 12 and he attended school first in Miami and later in Los Angeles. His art was postponed during that time, adapting to a new country and survival were more important.

"I tried sketching at first, then watercolors, but they didn't really satisfy me," recalls Alegria, who joined the District in 1971. "I hit on oils and got hooked. I love working with the tonality and richness of the media."

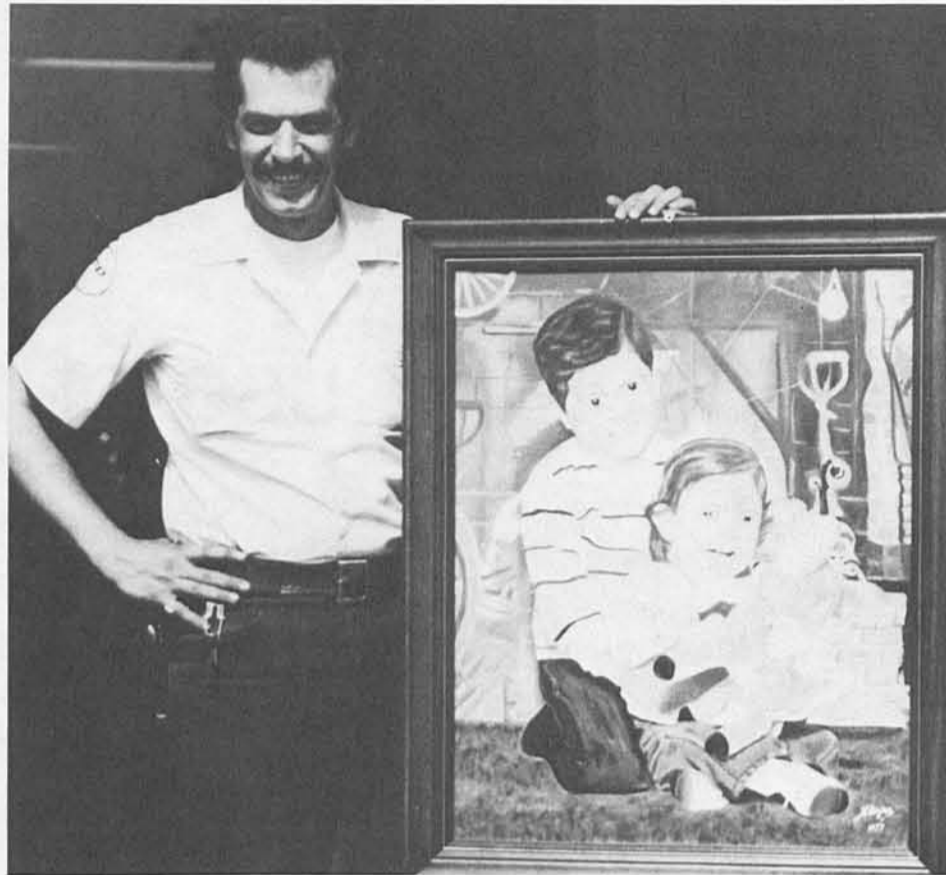
Now a citizen, Alegria is married to a native Californian and has two children. His painting is completely self-taught, but his talent is evident in his understanding of proportion, texture and perspective.

He reconciles his hobby with his job in a few words.

"I enjoy working with people," he says, "and driving never stops being interesting to me. Certainly the benefits and pay are very good."

Alegria says he is not considering a career in the art field while he still has to shoulder the responsibilities of a growing family. He plans to continue working for the District into early retirement.

"Then I can paint full time," he beams.



ARTIST AT WORK — Operator Hector Alegria poses proudly beside a painting he did of his children. The portrait, along with the French street scene, was among several works Alegria displayed during a recent one-man show at the El Monte operating facility.



# Driver use of chemical sprays OK'd

(Continued from page 1)

studied, specifies that operators wishing to do so obtain the state-required training on their own time. Also, they must select and pay for a state-approved tear gas canister themselves.

However, the District will reimburse those who take advantage of this new program for the cost of training and the device, up to \$25. The Board's action also provides for reimbursing an operator for the purchase of a new weapon should he be forced to discharge his weapon while on duty in a self-defense action.

While the Board's action did not recommend any specific brand of tear gas — and there are several — or make a determination as to the relative merits of a product or training school, there are essentially only two types of devices presently approved by the state, according to RTD Transit Police Chief Jim Burgess.

Burgess said that there is CN Gas, commonly referred to as Mace, and there is CS Gas, which

he said is "ten times more powerful" than the CN-type devices.

"No matter which form of tear gas is used, there has been no documented case where the injury of the subject was permanent," Burgess said. "This makes the use of tear gas weaponry an ideal tool to repel attacks and assaults."

In answer to questions from the Board, Burgess said there has been some question as to the reliability of CN Gas when used against persons under the influence of alcohol or narcotics, or against those mentally deranged. (Also, CN is easily diluted by tears or water).

This is because the irritants in the device attack nerve endings in the skin or eyes, and if the person's senses are already numb, they simply don't feel the effect of the spray.

"It should be understood that no matter what the tear gas might be, the substance is not gaseous," Burgess explained. "They are actually particles of irritants in a liquid solution (usually mineral oil or acetone) propelled by CO2."

The devices generally direct a very thin stream up to a distance of 10 feet. When the substance gets on the victim, the eyes begin to tear and burn and the sinuses will drain. With the more potent type devices, the eyelids will often swell closed so the attacker cannot see. It causes choking and a burning sensation in the throat and the victim feels as if someone has a bear-hug around his chest. Anyplace the irritant touches skin, a burning sensation is felt.

Anyone can take the tear gas training course if they are at least 18, have never been convicted of a felony and have never been convicted of the misuse of or assault with a tear gas weapon.

Acting General Manager Powers cautioned that the program will be closely monitored to determine its effectiveness and said any misuse or violation on the part of an operator with the tear gas weapon could result in a felony prosecution and would not be tolerated by the District.

WIDE RANGE OF PROGRAMS

# District bolsters crime prevention activities

In recent years, the District has taken several important steps that have helped reduce the crime problem on RTD buses.

For instance, in 1978, the Board of Directors ordered all members of the District's Security Department to be trained as police officers. The District now has a steadily increasing Transit Police Force.

The Rio Hondo Police Academy, where many of the District's police officers were trained, now includes field training utilizing District buses that students on their way to other police agencies will learn how to deal with bus crime situations.

The exact fare policy was implemented 11 years ago. Operators now carry no change and money is secured inside a locked vault placed inside the farebox.

Other programs instituted in recent years to help combat crime include the installation of flasher lights on all buses to act as an external signal to nearby law enforcement officers that the driver needs assistance, the painting of bus numbers on the roof of all buses to aid police department helicopters in locating buses from the air, and the installation of two-way radios equipped with a priority silent alarm system in buses.

(Silent alarm systems allow operators to alert the Dispatch Center of serious incidents on the bus without using the radio. Dispatch

responds by immediately contacting transit police, or other local law enforcement).

So, what have they done for you lately?

In recent months, the District has authorized an additional expenditure of \$1.5 million to hire 45 more transit police personnel, nearly doubling that department's numbers.

The District has also helped organize a task force of representatives from the RTD, UTU, LAPD and Sheriff's Department to help coordinate anti-crime efforts in the communities served by District lines. This effort has resulted in an increasing number of undercover police officers riding District buses.

The Transit Police have increased their patrols, including random boardings of buses to establish high profiles in law enforcement and crime deterrence, concentrating on lines operating in high crime areas.

New buses the District receives have electronic headsigns that can be programmed to announce emergencies on the bus and ask

passers-by to call the police. Message is displayed in front and on curb side of bus. Also, bids have been called for to purchase enough electronic headsigns for the remaining older buses in the fleet.

In addition, the District recently held the first in a series of community meetings with representatives from the judicial system, district attorney's office and community leaders to discuss ways of reducing crime on buses. The first meeting was held with leaders from the South Central Los Angeles area, with the second meeting to be held soon with members from the East Los Angeles community.

As a deterrent to potential criminal activities on buses, the District has installed car cards advertising that all buses are radio-equipped, that undercover transit police may be on the bus and other cards detailing the District's anti-crime activities.

In addition to contributing (along with UTU) to the We TIP program, a state-wide anonymous witness

cash reward program, the District has joined Project HEAVY, a federally-financed program aimed at reducing gang violence.

## WeTIP

(Continued from page 1)

are awarded to witnesses of crime when their information is helpful in the arrest and conviction of a perpetrator of crime.

Information gathered by the agency, through witnesses, has been used in over 2,400 arrests and has led to more than 1,200 convictions and the confiscation of more than \$32 million in illegal and dangerous drugs.

"We trust this new anti-crime program will help that small number of our passengers who abuse other passengers, operators and the equipment to develop a new appreciation for the transit system, which provides an essential community service for everyone," said Richard Powers, acting general manager.



CALL SIGN — New electronic headsigns can be programmed to display a call for help.

## Bus cameras — Nothing to smile about

Activities on 10 District buses will be recorded on film for the next couple months, but nobody's making a movie or filming a documentary. It's more serious than that.

As part of a 90-day test program, surveillance cameras have been mounted in buses operating on two lines to determine if there is any difference on camera-equipped and non-equipped buses in the areas of vandalism, criminal incidents, or arrests and prosecutions resulting from use of the camera equipment.

The test will also look at operator and passenger acceptance of the program, according to Transit Police Chief Jim Burgess, whose department is con-

ducting the test as part of its efforts to combat the increasing incidence of crime on District buses.

"In order to cover as large a geographic and demographic area as possible, and also to address a high incidence of criminal behavior, we selected lines 92 and 26 to have the camera equipment mounted and tested," said Burgess.

Line 26 runs from Atlantic Boulevard in East Los Angeles to Rimpau and Pico Boulevards on the westside. Line 92 operates between Sierra Vista and Watts. Both lines are out of Division 1.

Burgess said that 10 cameras have been mounted in metal housings and installed on new

Grumman-Flexible 870 buses for the test.

Operated by remote control by the operator, the cameras will work in the same manner as those used for surveillance in banks.

The test program is using an 8mm cartridge loaded, battery operated, pulsing camera with an electric exposure eye and a frame rate that is adjustable from one picture every 1 1/4 seconds up to one picture every 90 seconds.

The unit is mounted above the driver's seat and can record all activity in the rear three-quarters of the bus. Decals and car cards, prominently displayed, inform passengers that they are being monitored.



TESTING — Transit Police Chief Jim Burgess (right) explains the surveillance camera test procedure to (from left) Director Marvin Holen,

Acting General Manager Richard Powers and Board President Thomas Neusom. The camera is mounted in a metal housing above the driver.



The increasing incidence of crime, not only on District buses but throughout the Los Angeles area, has made everyone more aware of the problem and more than a little concerned that they not become victims.

In line with this concern, the District's Employee Education, Development and Training Department recently held a series of Lady Beware sessions at District headquarters. Consisting of a film presentation, self-defense demonstration and question and answer period, the Los Angeles Police Department-conducted program is designed to familiarize District employees — both male and female — with steps they can take to lessen the chance that they will be attacked and what they can do if they are.

While the emphasis of the Lady Beware program is on combating rape, the session also offers valuable suggestions to help protect yourself from muggings, robberies and burglaries.

"The most important thing to remember is that the rapist frequently plans his crime," explains Officer Shilah Johnson, a member of the LAPD's Crime Prevention Unit who conducted one of the sessions at District headquarters. "He looks for the easiest victim and the right chance to strike. Your best defense is to minimize his opportunity to attack you."

If you are attacked, Johnson recommends that you be prepared to defend yourself. She told the gathering of nearly 200 men and women in the District Board Room that most people mistakenly think of rape as a crime of passion, that the rapist is looking for sex.

"Rape is much more a crime of violence than of sex," she says. "Violence against his victim is seldom far from the rapist's mixed-up mind."

At one time, the police depart-

ment recommended the use of such everyday items as keys, aerosol sprays or nail files as weapons to defend yourself. However, Johnson says these did not disable the attacker and quite often just made him angrier.

The police now recommend that people learn to use one of the basic defense moves pictured on this page. With practice, such defensive moves as the knee or forearm to the groin, the kick to the knee, the palm thrust into the nose or gouging your attacker's eyes will disable him long enough for you to escape.

"You have to think and not panic," Johnson warns. "Your best

Many people think rape is a crime of sex, but LAPD Officer Shilah Johnson says no, it is a crime of violence and her advice is . . .

*Lady Beware!*

defense is noise. Loud screaming will attract attention, especially if you scream fire. Tests have shown that people pay more attention, that they will come out of their houses to see what's going on, if they hear a cry of 'fire!' because it could affect them."

Johnson says if you have exhausted all other possibilities for immediate escape, try talking to the rapist. Talk about his family, how he doesn't want to upset them or involve them. Ask him what it is he wants from you and why is he picking on you. Keep questioning him and all the time don't be trying to pull away. In fact, if you can, move closer to him.

"Getting him to talk may give you

an opportunity to escape. More women have escaped by talking than by fighting," Johnson says.

Talking to your attacker can be especially important if he has a weapon, Johnson says. Her advice when confronted with a knife or a gun: "Don't resist."

"If all he wants is your wallet or purse, give it to him! There's nothing you own that is worth losing your life over," she emphasizes. "But, if you think he is trying to force you into a car to take you to an isolated area, then you have to try and gain his confidence by talking to him. Make him think you are going along with his plans. When he has his guard down, then you can make your break."

## An ounce of prevention . . .

There's an old saying that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. That seems especially true where rape or physical attack is involved. Based on past experience as to where and when an attack is most likely to occur, the police have developed a series of tips you can follow to help keep you from becoming a victim.

This is only a partial list of the precautions you can take. For more information, call or write your local police department's Crime Prevention Unit and ask their advice.

### When Walking . . .

- Avoid walking alone and try to stay on streets where there are other people. After dark, carry a flashlight and avoid dark doorways or other places of concealment where an attacker might be hiding.

- If someone appears to be following you, cross the street, head for bright lights and people and be prepared to defend yourself. If it is a car that is following you, turn and run in the opposite direction. The driver will have to turn around to follow and, if he does, make your screams loud and long.

- If you have to work late, alert a friend or relative. When you leave ask the security guard to escort you or keep an eye on you while you go to your car. Better yet, leave in a group. Don't walk to your car alone if you can avoid it. Have your car

keys ready so you can open your door immediately.

- Secure your purse or handbag under your arm so that it cannot be easily snatched. Unless absolutely necessary, avoid wearing expensive jewelry or carrying large amounts of money.

- If you arrive home and find a door or window forced or broken, don't enter or call out. Someone may still be inside. Use a neighbor's phone to call the police and wait there until they arrive.

### When driving . . .

- Keep your doors locked and windows rolled up. Don't leave your purse on the seat where it will be an open invitation to criminals. Keep it on the floor.

- If your car won't start, don't ask a stranger to help you . . . he may have disabled it . . . If he insists on helping, lock yourself in the car and sound the horn to attract help. If your car breaks down in an isolated area, stay with the car until help arrives. Wait inside and talk to strangers through a partially opened window with the doors locked. (Also, it is not a good idea to raise your hood. If you have to sound your horn to attract help, your assailant can easily rip out the wires).

- Don't stop in isolated areas to help someone who appears to have a disabled car. Instead, send help back to them.

- Always check the back seat of your car before entering, a criminal may have

entered and concealed himself to wait for you. Always lock your car when you leave it.

### When at home . . .

- List only your last name and initials on your mailbox and in the telephone directory to avoid advertising that you are a female living alone.

- When you move into a new place, get new locks for the doors. Previous tenants or former employees may still have keys. Avoid hiding spare keys under door mats or in planters, that's the first place a criminal will look.

- Install a wide-angle viewer (peephole) in your door. Never open the door to strangers and train your children *not* to answer the door. Require identification of all repairmen and salesman before opening the door. If you have any doubts, call their employer and verify their identify before admitting them.

- Don't allow strangers to use your telephone to make emergency calls. Never permit them to enter. Instead, offer to summon emergency assistance or make the call for them.

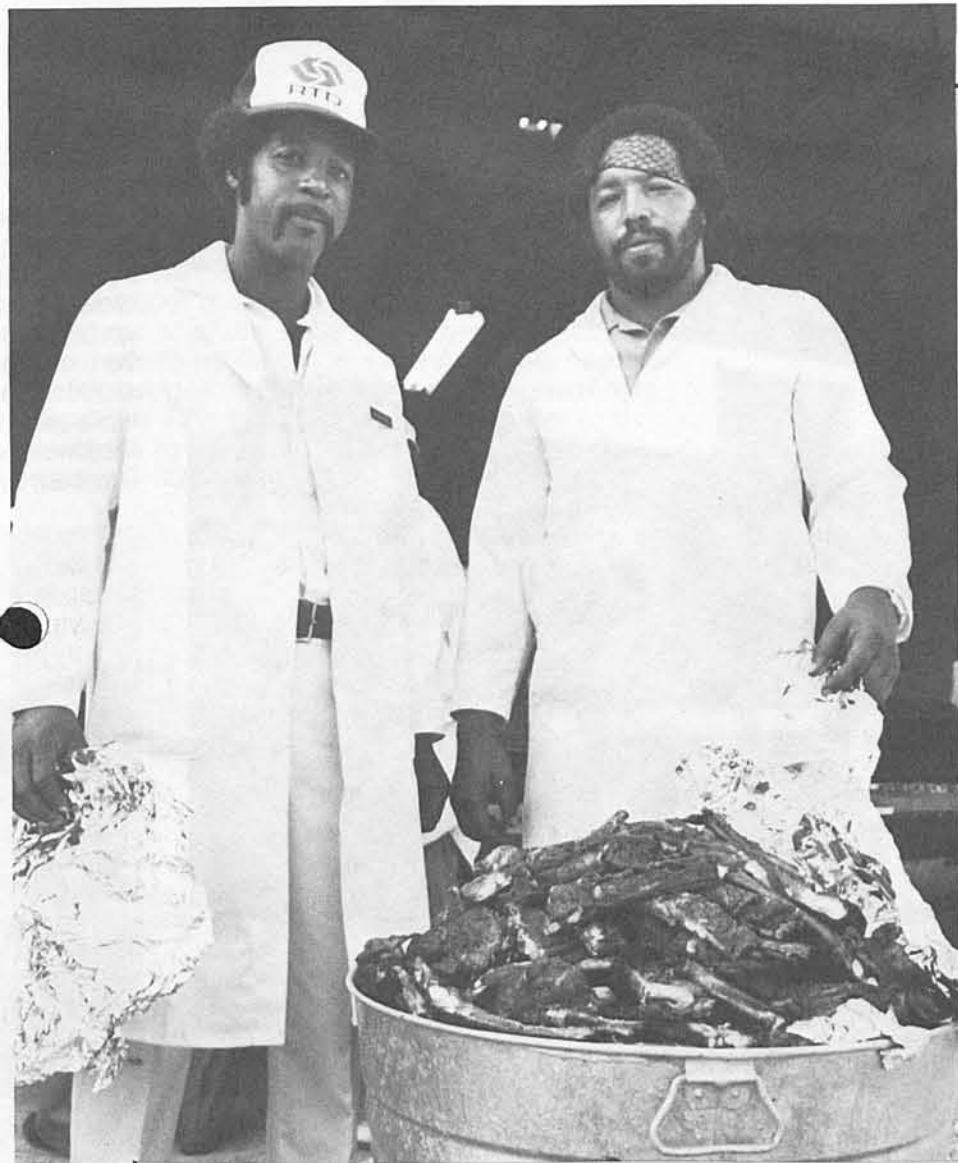
- If you receive wrong number calls, never reveal your name, address, phone number or admit that you are alone. If the caller asks what number he has reached, ask him what number he was calling.

In general, be alert when you are alone.

## Take that!

Officer Shilah Johnson demonstrates a few ways to temporarily incapacitate an attacker on RTD Training Analyst David Berke, a reluctant volunteer. The methods shown here include (from left) a knee to your attacker's groin, a hard kick at your assailant's knee (a move that may also be effective if you are on the ground and he isn't) and driving the heel of your palm into the attacker's nose. Johnson recommends you practice these moves before you need them to defend yourself. For more information, contact the LAPD's Office of Operations at (213) 485-3134 and ask about their Lady Beware program. But, Johnson's most important advice was to try and avoid getting into situations where you will have to defend yourself, which is what the Lady Beware program is all about.





### BBQ sauce covers division get-togethers

Barbecue sauce is being used as a sort of glue to hold employees at the District's maintenance and transportation departments together. Division 1 got the ball rolling earlier this year with a Friendship Day BBQ. Recently, Divisions 2, 3 and 5 have picked up the ball and smothered it in hickory smoked flavor. The photos here are from the recent gathering at Division 5 in South Central Los Angeles. Operators, mechanics, utilities, dispatchers and management all contributed their spare change regularly to a fund that was then used to purchase ribs, hotdogs, chickens and a dozen different types of salad.

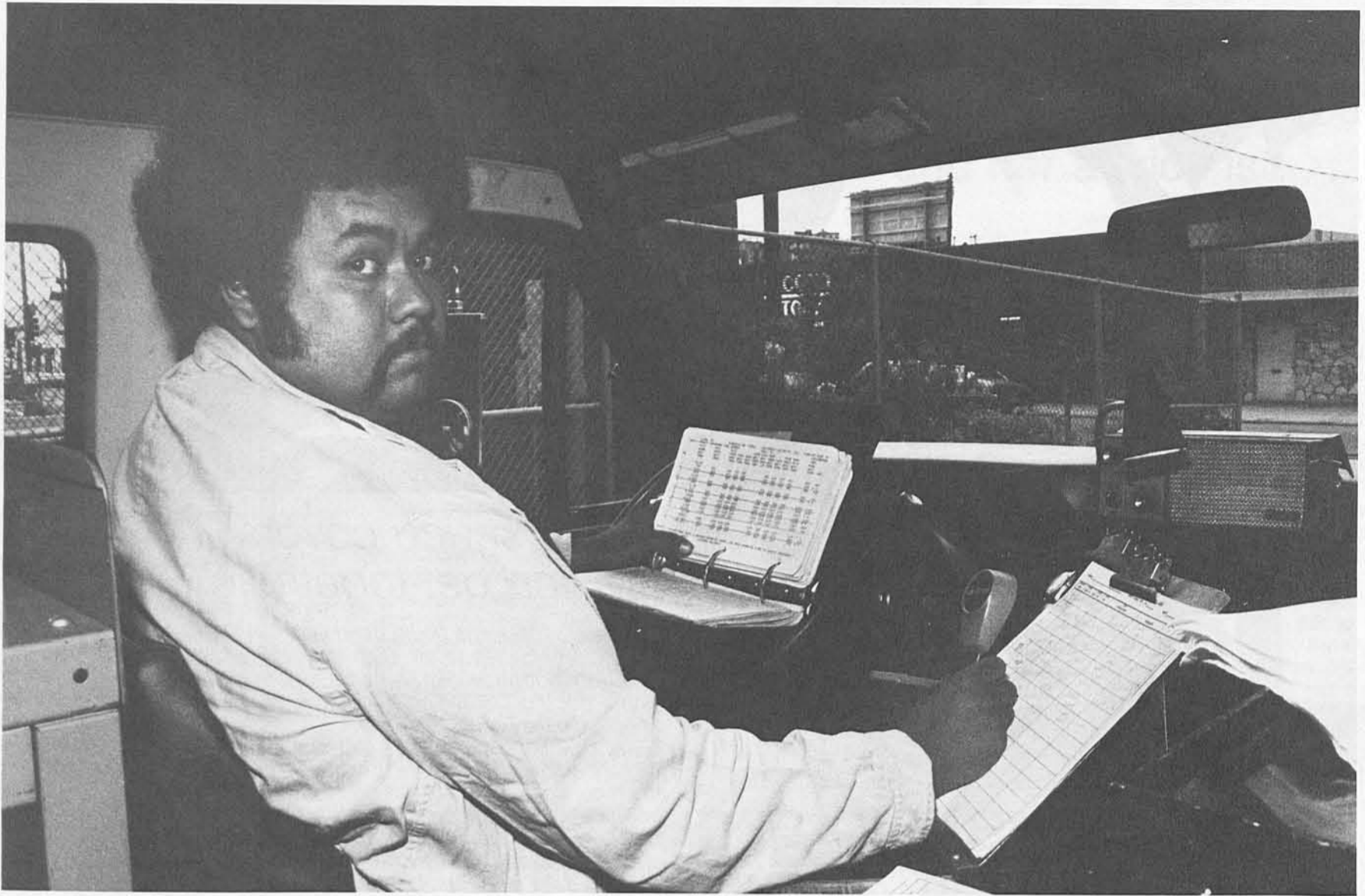


### A new activity

Diane Delaney (center), who has brought District employees all those fun-filled recreation events over the years in her capacity as Employee Activities Coordinator, is in the process of bringing her husband a fun-filled event in the form of a new baby. To celebrate the pending arrival, friends got together and threw a baby shower for the teary-eyed Delaney. Among the presents she received was a baby's car seat, in a box wrapped to resemble one of the District's new Grumman Flexible 870s. Pictured with Delaney is her boss, Manager of Employee Relations John Wilkens (right) and Betty Sconce, employee activities technician.



# Eastside, westside . . .



It takes a special man to operate the RTD's mobile mechanics vans. Raul Rodriguez, equipped with a radio, jotting down bus routes and schedules, is one of a pair of mechanics (below, right) who replace a defective radiator, to the other. The pair may answer



## . . . all around downtown

### Mobile mechanics help keep RTD's fleet on the street

By TREVA WOODS  
News Bureau Student Intern

*Road call: The dispatch of a mechanic to a point on a bus line to repair a reported malfunction of a bus.*

It's the type of job that would give most people an ulcer — dirty, backbreaking, and fast-paced with more than its share of pressure. However, unlike most high-pressure careers, the men in this profession don't get to wear fancy three-piece suits or sit behind big desks making executive decisions.

Instead, they wear long white lab coats, like doctors, and, while their decisions do affect hundreds of lives daily, their patient is always a 25,000-pound bus. More often than not, they do their best work on a crowded city street or freeway at the height of the rush hour.

They are RTD's Mechanical Road Supervisors — better known as roving mechanics — and their job is to make sure the District's buses keep rolling in the downtown Los Angeles area with as few delays as possible.

Working out of well-stocked, radio-equipped vans, the roving mechanics patrol a 30-square-mile area surrounding the Central Business District looking for buses in distress.

Unfortunately, they never have very far to look.

Increasing demand for service, combined with the aged condition of the District's 2,600-bus fleet (which, despite the pending arrival of nearly 1,000 additional new buses, still averages 13 years of age) equals a lot of breakdowns every day.

The District is now averaging

approximately 150 road calls per day out of a peak-hour operational fleet of 2,000 buses. Statistically, a road call can be expected about every 2,000 vehicle miles — and RTD operates more than 90 million vehicle miles each year!

There are only four roving mechanics.

From 5:30 in the morning until 9:30 at night, working in two-man shifts, the mobile mechanics are constantly on the move. With each mechanic averaging from 20 to 30 calls a day, they often cover more than 100 miles in an eight-hour shift with rarely enough time be-

The mobile mechanics are called on to fix everything from batteries that have lost their spark, sticking doors, fuel pumps that don't pump, loose mirrors, leaking transmissions and heaters that don't heat to blinkers that don't blink or faulty air conditioners.

The job is not only hard on the men who do it, it's tough on their vehicles, as well. They drive around so much that the engines on their vans have to be rebuilt as often as three times a year, according to Raul Rodriguez, who has worked as a roving mechanic for more than three years. Trans-

portive maintenance of other coaches."

"We can get to a downed bus in 10 or 15 minutes," Rodriguez says, "whereas shop mechanics have to go through the whole process of gathering their tools, locating a car and getting proper clearance before answering the call."

As an example, Rodriguez cited a recent case where he answered a call in Norwalk and was back downtown before the average bus division mechanic could have left the shop to check out the bus.

"Speedy service also keeps the riders happy," says Rodriguez, who is the son of Division 9 Transportation Manager Raul Rodriguez and a third generation transit employee. "You really notice it in the mornings when there's standing room only on a bus. The passengers are really relieved if you get them moving in just a few minutes."

The operators appreciate the quick service because it prevents them from having to sit idle for an hour while waiting for repairs — a money-saving sidelight also appreciated by the District.

Although the normal area for these roving mechanics is within a three-mile radius of the inner city, Rodriguez says they will go just about anywhere they are needed. On their route they cover the Wilshire area, Echo Park, parts of Sunset Boulevard, East and South Los Angeles and Lincoln Park.

Perhaps the biggest innovation in the program, according to the mechanics, was the addition of fully-equipped vans about a year ago. The two units operate as mobile maintenance shops.

"These new vans can carry a lot more equipment so we can tackle

**From 5:30 in the morning 'til 9:30 at night, the roving mechanics are constantly on the move . . . with rarely enough time between distress calls to stop for a break**

tween distress calls to stop for a break.

Operating out of Division 2 at 16th and San Pedro streets, the morning shift is relieved at 1:30 in the afternoon. The two vans are restocked with whatever was used that morning and are quickly back on the road again.

The one consolation for the mechanics may be that on the road these supervisors are boss. They determine if a bus can continue on its route or if its mechanical difficulty requires a replacement bus.

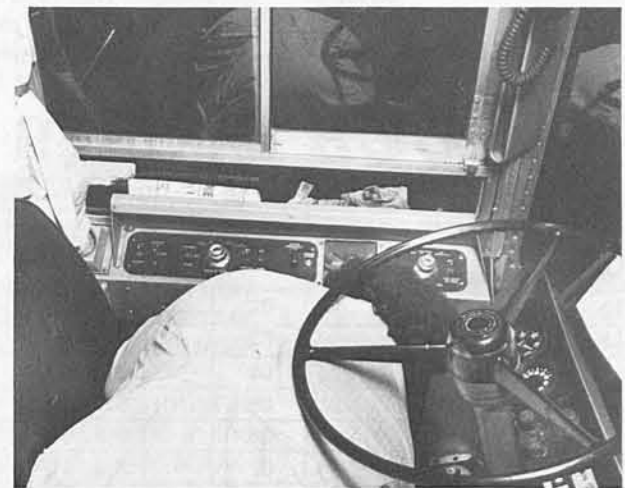
"It's almost sacreligious to argue with one of these guys," comments one District operator.

missions also go because the vans are often called upon to push or pull a stalled bus out of traffic.

RTD's philosophy about the program is simple.

"Roving mechanics handle minor problems such as jump starting a bus, changing a light bulb or repairing a windshield wiper," explains Rich Davis, General Superintendent of Maintenance and Equipment. "This not only keeps the coach in service, it saves the District from having to send out a tow truck to bring in the bus, which in turn saves time for the riders and frees shop maintenance personnel to concentrate on pre-

Special temperament to be a roving mechanic, according to Rodriguez, pictured at left at the wheel of one of two specially-equipped vans. Rodriguez says he often finds himself answering the phone, looking for information about buses needing assistance, looking for a bus and driving the van all at the same time. The job takes him to the back of a bus (below) where he refills the water in an overheated engine or other where he wedges himself under a steering wheel to replace a defective blinker switch. Rodriguez, along with Granger Kelley, are welcome sights to operators with mechanical troubles. They can answer as many as 30 distress calls in an eight-hour shift.



some of the problems right out on the street," Rodriguez notes.

Despite the rigors of the job, it is highly sought after. But, with only four positions, few openings are available. Raul worked as a shop mechanic for three years before

one of the older mechanical road supervisors retired, enabling him to apply for the job.

Potential applicants should be cautioned, however, that this is not a job for your ordinary mechanic.

"You have to have a very steady

hand, be almost ambidextrous, have really good concentration, be a little bit of a psychiatrist and know all about every type of bus the RTD has put on the street in the past 30 years," sums up Rodriguez.

This rigid criteria is necessary because the roving mechanics are on their own out on the road. They must be knowledgeable about buses, self-reliant and "unsinkable." No problem can be too great for a mobile mechanic.

Adding to the complexity of the job, Rodriguez says, is the fact that people are always stopping him to ask him for directions since his van displays the RTD emblem.

On the plus side, Rodriguez says he receives a lot of help and assistance from the Los Angeles Police Department and the California Highway Patrol in his efforts to reach his objective.

"They'll let us park on the sidewalk, make U-turns in the middle of the street or do whatever is possible to safely reach a bus," he says, "because they know the sooner we can get the buses moving, the sooner traffic can start flowing normally again."

All things considered, Rodriguez says he really loves his job. "It gives you so much more freedom," he says. "On the streets, I'm more or less my own boss. I have no set schedule and I get to meet new people every day."

Each of the roving mechanics has his own nomination for the worst day of the year to work and Rodriguez is no exception. He says he dreads the start of the rainy season.

"I know it doesn't sound that tough," he explains, "but you try catching up with 2,000 buses that suddenly need new windshield wipers."

# As year winds down, Rec program gears up

It's not too early to start thinking about "Roses" or the Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena. The Recreation Department is making available \$15 grandstand seats on Orange Grove Boulevard at the beginning of the parade route for \$14. You can use your bus pass and ride any of the special lines serving the parade free.

\*\*\*\*

Just telling you about it won't help. You have to see "One Mo' Time" to really appreciate this new 1920s vaudeville musical. It includes such fabulous musical hits as "Black Bottom," "Everybody Loves My Baby," "The Darktown Strutter's Ball," "A Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight" and more. \$17.50 orchestra seats are going for \$15.50 for the show, staged at

the Aquarius Theatre in Hollywood.

\*\*\*\*

For the hook, line and sinker set here's a chance to go on a local

trip. At midnight on December 5, the Atlantis will depart from the 22nd Street landing in San Pedro for the outer islands. The boat will return approximately 5 p.m. on December 6. This day of fishing can

be yours for only \$25 (employees and retirees) or \$30 (guests — spouses, relatives, kids, etc.). Equipment rental will be available at the pier for \$6. Money for the trip must be in by November 28.

\*\*\*\*

Continuing World Champion Lakers' action for November and December will feature the champs against Milwaukee on November 23, against San Diego on December 3 hosting Philadelphia on December 28. The \$7.50 tickets are available for only \$5.50. An added bonus at the Philadelphia game is the weekend rate for children. Tickets for youngsters under 12 can be purchased for \$3.50. However, they must be purchased prior to December 22.

\*\*\*\*

With Christmas just around the corner you can be thrilled by the Magical Holiday at Disneyland, set for Friday, December 19, from 8 p.m. until 1 a.m. This night will include a special premiere performance of "Very Merry Christmas Parade." The \$7 admission for persons over two years of age offers unlimited use of all attractions and free parking. This will be a private party, no general public admitted, which helps keep the lines short.

\*\*\*\*

There are still a precious few tickets remaining for the Thanksgiving Day performance of "My Fair Lady" starring Rex Harrison. The \$21.50 orchestra seats can be purchased for \$19.50. The performance is being staged at the Pantages Theatre. The curtain goes up at 8:30 p.m.

\*\*\*\*

For you ice hockey buffs, and we all must be after what the American team did at the Olympics last summer, here's your chance to see the Kings take on the New York Islanders in what promises to be an exciting game. The match is set for December 6, with \$8 seats available for \$6. Children under 12 will be admitted for only \$4 if the tickets are purchased before December 1.

\*\*\*\*

For more information about these activities, don't hesitate to call the Recreation Department at 972-6580.

## See's says seasonal salutation simply

One of the most popular and successful programs the District's Recreation Department conducts each year is the discount sale of See's Candy to RTD employees.

"It's the perfect gift for those hard to please persons on your list, or even for yourself and your holiday company," says Employee Ac-

tivities Coordinator Diane Delaney.

And, the 90-cents-per-pound discount can come in real handy in these inflationary times, Delaney points out. Special savings are available on the regular pack boxes, but some discount is also offered for specialty items and gift certificates.

If interested, all you need to do is complete the order form below and mail it with your check for the total amount to the Recreation Department by November 14. That is the time for Christmas mailings. Make checks payable to RTD.

Candy will have to be picked up at the headquarters building during the week of December 8. Hours for pick-up will be Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8 a.m., to noon, or Tuesday and Thursday from 1 to 4 p.m.

Don't delay, get your order in today.

## District slates open enrollment

Want to change your dental plan or switch your medical coverage? If, for any reason, you want to change the medical or dental provider you have through RTD, the Employee Benefits Section will be holding its annual open enrollment period the first week in December.

"This is the only time of the year that non-contract employees are able to change plans," remarked Ed Paull, the District's Benefits Administrator.

Meetings are tentatively scheduled for Monday, December 1, and Friday, December 5, in the Board Room on the second floor of District Headquarters. Exact times will be announced so keep an eye on the bulletin boards.

Representatives from the various medical and dental providers will be available at these meetings to answer any questions you might have.

## Brenchley sixth in International

Howard Brenchley, the Division 12 operator who won the RTD Bus Rodeo in August, competed in the Fifth Annual International Bus Rodeo last month in San Diego and finished sixth among the 64 operators entered in the competition.

Brenchley, who was competing in his second International Rodeo since joining the District in 1971, was pitted against the top operators from transit agencies throughout North America. The International Rodeo is a regular feature of the annual American Public Transit Association convention.

Top honors in this year's contest, held October 7, went to an operator from the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA).

## CLASSIFIED

Employees and retirees of RTD may use this column free of charge. Ads will be limited to one per person each month and will not be held over for repeat. Ads should be submitted either typed or printed before the 14th of each month for inclusion in the following month's issue. Include your name, work location, extension and home telephone number.

District policy prohibits ads for commercial ventures and such will not be published or returned. Send ads to Headway, Location 32 if you use company mail, or Headway Editor, 425 South Main Street, Los Angeles, CA 90013 via U.S. Postal Service.

- For rent, Mammoth Lakes Condo, two bedroom and loft, two baths, sleeps 10 to 12 comfortably. Sauna, jacuzzi, shuttle bus to lifts. 10 per cent discount to RTD employees. Call evenings (213) 299-9547.
- 1977 Volkswagon Rabbit. 1981 vehicle registration paid, FM cassette, new front brakes, 45,000 miles. \$3500 or best offer. Evenings, (714) 597-5822.

### See's CANDIES

INDIVIDUAL ORDER BLANK - CHRISTMAS 1980

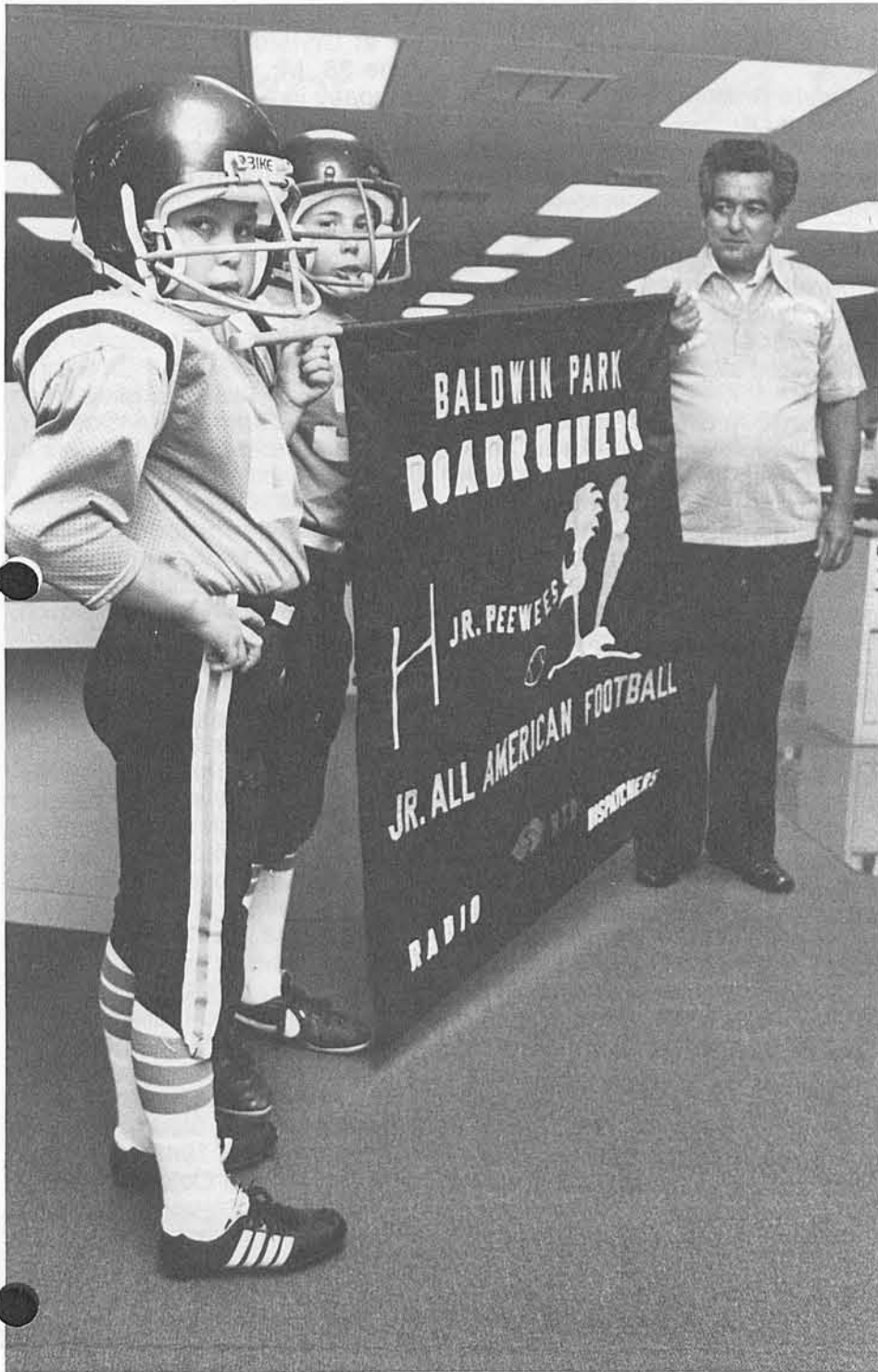
Description	Item No.	No. Boxes	Price	Extension
<b>REGULAR PACK BOXES</b>				
1 Lb.		02	\$ 3.40	
2 Lb. ASSORTED	03		\$ 6.80	
3 Lb. CHOCOLATES	04		\$10.20	
5 Lb.	05		\$17.00	
1 Lb.	06		\$ 3.40	
2 Lb. MILK	07		\$ 6.80	
3 Lb. CHOCOLATES	08		\$10.20	
5 Lb.	09		\$17.00	
1 Lb.	10		\$ 3.40	
2 Lb. DARK	11		\$ 6.80	
3 Lb. CHOCOLATES	12		\$10.20	
5 Lb.	13		\$17.00	
1 Lb.	14		\$ 3.40	
2 Lb. NUTS	15		\$ 6.80	
3 Lb. AND	16		\$10.20	
5 Lb. CHEWS	17		\$17.00	
1 Lb.	18		\$ 3.40	
2 Lb. SOFT CENTERS	19		\$ 6.80	
1 Lb. BRIDGE MIX	24		\$ 3.40	
<b>Regular Pack Boxes PACKED IN MAILING CARTONS</b>				
1 Lb.		27	\$ 3.60	
2 Lb. ASSORTED	28		\$ 7.00	
3 Lb. CHOCOLATES	29		\$10.40	
5 Lb.	30		\$17.20	
1 Lb. MILK CHOCOLATES	31		\$ 3.60	
2 Lb.	32		\$ 7.00	
1 Lb. DARK CHOCOLATES	35		\$ 3.60	
2 Lb.	36		\$ 7.00	
1 Lb. NUTS AND CHEWS	39		\$ 3.60	
2 Lb.	40		\$ 7.00	
1 Lb. SOFT CENTERS	43		\$ 3.60	
2 Lb.	44		\$ 7.00	
1 Lb. BRIDGE MIX	49		\$ 3.60	
<b>SPECIALTY ITEMS</b> Packed in Mailing Cartons Except as Noted.				
VICTORIA TOFFEE (No Mailer)	*55		\$ 3.40	
VICTORIA TOFFEE	*56		\$ 3.60	
PEANUT BRITTLE (No Mailer)	*57		\$ 3.70	
SPECIAL FANCY BOX - 2 lb.	*60		\$10.70	
GIFT OF ELEGANCE - 4 lbs.	*61		\$20.40	
SALTED NUTS - 12 oz.	64		\$ 3.25	
ALMOND ROYAL - 1 lb.	66		\$ 3.60	
TOFFEE-ETTES - 1 lb.	67		\$ 3.60	
BOX OF 60 LOLLYPOPS	68		\$ 7.20	
SANTA BOX - 7½ oz.	70		\$ 2.00	
CHRISTMAS RED FANCY - 2 lb	71		\$10.70	
GIFT CERTIFICATE	1 Lb. ANY ASSORTMENT	140	\$ 3.70	
	2 Lb. ANY ASSORTMENT	141	\$ 7.40	
<b>TOTALS</b>				\$

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Amt. Rec. By \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Department \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_





GRID IRON — Tackle David Valles (left) and fullback Shon Fincher display their team banner to Radio Dispatcher Rene Olivo. The dispatchers pitched in to help support the Roadrunners this season.

## Dispatchers dig deep to bolster kid gridders

It seems that nothing is safe from the ravages of inflation, not even youth sports. The rising cost of everything from cleats to the chalk they mark the fields with has made it hard for youngsters to participate in organized football, soccer, baseball or basketball programs.

Well, RTD's radio dispatchers — who are used to helping operators and others who need assistance — have come to the rescue once again.

At the urging of Radio Dispatcher Rene Olivo, who has been involved in helping youth organizations from bands to baseball teams for the past 15 years, the District dispatchers passed the hat and came up with enough money to sponsor a team in the Junior All-American Football League, commonly referred to as Pop Warner football.

The team, the Baldwin Park Roadrunners, competes in the Junior Peewee age division, designed for youngsters between the ages of 10 and 12. At each of their games, the Roadrunners proudly display a custom-made banner acknowledging their RTD benefactors.

A schedule of their games is posted on the bulletin board in the fourth floor Dispatch Center at District headquarters and many of the dispatchers attend the Sunday outings to root for the Roadrunners.

The money they raised, more than \$200, will go toward offsetting the cost of equipment. A uniform, consisting of pads, jerseys, pants and a special \$55 air-cushioned helmet, can cost as much as \$175.

Youngsters enrolled in the program only pay \$20 to cover insurance and a medical checkup. They must provide their own mouthpiece and shoes.

It is probably not just coincidence that Olivo is also president of the Junior All-American Football League, which fields teams for eight to 13-year-olds throughout the San Gabriel Valley. More than 150 youngsters (and 55 team cheerleaders) participate on the four teams the league offers.

Olivo became involved in the league seven years ago when his son began playing. Now that his son is too old to play in the league, Olivo remains involved because he likes what the organization represents.

"We teach the kids about football and see that they get plenty of exercise," explains Olivo, who has a six-year-old at home who may one day join the league, "but we also teach them discipline and encourage them to keep their grades up in school. If they don't get passing grades, they don't play."

Ironically, some of the dispatchers who pitched in to help out the Roadrunners have youngsters of their own playing on other Southland youth football teams.

Dispatcher Danny Ibarra's son plays on the East Los Angeles Bobcats in the King Football Conference. Special Events Dispatcher Joe Uresti's boy plays on a rival Diamond Bar team in the same league as the Roadrunners. When the two teams met in league play, it was hard for the dispatchers to know which side of the field to sit on.

## New buses will display exterior advertising

Citing the results of a recent Marketing Department survey that showed the general public does not object to exterior advertising on buses, the RTD Board of Directors voted to have ads placed on all new standard-sized buses.

Over objections from several board members who felt the exterior ads only increased the "visual pollution" on the streets, the Directors approved a motion to have advertising frames added to the 230 new Grumman Flexible 870s now on the street and the 940 General Motor's RTS-2 coaches which should begin arriving next month.

The Board's action excludes placing ads on double deck and articulated buses.

Saul Bass, the head of the firm that developed the new logo and paint scheme for the District, had strongly recommended that exterior advertising be done away with.

However, a survey of the general public (including both riders and non-riders) showed that they had no strong feelings either way about the ads. Furthermore, when those surveyed learned that the District earns more than \$1 million each year from the advertising, an overwhelming 92 per cent were strongly in favor of allowing advertising on the new buses.

The survey was conducted at a variety of locations around the service area. When asked if they liked or disliked ads on buses, 45 per cent of riders said they liked the ads and 45 per cent said it didn't matter to them. Of non-riders

polled, 41 per cent liked the ads, 12 per cent disliked them and 47 per cent said it did not matter.

When shown two new display buses, one with ads and one without, 51 per cent of riders liked the

bus with ads, 21 per cent without and 28 per cent had no preference. Among non-riders the percentages were 45 with, 28 without and 27 no preference.

When a statement was read to

the survey subjects about the amount of money raised by the ads, 92 per cent of riders said advertising should be allowed on new buses and 93 per cent of non-riders felt the same.



## Baby boom

Friends and co-workers of Division 1 steno Cher Fortuno (second from right) recently got together to shower the mother-to-be with gifts and celebrate the pending arrival of a new, little Fortuno with punch and cookies for the Division 1 crew. Cher, by the way, is the wife of RTD Director of Marketing Tony Fortuno.

## SCHEDULE CHANGES

### Moving Up

**Humberto Arango**, from service attendant to mechanic C.  
**Loretta Bevon**, from personnel analyst to sr. personnel analyst.  
**Steven Bialobzeski**, from opr/ex. inst. of VO to Inst. of VO.  
**Daniel E. Boyer**, from payroll clerk to jr inv/accts clerk.  
**Sylvia M. Brent**, from operator to opr/ex. division dispatch.  
**Jeffrey Carpenter**, from associate planner to senior planner.  
**Michael DeGhetto**, from supervising clerk to equip. maint. sup. I.  
**Joseph Denaro**, from service attendant to mechanic C.  
**Emiliano Diaz**, from mechanic C to mechanic B.  
**Lora L. Downer**, from janitor to rel. mopper/waxer.  
**Deanna Forrest**, from info. clerk to typist-clerk.  
**Diane A. Frazier**, from operator to opr/ex. div. disp.  
**Ellen G. Friedman**, from management analyst to senior management analyst.  
**Rhonda Garcia**, from info. clerk to ticket clerk.  
**Arthur Garlick**, from storekeeper-temp to truck driver clerk.  
**Suzanne B. Gifford**, from asst. general counsel to acting general counsel.  
**Javier Gonzalez**, from temp. div. maint. manager to equip. maint. supervisor II.  
**Ruben Gonzalez**, from opr/ex. div. disp. to division dispatcher (3203).  
**Robert Hamby**, from record clerk temp. to stock clerk.  
**William Holloway**, from mechanic B to mechanic A.  
**Benny Iverson**, from instructor of vehicle operations to sr. instr. of VO.  
**Allen Jacobs**, from opr/ex. supv. of VO to Supervisor of VO.  
**Mark Leach**, from st. shop clerk to rel. eq. rec. spec.  
**Kevin B. McGrath**, from operator to opr/ex. div. disp.

**Juan Morales**, from st. shop clerk to eq. record specialist.  
**Judith O'Donnell**, from stenographer to senior secretary.  
**James Pak**, from stock shop clerk to eq. rec. spec.  
**Charles Regalado**, from jr. stock clerk to stock clerk.  
**Beverly J. Rosser**, from operator to opr/ex. div. disp.  
**Arlen Sanders, Jr.**, from elec. comm. tech. to elec. maint. supervisor.  
**Robert Skarseth**, from elec. comm. tech. to elec. comm. tech. leadman.  
**Bernadette Summer**, from info clerk to stock shop clerk.  
**Barbara Swaine**, from secretary II to subrogation claims assistant.  
**Sandra Sweeney**, from info clerk to ticket clerk.  
**Shirley Thompson**, from operator to opr/ex. div. disp.  
**William Tucker**, from mechanic A to mechanic A leadman.  
**Gary W. Varga**, from operator to opr/ex. div. disp.  
**Vernice Wilson**, from accounts clerk to stock shop clerk.  
**Winnetta Young**, from typist clerk to stock shop clerk.  
**Patricia Zevely**, from mopper/waxer to information operator.

### Shifting Gears

**Eugene A. Cumbie**, 23 years. Operator at Division 9.  
**Leslie Felton Douglas**, 25 years. Supervisor of Vehicle Operations.  
**Simon R. Fernandez**, 21 years. Mechanic A at South Park Shops.  
**Everett B. Harden**, 19 years. Operator at Division 15.  
**James Hunter**, 21 years. Operator at Division 2.  
**Stanley M. Paris**, 36 years. Operator at Division 6.  
**Pete Romero**, 32 years. Operator at Division 9.  
**Harry Zipper**, 27 years. Operator at Division 8.

### In Memoriam

**David G. Blackmer**, former Operator at Division 18, passed away July 10. Mr. Blackmer joined the company in December, 1944 and retired after 27 years in November, 1971.

**Kenneth A. Bradley**, former Operator at Division 11, passed away June 21. Mr. Bradley joined the company in October, 1946, and retired after 29 years in March, 1975.

**George A. Briggs**, former Utility B at Division 7, passed away July 13. Mr. Briggs joined the company in January, 1959, and retired after 21 years in February, 1980.

**Charles E. Brown**, former Instructor of Vehicle Operations, passed away August 17. Mr. Brown joined the company in July, 1942, and retired after 34 years in August, 1976.

**William H. Brown**, Operator at Division 5, passed away July 30. Mr. Brown joined the District in April, 1974.

**Weldon M. Brown**, former Operator at Division 1, passed away August 13. Mr. Brown joined the company in February, 1936 and retired after 33 years in June, 1969.

**Joseph D. Burns**, former Operator at Division 9, passed away September 23. Mr. Burns joined the company in August, 1942, and retired after 28 years in November, 1970.

**Elgin L. Burton**, former Operator at Division 1, passed away July 3. Mr. Burton joined the company in February, 1946, and retired after 30 years in August, 1976.

**Robert A. Clenard**, Division 9 Maintenance Manager, passed away August 25. Mr. Clenard joined the company in October, 1946.

**Paul M. Dusserre**, former Operator at Division 9, passed away July 25. Mr. Dusserre joined the company in August, 1920, and retired after 39 years in November, 1959.

**Harold F. Fortner**, former Supervisor, passed away July 3. Mr. Fortner joined the company in July, 1929, and retired after 42 years in October, 1971.

**Fred H. Graham**, former Operator at Division 9, passed away June 28. Mr. Graham joined the company in August, 1945, and retired after 28 years in November, 1973.

**Nicholas Laborde**, former Operator at Ocean Park, passed away July 27. Mr. Laborde joined the company in March, 1922, and retired after 36 years in December, 1958.

**Marsell E. Larsen**, former Mechanic A at the South Park Shops, passed away June 12. Mr. Larsen joined the company in October, 1958, and retired after 18 years in June, 1976.

**Robert W. Owen**, former Operator at Division 8, passed away August 24. Mr. Owen joined the company in November, 1929, and retired after 36 years in March, 1965.

**Elwood Lyle Prescott**, Operator at Division 3, passed away August 26. Mr. Prescott joined the District in April, 1975.

**Douglas P. Reed**, former Mechanic B at Division 3, passed away June 17. Mr. Reed joined the company in October, 1945, and retired after 29 years in December, 1974.

**William J. Richards**, former Operator, passed away August 19. Mr. Richards joined the company in July, 1927, and retired after 28 years in January, 1955.

**Naseab J. Sleem**, former Operator at Division 9, passed away September 1. Mr. Sleem joined the company in April, 1946, and retired after 33 years in October, 1979.

**Charles H. Stevenson**, former Mechanic A at Division 9, passed away August 27. Mr. Stevenson joined the company in August, 1944, and retired after 30 years in August, 1974.

**Delmar Walker**, Operator at Division 1, passed away August 9. He joined the company in June, 1947.

## TRIPPERS

(Continued from page 2)

### Old friends

Division 8 operator Jim Meadows, who has been with the District for the past nine years, will be celebrating his 30th wedding anniversary with his wife, LaVerne, by flying to Lake Tahoe for a "little rest and relaxation." With three children and three grandchildren, he probably needs it.

### On your honor

When operator Al Duplessis, of Division 7 was forced toward the curb to avoid a car that swerved over the center divider, he was unaware that he accidentally hit a parked car. He continued on his route up 6th Street. However, a person riding in the car behind Al's bus noticed the accident and followed the bus, hoping to catch up with it at a stop and notify the driver about what had happened. Seven blocks later that finally happened and Duplessis was a little surprised when the Mayor of the City of Los Angeles, Tom Bradley, climbed aboard his bus to inform him that he had sideswiped a parked car. Duplessis, who said it was an honor to have His Honor on board, gave Bradley his name. The Mayor, who retired from the LAPD as a lieutenant in 1961, reported the incident to the District and the claim was processed through normal channels.



Forty-four years ago Lawrence Edwin Allen joined the Pacific Electric Company as a baggage handler. The eighteen year old was too young to operate a bus or trolley. Last month, Larry Allen, the number three man on the Radio Dispatch Center's seniority roster, unplugged his headphones for the last time. It was an occasion for a celebration and the dispatchers rose to the occasion with a gala buffet luncheon, cakes and retirement gifts. Above, Chief Radio Dispatcher Joe Reeves (right) presents one of three retirement scrolls to Larry, with his wife Billie.

### Pulling the plug

## District adds three to employee honor rolls

Three more of the District's finest had their names added to the Employee Honor Roll last month in recognition of their fine performances as RTD employees and their pleasant attributes as individuals. Receiving kudos at a Board of Directors meeting were Information Operator Frank Sahlem, Mechanic-A James Gatewood and Operator Felix G. Rubio.

Rubio has worked for the District 13 years — all of that time at the old Division 4 or Division 2, where he is presently assigned. In that time he has been absent only once, for a two-day period. He has never had a missout and he has been charged with only one avoidable accident, and that was nine years ago. He has 90 merits for the observance of minor rules and regulations and has never been assessed any demerits.

As Division 2 Transportation Manager Larry Johnson told the board during the ceremony, "It is hard for me to imagine any operator working out of (divisions two or four) for such a long time and still able to maintain such an admirable record.

For his part, Rubio says that he owes whatever success he has achieved to taking pride in his work. To do a good job, he says, a person must have a good attitude. In his spare time, Rubio is an avid football and baseball fan and likes to restore old cars.

James Gatewood has worked for the District 23 years and is something of an RTD success story. Originally employed as a utility, James took advantage of District training programs to become a mechanic. His skill and efficiency in the performance of his duties eventually led to his promotion to Mechanic-A. In 1974, after displaying leadership abilities and an extensive knowledge of mechanics, he was made a leadman, the position he holds today.

His expertise, knowledge and guidance in repairing coaches has made him an asset not only at Division 5, but to the entire District. In his off-duty hours, James, the father of seven children, takes a sort of busman's holiday and puts his mechanical ability to use restoring old automobiles. When he really wants to get away from it all, he goes fishing.

Frank Sahlem joined the Telephone Information Department in January, 1979. Since then he has consistently proven to be a valu-

able asset to the department. He exceeds the standards set for the information clerk's work performance and has a thorough knowledge of all District routes, schedules and fares. His hobbies include writing poetry and playing basketball and he hopes to one day work as an instructor, training new information operators.



**BADGE OF HONOR** — Director David Hayward (left) bestowed congratulations, commemorative certificates and Redondo Beach Junior Fire Marshall badges (he's the Mayor of Redondo Beach) on employees of the month Felix Rubio (center) and James Gatewood. Looking on are Division 6 Trans. Mgr. Larry Johnson and Division 5 Maint. Mgr. Johnny Howard.

## COMMENDATIONS

Late one September evening, Division 5 operator Frank Scott, who has been with the District only since June of last year, was on his way back to the South Central Los Angeles operating facility when he saw a gang of youths beating on another man.

Scott began blowing his horn and moved his bus towards the group, which quickly scattered into the darkness. Scott notified radio dispatch of the problem and police and paramedics were quickly dispatched to the scene. The victim had been badly beaten and required hospitalization.

"There seems to be little doubt that Scott's concern for a fellow human being in distress, his fast thinking and appropriate action saved the man's life," said Division 5 Transportation Manager Ben Lynam. "In this day and age, where people generally are afraid to get involved, I am proud to have a man like Mr. Scott in my division."

Following are excerpts from some of the hundreds of commendation letters received last month by other District operators.

**George Nahra, Division 18:** (This letter was from Second District Supervisor Kenneth Hahn). I have learned that for more than 10 years you have worked "behind the scenes" of many public service telethons providing the people who are actually on the air with the things they need for a successful event. Few give so generously of their time in helping to ease the suffering of persons afflicted with a major illness. I want you to know the members of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles greatly appreciate the outstanding service you are giving the citizens of this county, and I commend you for your dedicated effort

to make life a little better for persons afflicted with catastrophic ailments.

**The RTD System:** During a recent visit to Los Angeles, I rode the bus system nearly everywhere! Your system is well-conceived, and I was quite surprised at the frequency with which buses arrived. The downtown minibus is a terrific idea. (The author was visiting from New York City).

**G. J. Claybourne, Line 552:** I am certain RTD is under a great deal of criticism from the public and would also guess it is rare for you to receive a complimentary letter. This is one. My wife and I and several friends recently returned from the Hollywood Bowl aboard

your special service between Westwood and the Bowl. The operator was Garland Claybourne. From the moment we entered the bus he was extremely pleasant, patient, friendly, helpful, courteous and his attitude continued throughout the trip. He made us feel welcome and comfortable, permitting us to have an enjoyable trip, thus topping off a wonderful evening.

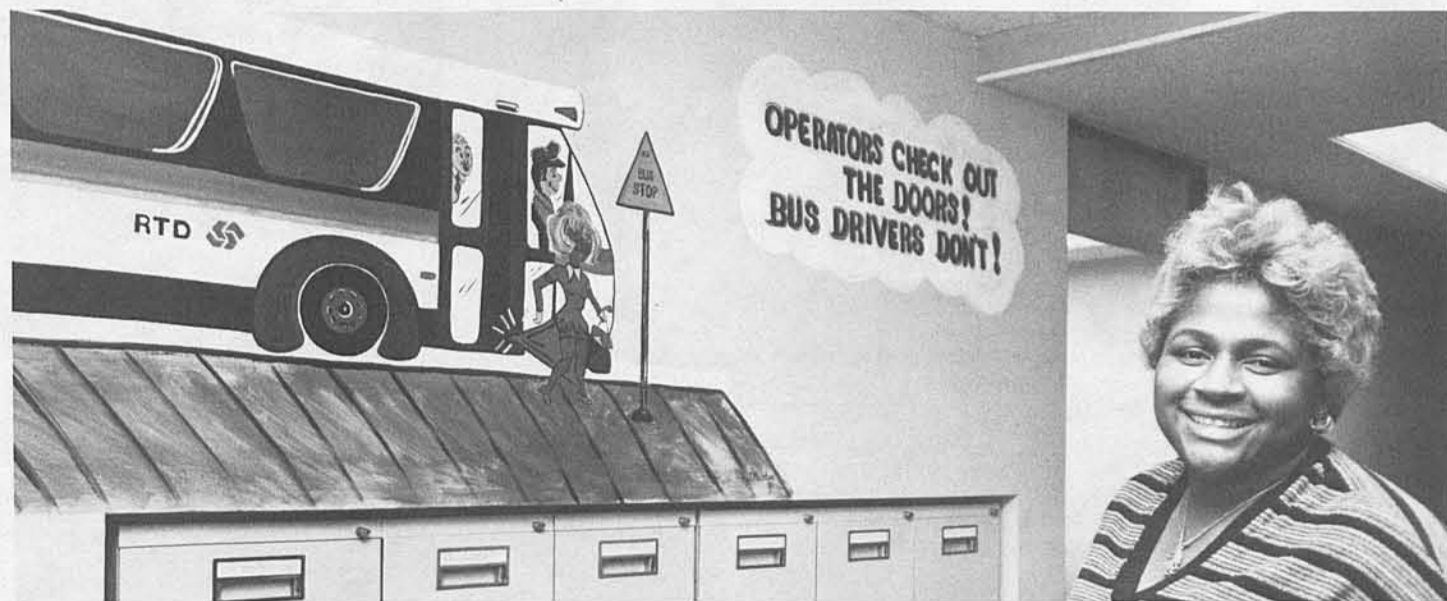
**Ernest B. McCarns, Line 5:** I would like to call your attention to a super driver. I have noticed on many occasions that passengers would let other buses go by and wait on him for service. I wish you had more men of this calibre in your service.

**Mike Gayer, Line 84:** When I boarded the bus, I was actually greeted by the driver. I was so taken back that I forgot to give a greeting in return. I noticed that he was cordial to each and every boarding and exiting passenger. Somehow we managed to make

good time without the passengers being thrown helter-skelter into each other or onto the floor. It was not so much what this young man did, but the manner in which he did his job that was so refreshing.

**Edward Wenkunas, Line 163:** I had a small run-in with this operator but it turned out to be a positive experience for me because of his honesty in admitting that he made a misjudgement. Believe me, I really appreciate this man for being truthful. This is a rare quality in people.

**Robert S. Perrone, Line 12:** I have been riding the RTD daily for the past year and a half and this is the first time I have felt compelled to praise a driver in writing. This operator displayed a superior driving ability, was highly efficient and very courteous, and also displayed a valuable ability of being able to communicate with passengers in both Spanish and English.



## Off the wall

Division 5 was looking for a way to brighten its walls while also reminding operators to stay alert. They turned to Ja-Nice Mustin, a bus operator with the District for the past four years, who annually turns the windows at the South Central Los Angeles facility into a greeting card at Christmas. Ja-Nice used her artistic talents to decorate two walls, one with the cautionary warning about not closing the doors too soon, and another with symbols from all the places RTD goes, such as Disneyland, Knott's Berry Farm, and the like. The murals each took Ja-Nice, who has no formal art training, a week to do.

SPECIAL OFFER

# RTD offers nostalgic look at transit scene

A nostalgic look at the Los Angeles transit scene is being offered for sale by the District to its employees, transit buffs and the general public.

Through the Marketing Department, the District has commissioned three original paintings from artist Stanley Cline, noted for his memorable renditions of famous Los Angeles landmarks — many of which are no longer with us.

Not available outside the District, the three full-color lithographs depict popular modes of transportation in use in Los Angeles in 1924, 1950 and today. The 11-by-14 prints will be offered to the general public for \$5 each, but are being made available to District employees at a 20 per cent discount of only \$4 per print.

Suitable for framing, the prints may be purchased through the District's Recreation Department on the sixth floor of RTD Headquarters, at any of the District's ticket offices or via the company mail by using the order coupon accompanying this article.

The idea of the prints originated about two years ago with Director of Marketing Tony Fortuno.

"I thought we should be able to present visitors from other transit properties or governmental agencies with some sort of a transit-related memento of their trip," explains Fortuno. "The paintings Stan Cline produced are so good that I also think our employees and even the general public should have an opportunity to purchase them."

And, for anyone associated with public transportation, the prints are a glimpse at the past.

The 1924 print is a view of Pershing Square looking toward the Biltmore Hotel with trolley cars picking up and discharging passengers in the foreground. The

1950 scene shows a view of L.A. City Hall with the vehicles of the old Pacific Electric and Los Angeles Railway companies visible.

Bringing the transit up-to-date, Cline painted a 1980 view of the Los Angeles skyline as seen from the Santa Monica freeway with modern RTD equipment in the foreground.

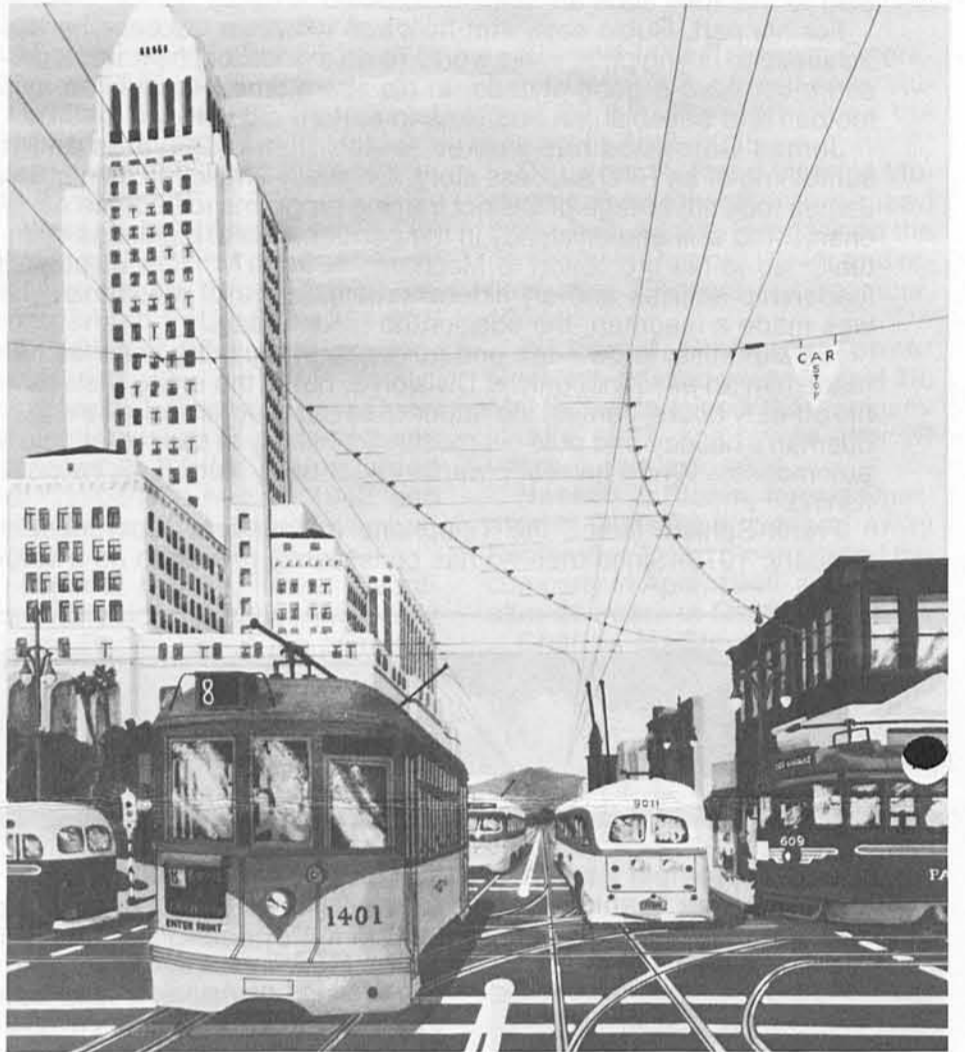
The original artwork, from which the lithographs have been made, will be on display in the third floor Employee Cafeteria at District headquarters during November.

Cline, a native Angeleno who attended Art Center College of Design and was also a member of Mayor Bradley's Citizens Advisory Committee to bring rapid transit to Los Angeles, says he selected these particular locations for the prints because they were the transit centers of their day, places where a variety of modes of travel merged.

"With these three paintings I tried to represent as best I could the transit developments in Los Angeles," he explained. "There is a possibility that, in the future, we may add two more pictures to the series, one depicting the horse drawn trolleys from the turn of the century, and another showing the rail rapid transit system that is currently being planned."

Cline, who describes himself as a transit buff, is best known for his "Los Angeles Yesterday" series, a collection of 12 prints depicting interesting Los Angeles landmarks and dating back to the turn of the century.

That series also features several transit oriented prints, including a 1948 scene of the old Pacific Electric terminal at 6th and Main streets, just two blocks from the RTD's present headquarters, bristling with tracks and trains arriving and departing.



TRANSITION — Artist Stan Cline has produced three original works for the District, depicting public transportation in (from top) 1924, 1950 and 1980. Series is titled L.A. Transit: Yesterday and Today.

## L.A. Transit: Yesterday and Today Print order coupon

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Work location \_\_\_\_\_

Home address \_\_\_\_\_

Home telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Please send me the transit prints I have indicated below:

1924 Scene (quantity) \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$4 each.

1950 Scene (quantity) \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$4 each.

1980 Scene (quantity) \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$4 each.

I have enclosed a check or money order (payable to RTD) for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to cover my purchase.

(Prints will be returned to employees via company mail and to retirees via the U.S. Postal Service).

**HEADWAY**

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Mailing address: Headway, 6th Floor, 425 South Main Street, Los Angeles, CA 90013. Telephone: 213-972-6680.

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