



# POSITIVE IMAGERY

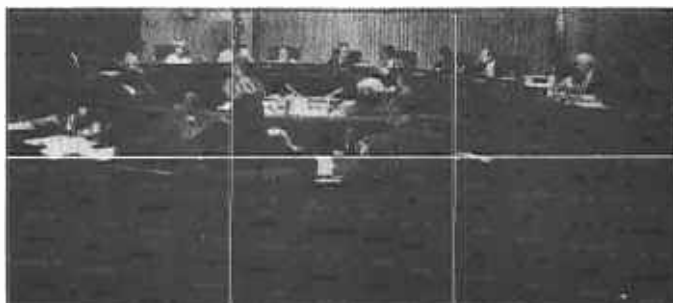
*Annual Report of the Community Relations Department*

*Fiscal Year 1985*



Southern California Rapid Transit District

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Southern California Rapid Transit District



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## FOREWORD

### STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Positive Imagery is the first annual report of the RTD Community Relations Department. Its primary purpose is to document and assess the major accomplishments of the department during Fiscal Year 1985. This booklet also describes how the department has successfully implemented an effective, comprehensive program that has:

- o Maintained and expanded the public transit constituency in Los Angeles County.
- o Enhanced bipartisan, regional public support of federal funding for Metro Rail and bus operations at a critical time when funding support at the federal level was seriously jeopardized.
- o Developed new and strengthened long-standing ties with local, state and federal elected officials.
- o Expanded the District's public information program, which has broadened public understanding of transit-related issues and how District policy decisions are made.

These and other accomplishments have greatly enhanced the District's overall image with the general public, and even more specifically with key decision-makers in the Los Angeles metropolitan area. Other quantified and qualitative benefits resulting from this image-building process are discussed in the following pages of this annual report. Also included is a description of the major functions of the Community Relations Department and an explanation of how these vital functions were managed to achieve the District's goals and objectives for this fiscal year.

### THE CRITICAL ROLE OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS

The past decade for the Southern California Rapid Transit District has been a period marked by tremendous growth in service and scale of operation. It has also been a period of excitement and opportunity insofar as RTD has evolved from a bus operating company in the 1970s to the corporate entity it has become today. The District now stands at the threshold of a dynamic era--an historic one, highlighted by the transitional challenge of becoming a multimodal transit agency. Once federal funding arrangements for the Metro Rail Project are finalized, the District will begin preparing for this milestone transition from North America's largest single-modal transit operator to a multimodal agency that will have the formidable task of merging both bus and rail services into one, integrated system.

Further, the District has increased its base of political involvement and now interacts with a public constituency that has become more demanding and very astute in transit matters.

During this decade, we have witnessed the vital need for an effective community relations program to meet the major challenges and trends cited above. The Community Relations Department has carried out its responsibilities to communicate and interpret the District's plans, programs, projects and services to the multiple publics it serves, and in turn, has brought back to District management and the Board the public's reactions and suggestions.

As the District's "vanguard," Community Relations has the charge of communicating "realities" versus "perceptions" to the communities we serve as well as to the employees of this agency. What may be perceived as the right way of doing things from the points of view of accounting, planning or stops and zones, may differ vastly from what is perceived as "right" from a human resources standpoint. And both opinions may differ radically from what the bus patron or taxpayer perceives as "right," "acceptable" or "politically appropriate." Thus, the role of community relations as interpreter-mediator-communicator becomes very apparent. And in an industry that is changing as rapidly as public transportation, community relations becomes even more essential.

The internal value of an effective community relations program is also noteworthy. From advertising, to legal to planning and transportation, the Community Relations Department works daily with all District departments to accomplish its goals. These departments provide valuable technical assistance and vital information necessary to complete community projects. Thanks to their cooperation, Community Relations staff has been able to meet the District's ever-increasing demand to initiate, cultivate and maintain widespread community support and involvement in the decision-making process of our agency, as well as facilitate the delivery of bus services.

In turn, Community Relations provides valuable input into major decisions and communication materials that impact the general public and special rider and interest groups. In this way, District policymakers can make informed decisions, based on public viewpoints and possible social/political sensitivities.

The accomplishments cited in this annual report have significantly aided the District in meeting many of its goals and objectives this past year--goals that are more widely and clearly understood by the public now than at any other time in the District's history.

The work effort made this past fiscal year is only preparatory for FY'86 and beyond. Next fiscal year, Community Relations will be an integral part of the District's effort to:

1. Attain funding and implement a successful construction program for Metro Rail.
2. Successfully implement the second phase of the Proposition A bus operations program to the benefit of the District, the riding public and other impacted parties.
3. Maintain and intensify a multilevel legislative program for improving public transportation.
4. Work more closely with local governments to encourage investment of Proposition A dollars in District services.

On the following pages, you will learn how the Community Relations Department is organized, how it functions, and with whom it interacts. Included are highlights of some of the major accomplishments the department has made this year. After you have read Positive Imagery, I am certain you will better understand the critical role of the Southern California Rapid Transit District's Community Relations Department and the importance of maintaining this vital function at the highest operating level possible.

Respectfully,



Lou Collier  
Director of Community Relations

## DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The Community Relations Department is organized in such a way as to best carry out its responsibilities (see Table 1 for organizational structure). The department is headed by the Director, who reports to the General Manager's Office. The Director is responsible for the overall fiscal management of the department and for the development and implementation of departmental policies and programs. This entails direct interaction with other department heads, District management and high-level business, community and political leaders. He also represents community relations interests in District executive and Board sessions.

Directly assisting the Director is the Community Relations Coordinator. His primary responsibility is to carry out the day-to-day management of the department, including staff supervision and administration. He coordinates the efforts of the administrative support staff, which includes the administrative analyst and three secretaries. During the last quarter of the fiscal year, a management intern was assigned to assist the administrative unit with special projects. The Coordinator also serves as the principal District liaison with Los Angeles City Hall and downtown interests. In addition, he personally oversees the development of board reports and correspondence requiring the signatures of the department Director, the General Manager and Board members.

The Coordinator delegates the assorted line supervisory responsibilities to the department's two Senior Community Relations Representatives. This entails coordinating the daily work efforts of each Community Relations Representative. One senior is responsible for coordinating all field-related tasks relative to bus operations and the Metro Rail program. This includes:

1. General public liaison.
2. Visitation and interaction with local government officials and community groups.
3. Interdepartmental liaison.
4. Liaison with operating divisions.
5. Public information dissemination.
6. Resolution of community problems and concerns.
7. Documentation of field activities and community problems/resolutions. This is accomplished through memoranda, reports and correspondence.



# Community Relations Organizational Structure

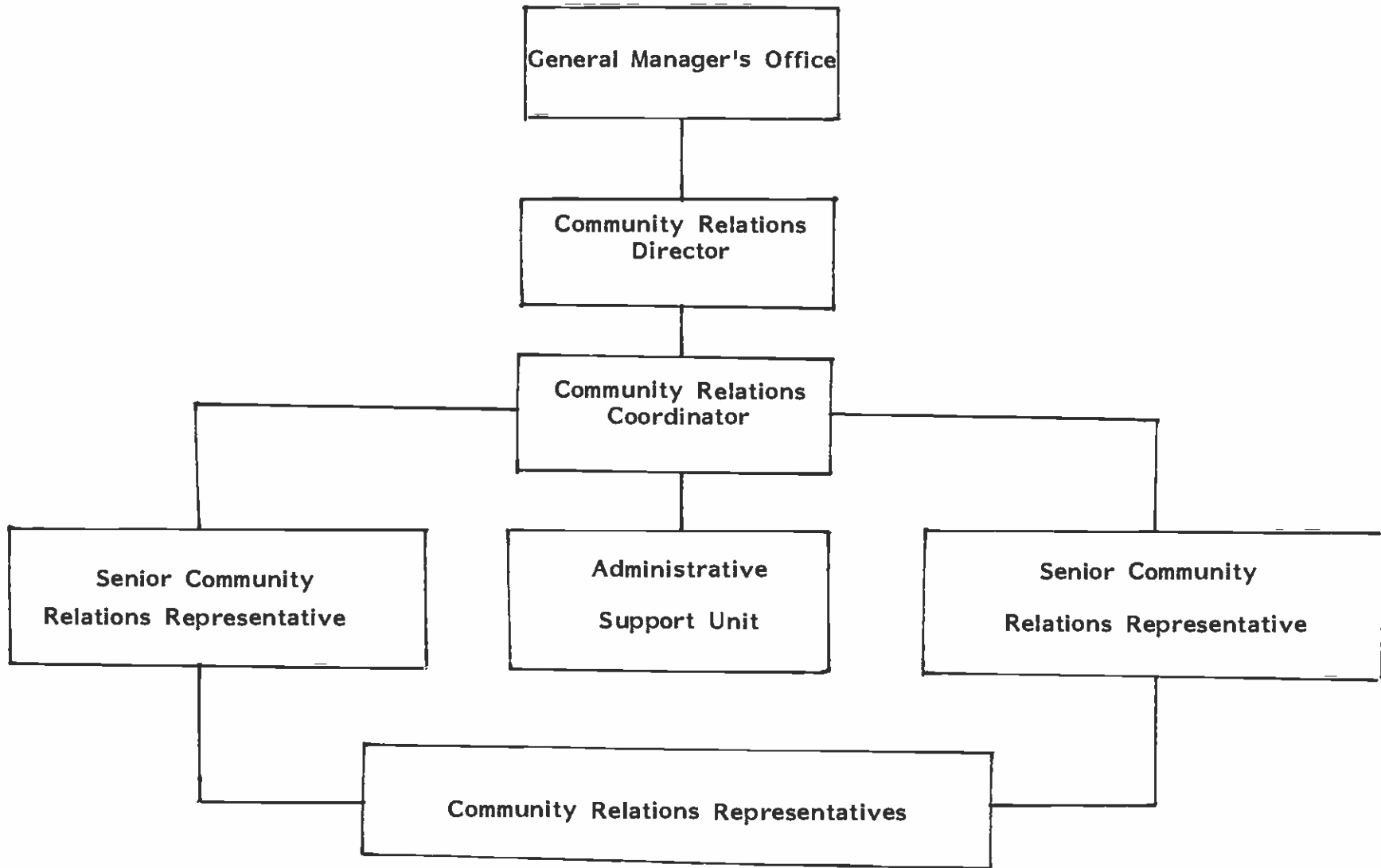


Table I

The other senior representative coordinates the department's Special Projects Unit and provides staff direction in implementing its diverse programs. The unit's major programs include:

- o The RTD Speakers' Bureau
- o Publications
- o Exhibits and Displays
- o "Youth in Transit" program, incorporating Operation Teamwork
- o Youth Motivation Task Force
- o Summer Youth Employment Program
- o Accessible Service Program
- o Audio-Visual Development (and Photography Library)
- o Documentation and Historical Library

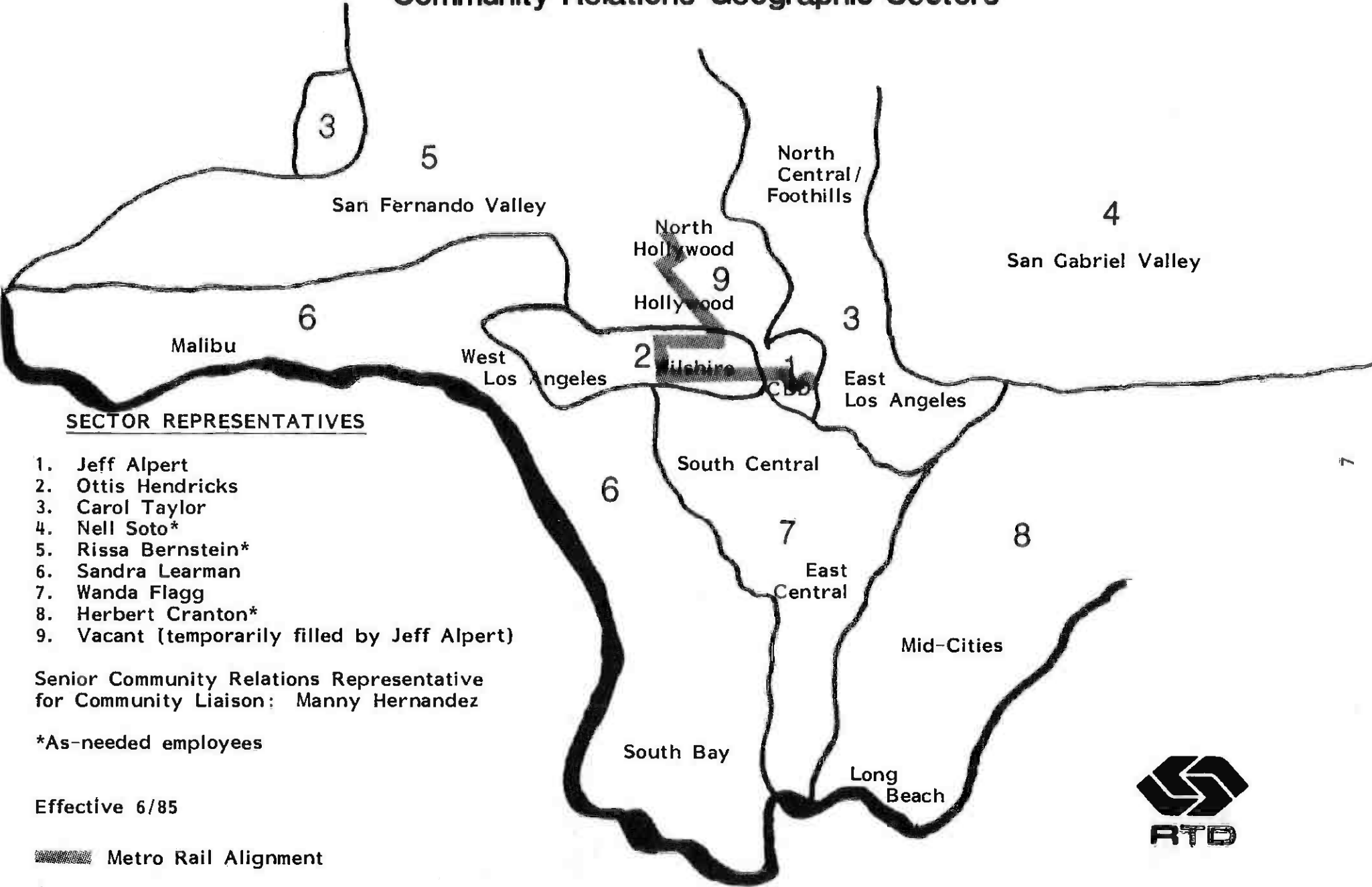
Staff members are appointed "project managers" over these programs, except for the Speakers' Bureau, Exhibits and Displays, Audio-visual development and Publications, which are handled directly by the senior coordinator. A detailed description of each program and major accomplishments are contained in the Special Projects section of this document.

#### BASIC RESPONSIBILITIES OF REPRESENTATIVES

Each Community Relations Representative is assigned to carry out the above essential functions in one or more of nine geographic sectors. (The District's 2,200-square-mile service area has been divided into nine geographic "sectors." These sectors encompass all of the 84 cities and unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County and outlying cities in four other adjacent counties. Table II identifies these sectors and their assigned representatives.)

Each representative has successfully developed productive and supportive relationships with key, influential persons, officials and organizations within his/her sector. In some sectors, representatives have formally organized these opinion leaders into committees, through which they provide input into the development of District policies that impact transit services in their respective sectors. Formally organized or not, these influential entities comprise a broad-based, bipartisan constituency that has been very supportive of public transit in general and RTD in particular.

# Community Relations Geographic Sectors



**SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES**

- 1. Jeff Alpert
- 2. Ottis Hendricks
- 3. Carol Taylor
- 4. Nell Soto\*
- 5. Rissa Bernstein\*
- 6. Sandra Learman
- 7. Wanda Flagg
- 8. Herbert Cranton\*
- 9. Vacant (temporarily filled by Jeff Alpert)

Senior Community Relations Representative  
for Community Liaison: Manny Hernandez

\*As-needed employees

Effective 6/85

Metro Rail Alignment



Table II



## ***Community Liaison***

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## C O M M U N I T Y   L I A I S O N

### GOVERNMENT LIAISON

The Community Relations Department has primary responsibility for local government affairs. In this particular area, Community Relations staff has the charge to respond to any and all transit-related requests made by local elected officials, including the 84 municipalities of Los Angeles County and the local offices of county, state and federal legislators. Staff is also authorized to represent the District at city council sessions and work with government administrators regarding transit matters on a daily basis.

Since the City of Los Angeles represents approximately 42% of the District's ridership base and 23% of the District's geographic service area, Los Angeles is a major governmental unit that receives a substantial commitment of Community Relations staff and resources.

The overall liaison work between the District and the City of Los Angeles rests primarily with the Community Relations Coordinator. His efforts are often augmented by other Community Relations Representatives. Essentially, Community Relations communicates with all departments of the City, as well as the Mayor and each Council member.

The activities of the Planning and Public Works Commissions are regularly monitored, as are those of key City departments such as Planning, Transportation, Public Works, City Clerk and the offices of the Chief Administrative Officer and the Chief Legislative Analyst.

At the all-important City Council level, meetings are monitored, as well as key committee sessions, such as those of the Council's Transportation and Traffic Committee. As a result of this ongoing communication effort, the District's relationship and influence with Los Angeles and other city governments have progressed appreciably during recent years.

Through the Community Relations Department's efforts, the District has realized numerous supportive actions by local government. During this fiscal year, the Mayor and City of Los Angeles have supported the creation of benefit assessment districts around Metro Rail stations, supported critical funding legislation for Metro Rail's construction, joined in lobbying efforts to pave congressional inroads leading to Metro Rail's construction, and worked cooperatively with the District in implementing traffic and transportation strategies for the XXXIII Olympiad, just to name a few.

In addition, Los Angeles, Bell, La Puente, Glendale and other cities have signed contracts with the District to implement an RTD monthly pass reduction program for their senior and disabled residents. Community Relations has been the lead coordinator of this program.

## PUBLIC HEARINGS

Since its inception, RTD has been concerned about the impacts of its policies on the expansive community it serves. To ensure that policies and services meet the changing needs of the public, the District has established two principal means to accommodate citizen input in the decision-making process. They are community meetings and public hearings. Before District Directors take final actions on major issues, citizens are invited to comment at these formal sessions. Many of these meetings are planned, organized and facilitated by the Community Relations Department.

This year, the District faced several critical policy decisions relating to Metro Rail and bus operations. Public hearings were convened for each of the following:

- o Environmental assessment of Metro Rail MOS-1 construction and operational impacts (August).
- o Policies germane to the creation of benefit assessment districts around Metro Rail stations (January).
- o Changes in the RTD fare structure and bus services (February).

At all of these major hearings, Community Relations was successful in garnering supportive testimony from influential community leaders.

In preparation for the controversial hearing on fare increases, Community Relations met with local elected officials and community and business groups regarding the reasons behind the proposed fare and service changes. These discussions gave citizens and the public sector a clearer understanding of Proposition A's impact on RTD's operations and why fare increases and service reductions would be inevitable.

Though the public did not express overwhelming support of the RTD proposals--as expected--they did reach an acceptable compromise. Given the choice between higher fares or maintaining current service levels, they opted for maintaining service. This preference was expressed repeatedly at the day-long, February 2 public hearing by many of the 500 riders and public officials who attended.

Clearly, this scenario constitutes a classic example of how community relations groundwork can prove effective in obtaining public consent on a highly unpopular issue whereby overall approval was improbable.

## PUBLIC SUPPORT

FY'85 proved to be one of the most challenging years for Community Relations in the area of public support. That is, obtaining and maintaining it. At a time when government scrutiny of transit's cost-effectiveness was at an all-time high, Community Relations was immensely successful in garnering broad-based public support of RTD programs, including the Metro Rail Project.

During the public hearings on the creation of benefit assessment districts in the Metro Rail MOS-1 area, several community and business leaders went on public record, endorsing this as a vital local financing mechanism. Such a demonstration of support was largely due to the effective relationship between the private sector and Community Relations staff.

When the unpopular issue of fare increases became necessary to discuss with the community-at-large, Community Relations met with scores of community groups, local elected officials and business leaders throughout the RTD service area prior to the fare hearing to help them understand the reasons behind the inevitable fare hikes. Thanks to that vital groundwork, speakers at the February public hearing repeatedly expressed a preference for higher fares, if current levels of service could be maintained. It is now history that the Board of Directors acknowledged their consensus and voted accordingly.

As challenging as these issues were, the most critical, by far, was--and still remains--the fate of federal transit funding in the FY'86 budget of the United States Government. The Reagan Administration's anti-transit position took on greater force earlier this calendar year when the Administration announced its proposal to eliminate the "new starts" program and federal transit operating assistance. Such action would spell doom for Metro Rail and 10% or more of the District's operating budget.

Community Relations immediately mapped a strategy, working with private-sector organizations and elected officials to rally the greater Los Angeles community to overturn the devastating budget proposals. The program yielded effective results. Organizations worked with local elected officials and influential decision-makers on Capitol Hill to persuade Administration insiders and Congress to reject the Reagan budget. Within the first 90 days of this effort, more than 8,450 cards, letters, phone calls and telegrams were sent directly to the White House and Congress, urging the preservation of federal funds to maintain Los Angeles County's bus systems and to begin building Metro Rail. The affects are being seen in the strong pro-transit position of the House and even the Senate, which earlier projected an unsympathetic attitude.

In addition, about 65 formal resolutions of transit support were sent to Capitol Hill by city councils, the California State Senate elected officials, chambers of commerce and community/business groups throughout the RTD service area within weeks of the announced budget cuts. Grassroot support groups were formed, including the California Taxpayers for Public Transit. They distributed and collected public petitions denouncing the proposed transit funding cuts. Community Relations publicized these efforts in special editions of its bimonthly publication, Metro News Bulletin. This gave additional momentum and exposure to the effort. (See Appendix for samples.)

RTD Directors and the California Congressional Delegation presented these documents at congressional budget hearings recently as evidence of broad-based public support.

Similar efforts were coordinated by Community Relations in support of SB290, the transit funding measure proposed (and later defeated) this year by state Senator John Foran (D-San Francisco).

Given this scenario, it is clearly evident that Community Relations must be prepared to effect results in "11th-hour" crises situations at any given moment. The fact that it has done so in most situations speaks highly of its strong influence and bond with the community-at-large.

#### ON THE ROAD WITH THE DIRECTORS

The 11 members of the RTD Board of Directors represent the transit interests of the 84 cities and unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County. This responsibility brings them into constant interaction with government officials, community leaders, community organizations and the general public.

To execute their complex policy-making charge properly, it requires current, reliable information, community feedback, sound advice, numerous meetings and oftentimes on-site inspections. Community Relations has assisted Board members in these essential matters, and the results have been very beneficial to the District's best interest and that of the community as well.

Some of the major issues that the Board has resolved this year through close coordination with Community Relations are:

1. Construction of the Division 16 employee parking lot, which solved the problem of parking space competition on East Mission Boulevard in Pomona.



2. Implementation of short-term measures to buffer noise and beautify the environment around Divisions 5, 6 and 12, in response to community concerns. This entailed several community meetings and resulted in the creation of the "RTD Good Neighbor" program.
3. Assistance in studies relative to the relocation of Divisions 6 and 12 as long-term measures to resolve community concerns and increase operational efficiency.
4. Coordination of the "buy down" fare subsidy program, facilitating the contractual negotiations between the District and participating cities.
5. Facilitating community information and liaison programs for the senior and disabled community. This has greatly enhanced the relationship between the Board Ad Hoc Committee on Accessible Transportation and the private-sector Citizens' Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation. (See Special Projects section for details and accomplishments.)
6. Resolution of the Eastland Shopping Center Park 'n' Ride problem, in which user demand far exceeded the authorized number of parking spaces. Additional parking was located adjacent to the shopping center. Community Relations maintained close communications with Eastland officials and other affected parties.

Because Directors are assisted by one or more Community Relations Representatives in the geographic corridors they represent, they have been able to maintain productive, personal relationships with the community's influential organizations and individuals. In turn, the net result has been open communication with these parties and an overall acceptance of District policies.

Routinely, Community Relations Representatives have accompanied Directors to meetings, written correspondence and speeches for Directors on a variety of transit-related topics, and have coordinated mass mailings for the collective Board to RTD constituents in times of crises.



## ***Special Projects***

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## S P E C I A L   P R O J E C T S

### ACCESSIBLE SERVICE PROGRAM

Throughout Fiscal Year 1985, the Community Relations Department has played a primary role in coordinating and implementing major aspects of the RTD Accessible Service Program. The following summary of the department's activities covers the period from August 1984 through May 1985. (The Department's efforts were dedicated solely to Olympics activities during July 1984, the first month of the current fiscal year.)

#### PLANNING AND LIAISON ACTIVITIES

Community Relations has served as the principal liaison with the Citizens' Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation (CACAT) and other special interest groups relative to accessible transportation. In this capacity, Community Relations has coordinated monthly meetings with CACAT and has worked closely with CACAT's Subcommittees on Goals and Objectives, By-Laws, APTA National Conference, Membership, and Community Relations. Largely through the efforts of Community Relations staff, the Membership Subcommittee has recommended to the General Manager, three additional organizations for membership to the Citizens' Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation.

Interdepartmentally, Community Relations has worked closely with the RTD Task Force on Accessible Transportation and Quality Circles, which involve the participation of operating division supervisors, mechanics and drivers to enhance accessible service. The department's input in accessible service policy and program development has proven invaluable, as recommendations are based on concerns articulated by the senior and disabled constituency. Community Relations also has kept the Management Committee on Accessible Transportation abreast on relevant issues, challenges and accomplishments regarding accessible service. The Management Committee reports to the General Manager and the RTD Board Ad Hoc Committee.

#### PUBLIC INFORMATION/COMMUNICATION

Recognizing the critical role of timely and effective public communication in meeting the District's accessible service goals and objectives, the Community Relations Department has made numerous presentations to the senior and disabled constituency. As of the last week of May, staff made a total of 48 presentations since August 1984, specifically addressing aspects of the District's Accessible Service Program. Audiences included the Veterans' Administration Hospital, the Gray Panthers, Pasadena Retirement Hotel, Angelus Plaza, Lincoln Heights Seniors, Temple Beth, Inglewood Senior Citizens, Cypress Park Seniors and the International Institute of Senior Citizens. These presentations served to explain the policies and purposes of the Accessible Service Program and gave the audiences better insight into the decision-making process, budget concerns, special services and benefits of the Program.

To help RTD wheelchair patrons learn how to use bus lift and securement equipment properly, Community Relations has coordinated on-site bus demonstrations. Bus operators gave observers hands-on experience on using the equipment. This year 16 demonstrations were staged at various locations such as Diamond Point Elementary, Perez Community School, Pasadena City College, Cal Poly Pomona, Good Shepherd Center for Independent Living, The Blind Children's Foundation, Miller School and the Board of Governors of the California Association for the Physically Handicapped.

To complement these demonstrations, a multifold how-to brochure was developed this year for wheelchair patrons. Community Relations staff provided substantive input in copy development and general concept. The brochure will prove even more beneficial throughout the next fiscal year, particularly for those who will not have the opportunity to participate in a demonstration. Community Relations will continue to distribute these brochures at public presentations, exhibits and demonstrations.

Access, the new quarterly newsletter developed this year by Community Relations, is another vital communication tool that is steadily gaining public popularity and appeal. The four-page magazine, focusing on the District's efforts to implement the Accessible Service Program, has been lauded by organizations serving the elderly and handicapped throughout the nation. RTD has been commended for "its innovative approach" to communicate services and issues that directly affect this special rider group. Access satisfies a Board mandate for a specialized publication addressing the transit needs and concerns of the senior and disabled constituency. It enjoys 2,000 readers, and the subscription requests are increasing daily.

Complementing Access is the new audio-visual presentation, entitled Total Accessibility: The RTD Commitment. As the title suggests, this 9-minute show provides viewers an overview of the District's Accessible Service Program and underscores the RTD leadership's commitment to make the bus system totally accessible to all riders. The show was developed this year by the Community Relations Department and, like all of the other communication tools, it is featured as part of staff's public presentations.

#### DISPLAYS/EXHIBITS

This year the Community Relations Department participated in two major exhibitions, highlighting the District's Accessible Service Program. Both were held in April at the Los Angeles Convention Center. The Time of Your Life exposition drew thousands of the Southland's senior citizens. Over 4,000 visitors received information and literature about the District's services for senior citizens. The Abilities Expo attracted over 13,000 senior and disabled people. The RTD exhibit showcased the District's Accessible Service Program to 3,000 people with a mural display, photography, the audio-visual show and a literature table. Visitors expressed their concerns and appreciation for RTD's special services and signed hundreds of cards supporting federal funding for public transit.

In addition, Community Relations participated in eight major senior fairs this year, where information and literature were provided to visitors. These private-sector fairs were held in East Los Angeles, Inglewood, Manhattan Beach and in South Central Los Angeles.

#### CONFERENCES, INSPECTION TOURS AND SPECIAL MEETINGS

Community Relations helped coordinate the following visits by District management and staff for the purpose of acquiring knowledge of the latest equipment available for our disabled constituents and to stimulate the development and research for better technology in transit accessibility:

1. The Third International Conference on Mobility Transportation of Elderly and Handicapped, held in Orlando, Florida in October 1984.
2. An on-site inspection/orientation of American Seating and Coach and Car, the two leading seating manufacturers for buses.
3. An on-site inspection/orientation of Carpenter Body Works in North Vernon, Indiana.
4. A tour and orientation of the Seattle Metro Transit Authority.
5. A meeting with the California Department of Rehabilitation in Sacramento, California.
6. A meeting with ADAPT, a national organization for the handicapped in Denver, Colorado.

#### PASSENGER ASSISTANCE

In special cases, Community Relations staff has assisted RTD wheelchair passengers who for one reason or another have routinely encountered difficulty boarding a bus, or getting a driver to stop for them. Thus for this fiscal year, five passengers have requested and obtained such assistance. Staff provided on-site assistance and helped resolve most of the equipment-related problems and driver pass ups.

The Community Relations Department has made significant contributions to the advancement of the goals of the District's Accessible Service Program, and will continue its efforts to further the program during the next fiscal year. Through the Community Relations Department, the story about the District's commitment to quality, accessible transit service is being told to tens of thousands throughout the Los Angeles metropolitan area and across the nation.

## YOUTH IN TRANSIT

Because students comprise a respectable percentage of RTD riders, Community Relations developed a program this year that aims to develop and nurture an enduring relationship between the District and local youth. Hence the program's name, Youth In Transit.

The goals of the program are to:

1. Foster support for the District and its operators in local schools.
2. Generate community support for RTD through involvement in various school projects.
3. Educate and inform students about RTD and its career opportunities.
4. Increase students' awareness of their personal responsibility in preventing crime and vandalism of private and public property.

These goals were implemented through the following projects. (It should be noted that in some instances, this year's effort was devoted basically to groundwork. Further development of these aspects of the total program will be the focal point of emphasis in FY'86.)

## OPERATION TEAMWORK

Through the vision and leadership of the late RTD Board President Thomas G. Neusom, Operation Teamwork was established in 1981. The purpose of Teamwork was to reduce crime and vandalism on RTD buses and the community-at-large. This program combines the resources of RTD, law enforcement agencies, schools and community groups to mount a strong campaign against crime. A brochure describing the program is included in the Appendix.

As a means to get students involved in the program, Community Relations sponsors the annual Operation Teamwork Poster and Essay Contest. Through art and prose, local students have the opportunity to creatively express their ideas on good citizenship and social responsibility as they relate to public transportation. Winners are recognized at an annual awards reception. This year, more than 100 students from local junior and senior high schools participated in the contest. Next year, additional schools will be invited to participate.

## THOMAS G. NEUSOM MEMORIAL AWARDS

As a means of preserving Mr. Neusom's outstanding contributions in the areas of community involvement and crime prevention, the Community Relations Department established the annual Thomas G. Neusom Memorial Awards in 1984.

These awards recognize citizens who have made outstanding achievements in the areas of (1) crime prevention, (2) community leadership and (3) youth/student involvement. In addition to these award recipients, 40 individuals received certificates of appreciation for their exemplary service to the community this year.

Recipients are recognized at the annual Operation Teamwork Poster and Essay Awards Reception. This year's reception was very successful, with Los Angeles City Attorney-Elect James Kenneth Hahn as keynote speaker, and representatives from local government, law enforcement, education and community development in attendance.

## SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

Studies have confirmed the direct link between unemployment and crime. As another measure to combat crime and simultaneously offer youth an enriching life experience, the Community Relations Department has worked with the City of Los Angeles in implementing the Summer Youth Employment Program. Twenty youth have been employed each summer since 1983. They worked in key departments such as Transportation, Accounting, Purchasing, Employee Development and Community Relations. Participants received valuable training and experience, general career guidance and became better acquainted with the inner workings of the District . . . not to mention a little extra money for the summer.

## ADOPT-A-SCHOOL PROGRAM

During the past year, Community Relations began its participation in the Los Angeles Unified School District's Adopt-a-School Program. Community Relations formed a partnership with Lillian Street School, a predominantly Hispanic elementary school in southeast Los Angeles.

The purpose of the program is to give businesses, local communities and schools an opportunity to work together to enrich the educational and cultural experience of disadvantaged youth. Activities such as tutoring, career awareness days, and educational field trips to RTD were just a few of the activities. The District's participation was launched in December with a Christmas Party, hosted by--who else?--Santa himself, aboard a bus, of course!

## YOUTH MOTIVATION TASK FORCE

Community Relations has participated in the Youth Motivation Task Force (YMTF) for the past nine years. Sponsored by the Merit Employer's Association, YMTF encourages students to remain in school and complete their education. The organization is composed of volunteer employees from local businesses and industry. As positive role models, they visit schools in disadvantaged areas and make classroom presentations. Their message to the students stresses the importance of education.

In the past, the majority of volunteers from RTD were bus operators; however, this year the District's participation in YMTF expanded to include staff from various departments such as Equal Employment Opportunity, Legal, Metro Rail, Employee Activities, Transportation, Administration and Community Relations. Twenty-two volunteers visited designated schools and spoke to hundreds of students. RTD volunteers visited at least one school a week.

Some students also had the opportunity to tour RTD headquarters, and disabled students participated in wheelchair lift demonstrations.

## PUBLICATIONS

Printed literature--be it a brochure, newsletter or flyer--has long been proven an effective tool in meeting the goals of community relations. Though literature primarily informs and communicates with the public it can be most effective in persuading and shaping public opinion. The family of publications developed by the Community Relations Department over the past three years constitutes a classic case study of the image-building and opinion-shaping power of the printed word.

Recognizing that newspaper headlines oftentimes do not provide a balanced account of controversial aspects of District-related issues, it becomes incumbent on us to communicate the District's position . . . which is too often misunderstood.

Community Relations literature has provided that catalyst. And it has proven effective through the positive feedback the department receives from local and national constituents. In fact, this year the RTD Customer Relations Department noted a substantial increase in public requests for Community Relations literature on District operations and Metro Rail.



In light of the critical matters looming on the horizon for RTD in FY'86 (i.e., fare increases, rail construction, benefit assessments, real estate acquisition), it will be absolutely essential for Community Relations to keep the public informed and help its diverse constituencies understand the "whys" and "hows" of complex policies the District will be implementing. Where public presentations leave off, publications must continue to serve as the primary catalyst in the District's comprehensive public information program. Ultimately, it is hoped that this vital program will aid in fostering an enduring relationship with the regional constituency that can be developed and nurtured in the District's best interest.

#### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

This year, Community Relations published three newsletters (two special editions during the height of the federal transit budget debates), and project-specific brochures. In addition, the department published a series of "Metro Rail Project Update" bulletins and sent them to private-sector house organ editors. This broadened Metro Rail's editorial coverage to thousands of private-sector employees throughout the Southern California region. This collective productivity represents over 1 million pieces of public information literature. With the exception of the Update, the literature was distributed by mail (utilizing the Community Relations mailing list), RTD Customer Service Centers, pass sales outlets, the RTD bus fleet, various community professional organizations, RTD operating divisions, city halls, chambers of commerce and numerous RTD exhibits, public meetings, conventions and trade shows.

#### Publications included:

1. Metro News Bulletin. Bimonthly newsletter, focusing on RTD services and programs. It is distinct from any other District publication in that it speaks to the concerns that various communities and cities have relative to RTD services, facilities and programs. The status of the Metro Rail Project is also an integral part of the editorial content. Six regular issues were published this year, in addition to two special editions. (Audience: Regionwide constituency. Circ: 25,000)
2. RTD Transit Reader. Bimonthly news brochure, focusing on "things every bus rider should know" about RTD (i.e., operations, revenue sources, Proposition A, Metro Rail, special services, important service announcements). A detachable response card allows readers to communicate their concerns and subscribe to other Community Relations publications. Nearly 5,000 respondents have commended the District for publishing the Reader, and they have requested to be added to the Community Relations mailing list. Six regular issues were published this year. (Audience: Bus riders. Circ: 150,000)

3. ACCESS. Quarterly newsletter, focusing on RTD's efforts to implement its Accessible Service Program. The publication also addresses legislation and issues that affect transportation services for the senior and disabled constituency within the RTD service area. Three issues were published this year. ACCESS has received accolades from the senior and disabled community across the nation. RTD has been commended for its "innovative approach" to communicating with this special rider group. (Audience: Seniors and disabled constituents. Circ: 2,000)
4. Operation Teamwork: For a A Better Community. A 2-color brochure, describing the District's crime/vandalism prevention program. Distributed at community and school meetings and crime prevention fairs.
5. Metro Rail: The Future Is Now. Brochure, focusing on the current status of the Metro Rail Project, including a description of the minimum operable segment.
6. Let's Talk Transit. Brochure, promoting the RTD Speaker's Bureau and audio-visual presentations.

This year, Community Relations has also assisted in the preparation of several other documents, such as an information booklet on the MOS-1 Benefit Assessment District, a how-to brochure on wheelchair boarding and securement, and a brochure on the District's Metro Rail joint development program.

#### AUDIO-VISUAL DEVELOPMENT

To assist District Board members, management and staff in presenting major programs, policies and services, Community Relations developed four major audio-visual presentations. They have been used effectively to complement and illustrate verbal presentations at various kinds of meetings--luncheons, dinners and informal sessions with community and service organizations.

Most significantly, these slide/audio presentations have proven to be the most cost-effective AV media, compared to feature films and video shows. Community Relations also realized tremendous cost savings for the District by handling most of the production tasks in-house. Production costs for each show averaged about \$2,500. This compares with wide-ranging estimates of \$11,000 to \$30,000 by several AV production consultants.

The shows have enjoyed broad public appeal and have proved invaluable to District staff. The presentations completed this year included:

- o 20 Years of Progress, tracing RTD's development and highlighting its accomplishments to improve transit services during its 20 years of operation. (12 min.)
- o Metro Rail: The Future Is Now, describing the Metro Rail Project in the context of the 150-mile countywide rail system. It also focuses on MOS-1, its significance and its impacts. (10 min.)
- o Total Accessibility: The RTD Commitment, describing the RTD Accessible Service Program and the accomplishments made over the last decade. (9 min.)
- o Public Transportation at the Crossroads, focusing on the adverse impacts of the Reagan budget on public transit programs. (9 min.)

Community Relations is particularly proud of the Ad Wheels Award it shared with the Marketing Department this year. Presented by the American Public Transit Association at its annual national conference in October, the award recognized RTD's development of the popular 90-second feature film trailer which promoted Metro Rail. Community Relations initiated the concept and negotiated distribution of the trailer in movie theaters statewide.

In addition to these activities, Community Relations developed throughout the year informal slide presentations for District board members and staff as needed. Topics included development opportunities along the Metro Rail route, the El Monte Busway, the history of transit in Los Angeles and orientation presentations for new District employees.

The department also maintains a slide and photography library to support the AV and publication needs of Community Relations, the Board of Directors and the General Manager's office.

#### SPEAKER'S BUREAU

Community Relations' Special Projects Unit also operates an active Speaker's Bureau. All public speaking engagements with community and service organizations are coordinated through this program. The Bureau is often responsible for developing speeches for Directors. Community Relations developed a new brochure to inform private-sector groups of the services offered by the Bureau.

In all, Community Relations representatives made 138 formal presentations to groups throughout the District's service area. The District has benefitted from these presentations through formal actions by these organizations--in the form of resolutions, position papers and correspondence supporting legislation and programs that are beneficial to public transportation.

#### AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

Community Relations is a member in "good and regular standing" of several chambers of commerce and other key organizations throughout greater Los Angeles. This year, the District joined 11 chambers, and Community Relations staff regularly attended their meetings and served on their transportation committees. Some staff members even serve as officers on these committees, which places them in a unique position to influence policies on transit matters.

#### DISPLAYS AND EXHIBITS

During FY'85, Community Relations represented the District at several exhibitions and community fairs. Displays were graphically appealing and covered three major themes: accessible service, Metro Rail, and "RTD: People Moving People." Literature describing District programs and services was issued to thousands of Southland visitors. Moreover, it was at these exhibitions that hundreds of people signed transit support cards, indicating their endorsement of public transit and Metro Rail.

Major displays were staffed at the annual convention of the League of California Cities, California Contract Cities Association annual seminar, the Time of Your Life Expo, Abilities Expo, the South Bay Transit Fair, the Eighth Council District Community Fair, open house ceremonies for RTD Divisions 10 and 18, and numerous other fairs for senior citizens, schools, and community groups.

Community Relations also developed give-away items that promoted positive messages about RTD and its programs. These are always well received by the public and have proven effective in promoting general good will in the community-at-large.

## ***Appendix***

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**Community Relations was successful in demonstrating regional bipartisan support of public transit.**



**Looking Up to Public Transit** — RTD General Manager John A. Dyer and RTD Board members and San Gabriel Valley residents Charles Storing and Leonard Panish presented certificates of appreciation recently to 23 local leaders for their support of public transportation and the Metro Rail subway project. Among those honored at El Monte Busway Terminal are (front, l-r) Rosemead City Councilman Pat Cleveland and West Covina City Councilwoman Nancy Manners. Second row: Covina Councilman Henry Morgan; Covina Mayor Charles Colver; Dave Hart, representing Monrovia Councilman Bob Bartlett; Leticia Hernandez, representing Rep. Esteban Torres; Marta Maestas, representing Assemblyman Charles Calderon; El Monte Councilman Jack Crippen; and Bob Ogert, representing Assemblywoman Sally Tanner. Third row: Patricia Hutter, representing Bradbury Mayor Ron Westmeyer; Alfred Herrera, representing Irwindale Mayor Michael Miranda; Azusa Councilman Jim Cook; Azusa Mayor Eugene Moses; La Puente Councilman Frank Palacio; and Pomona Mayor Stan Selby. Back row: La Puente City Manager Frank Ruiz; La Puente Councilman Lou Guzman; Mike Duffy, representing State Senator Joseph Montoya; La Puente Mayor Max Ragland; RTD Director and La Puente Councilman Storing; RTD Director Panish; and Dyer.

LEGISLATIVE ADDRESS  
STATE CAPITOL  
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814  
(916) 465-3388

DISTRICT OFFICE  
11001 VALLEY MALL  
SUITE 204  
EL MONTE, CA 91731  
(916) 515-6899

# Senate California Legislature



JOSEPH B. MONTOYA

STATE SENATOR  
26TH SENATE DISTRICT

CHAIRMAN BUSINESS AND  
PROFESSIONS  
AGRICULTURE AND WATER  
RESOURCES  
ENERGY AND PUBLIC  
UTILITIES  
HEALTH AND HUMAN  
SERVICES  
INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

COPY

March 22, 1985

The Hon. Ronald Reagan  
President of the United States  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As a California legislator representing over 650,000 constituents in the Los Angeles area, I am concerned that current administration policies may seriously inhibit proposals to construct vital transportation systems for Los Angeles County. The loss of these funds will seriously hinder the middle class and exclude the working poor from utilizing transportation services. Federal mass transit funds support a transportation system accommodating 1.5 million boardings in Los Angeles County alone.

I am requesting your intervention and assistance in this matter. Anything that can be done to assist Los Angeles County in meeting its transportation needs would be appreciated.

Sincerely,

JOSEPH B. MONTOYA  
State Senator

## Appeals for federal transit funding came from all levels and the private sector.

REPLY TO:

WASHINGTON OFFICE

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515  
(202) 225-5464

DISTRICT OFFICE

1712 WEST 81ST STREET  
MONTRELL, CALIFORNIA 90840  
(213) 722-7731



# Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, D.C. 20515

MATTHEW G. MARTINEZ

30TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT  
OPPORTUNITIES

SUBCOMMITTEE ON LABOR-MANAGEMENT  
RELATIONS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON LABOR STANDARDS

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMPENSATION  
PENSION AND INSURANCE

April 10, 1985

The Honorable Ronald Reagan  
President of the United States  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I completely agree with the need to reduce the growth in federal expenditures and to reverse the dangerous expansion of the federal deficit. Mr. Stockman's recommendations to withdraw from federal participation in the transit infrastructure seem to be fiscally counterproductive, however.

In keeping with your philosophies and policies, we need to create the means of building a stronger economic base which in turn will yield greater tax revenues to all levels of government. Mass transit is an important building block in this process.

OFFICE  
OF THE  
MAYOR

City Hall, Pomona, California 91769

G. STANTON SELBY

RECEIVED  
DEC 11 10 59 AM '84  
CITY OF POMONA



November 28, 1984

Mr. Ralph Stanley  
Administrator  
Urban Mass Transportation Administration  
400 7th Street, S. W.  
Washington, D. C. 20590

Dear Mr. Stanley:

We in the City of Pomona are extremely concerned about the delay in the beginning of the construction of the Los Angeles Metro Rail System. We, the civic leaders, have long been in support of the building of the Metro Rail because we are aware of the opportunities and benefits to be derived by the local communities both in the improvement of transit travel and, of course, the long term economic benefits which will be generated due to this project.

This letter is to encourage your office to initiate the issuance of the Letter of Intent to the Southern California Rapid Transit District. We feel that the long delay in the commencement of the construction only serves to inhibit the progress of this project. Without a doubt each day of delay can only increase the cost, and therefore create a greater burden on the taxpayer.

We urge you to strongly consider sending the letter as soon as possible to help alleviate the anxiety the delay has cause the people of Los Angeles.

Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

*G. Stanton Selby*  
G. STANTON SELBY  
Mayor

LEGISLATIVE ADDRESS:  
STATE CAPITOL  
SACRAMENTO 95834  
PHONE: (916) 445-0834

DISTRICT OFFICE  
1712 W BEVERLY BLVD  
MONTEBELLO 90640  
PHONE: (213) 721-2804

Assembly  
California Legislature

COMMITTEES  
VICE CHAIRMAN  
FINANCE & INSURANCE  
  
MEMBER  
EDUCATION  
HOUSING & COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT  
HUMAN SERVICES  
JUDICIARY

CHARLES M. CALDERON  
ASSEMBLYMAN, FIFTY NINTH DISTRICT

March 22, 1985

Honorable Ronald Reagan  
President of the United States  
The White House  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

It has come to my attention that the Office of Management and Budget and Mr. Stockman have decided to cut funding for public transportation from the Federal budget. While I can understand the attempts by your administration to reduce spending and deal with the problems of mounting deficits, curtailing the use of one cent gas tax revenues would do nothing to impact these problems as the funds may be expended only on transit systems.

The impact on the citizens of my district and the entire Los Angeles basin would be critical. The proposed reduction in funding would reduce the operating capital of the Southern California Rapid Transit District (SCRTD) by a devastating 10%. This would mean increased fares, reduced ridership, reduction of service, and force more people back into their automobiles and onto our already congested freeway system.

Sincerely,

*Charles M. Calderon*

CHARLES M. CALDERON  
33 Assemblyman, 59th District



## A typical White House response to the appeals.

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON  
January 29, 1985

Dear Mayor Westmyer:

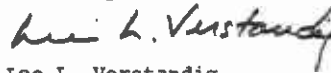
On behalf of the President, I would like to thank you for your recent correspondence reiterating the importance of public transportation.

As you know, the President is deeply concerned about the severity of the federal deficit. If the deficit is allowed to grow without abatement our country will fall into one of its severest economic challenges ever. At the same time, we are committed to furthering the economic well-being of every American citizen, as well as their communities. The President will review your concerns as we study many different ways to try and reduce the national deficit while responding to the needs of our citizens. Additionally, I have taken the liberty of forwarding your letter to the White House Office of Policy Development and the Office of Management and Budget for review and consideration.

We truly understand the repercussions which will result from a reduction in any part of the federal budget, including aid to our urban areas. The task of deciding where these necessary budget reductions will occur is not an easy one, but I assure you that your comments will be read and considered by all individuals involved in the decision-making process.

Thank you for sharing your concerns with the President. Please let me know if I can be of further assistance to you.

Sincerely,



Lee L. Verstandig  
Assistant to the President  
for Intergovernmental Affairs

## Sample of private-sector petition.

Dear President Reagan:

We are well aware of Budget Director David Stockman's attempt to balance the federal budget. But he is trying to do so at the expense of millions of Americans who rely on public transportation each day of their lives to travel to work, school, shopping and to medical appointments.

Therefore, we the undersigned FORMALLY PROTEST Mr. Stockman's recommendations to:

- abolish the Urban Mass Transportation Administration
- eliminate transit operating assistance
- eliminate federal funding for construction of new rail projects.

Furthermore, WE DEMAND THAT YOU ORDER MR. STOCKMAN TO RETAIN AND CONTINUE THE ABOVE MENTIONED FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMS in the best interest of the American public! We are well aware of Mr. Stockman's attempt to deceive the public and perhaps you, Mr. President, by saying that transit capital projects add to the federal deficit. We know that the gasoline taxes WE PAY are reserved in a trust account - - SEPARATE FROM THE OPERATING BUDGET - - and are used to build and upgrade rail projects. BY LAW, Mr. Stockman is prevented from using these Trust Fund monies for any purpose other than transit development.

We thank you for your consideration and support of our views, and appreciate your directing David Stockman to abandon his irrational public transportation proposals and release the Letter of Intent for the Los Angeles Metro Rail Project.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Vol. 2 No. 3 • May 1984

# Metro News BULLETIN




## Officials Optimistic About Metro Funding

**M**etro Rail supporters left the nation's capital recently with renewed optimism that the subway project would receive the necessary federal dollars to begin construction.

A delegation of local, congressional and RTD officials made a strong case for Metro Rail May 1 before House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on Transportation. See page 2 for more news about national efforts to preserve federal support of public transit programs.

The delegation asked Congress to give the Los Angeles region \$150 million during the next federal budget year and to free up \$129 million already earmarked for the project from the federal 1-cent gas tax transit trust fund. Both actions are expected in the summer after Congress sets its budget, pending and individual committee device funds among competing interests.

Local matching funding commitments totaling over \$1 billion have been secured from the state, Los Angeles County, the City of Los Angeles and local benefit assessments.

United for Metro Rail—RTD and elected officials attend recent Capitol Hill function held for supporters of Metro Rail and other federally funded transit programs.

Metro Rail's construction has been in jeopardy since last December when federal budget director David Stockman persuaded President Reagan to recommend an end to all federal funding for new rail starts as part of the Administration's efforts to reduce the federal deficit. (Continued on page 5)

## RTD/Unions Avoid Labor Strikes

### Drivers, Clerks Ok Pacts, Mechanics' Talks Proceed

The RTD Board of Directors ratified the two of three major labor union contracts this quarter, ending all fears of a work stoppage.

In April, the Directors ratified the longest labor contract in RTD history with the United Transportation Union (UTU), which represents over 10,000 bus drivers. The members overwhelmingly approved the 41-month contract, 3,000 to 292.

"For the first time since 1969, the District has successfully renegotiated a contract with our drivers when there wasn't a strike in progress," notes RTD President Nick Patsouras. "The landmark agreement signals a new era in labor stability at RTD, which is imperative at a time when the District faces substantial losses in local and federal operating assistance."

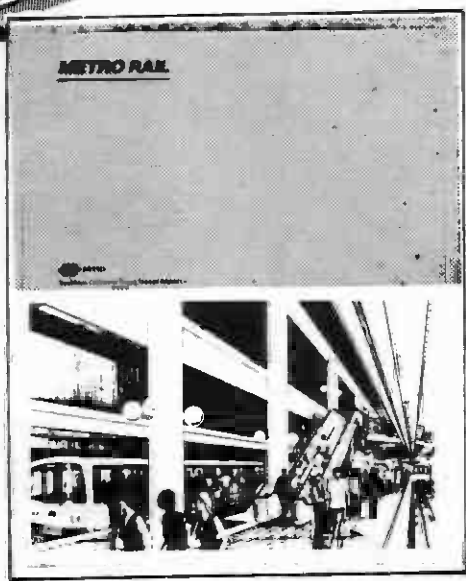
In May, the Board ratified a new 39-month contract with the Brotherhood of Railway, Airline and Steamship Clerks (BRASC), which represents 700 RTD ticket clerks, telephone room operators and other clerical employees. At press time, negotiations were set between the District and the Amalgamated Transit Union, which represents 1,800 RTD mechanics and maintenance employees. An accord is expected to be reached soon.

Under the terms of the UTU contract, RTD drivers will receive a 4.5% increase in wages and fringe benefits. The District will realize significant cost savings by utilizing part-time drivers up to 30 hours a week, including weekends. Changes in scheduling rules including a move to reduce absenteeism also will generate savings.

## New Fare Structure Effective July 1

RTD's new fare structure will go into effect on July 1. While this will mean higher fares for passengers, the RTD Board of Directors is pleased to announce that 98% of the bus service will remain intact. No routes will be cancelled, although some buses will be removed from lines that are expected to experience a drop in ridership in the wake of higher fares.

"These service adjustments are necessary to balance our budget in the fiscal year beginning July 1, when the District will lose an estimated \$42 million in local sales tax subsidies," explained RTD Board President Nick Patsouras. "The Board opted for higher fares rather than more stringent service adjustments." (Continued on page 12)



**RTD**

# Transit Reader

Vol. 1 No. 4      Aug./Sept. 1984

## Olympic Spirit!

RTD Board President Nikolas Patsouras and Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley display an RTD Olympic Bus Service Goldie that illustrates the special bus routes and services RTD is providing to most Olympic venues. Bradley holds an Olympic Gold Pass, good for unlimited rides on both Olympic and regular RTD bus services. More than a million brochures are in circulation, and riders tell us that the Gold Pass has proven to be the best transportation bargain in town. The passes are being sold at Ticketron outlets, including all Tower Record stores in Southern California.

# The Perfect Keynote Speakers

RTD's public information products speak for themselves. That's why they are the perfect feature for your organization's next breakfast, luncheon or dinner meeting. Our impressive audio-visual collection and informative publications tell a unique message about the fascinating programs and services RTD provides for millions of Southlanders like you!

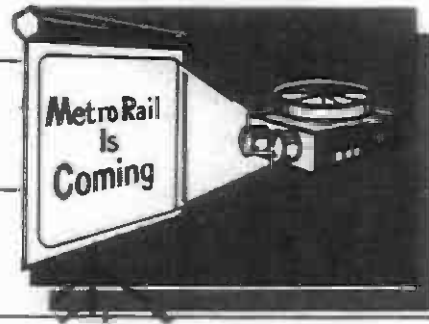
Whether the topic be rail transit development, bus services or how transit policy and service decisions are made, we tailor our presentations to your audience. You provide the place; we'll provide the speaker and materials.

***For details, contact:***

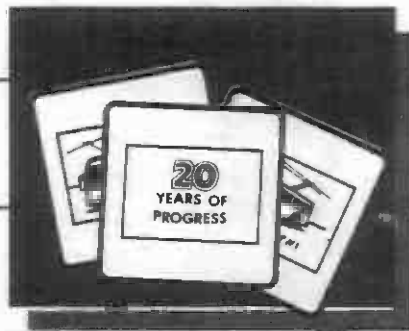
**Mr. Albert Reyes**  
**RTD Speaker's Bureau**  
**Community Relations Department**  
**425 S. Main St.**  
**Los Angeles, CA 90013**  
**Phone: (213) 972-6622**



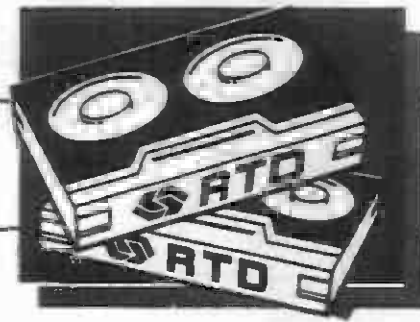
***Starting Under*** is our award-winning 16mm film on the Metro Rail Project. (For all size audiences.)



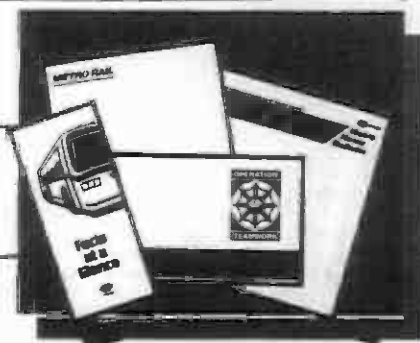
***Metro Rail is Coming*** is our popular slide-audio presentation highlighting actual designs and benefits of Metro Rail. (For all size audiences.)



***20 Years of Progress*** is our newest slide-audio presentation highlighting RTD's major accomplishments and the services it has been providing its customers over the past two decades. (For all size audiences.)



***The RTD Video Library*** contains video cassettes on all RTD programs and services. (For small audiences.)



***Metro News Bulletin***, ***Metro Rail News***, and ***RTD Transit Reader*** are among our popular publications distributed at each RTD public presentation.





# Metro News BULLETIN

## Community Presses to Preserve Operating Subsidies, Federal Funding for Metro Rail

All segments of the public and private sector throughout the county are uniting in their appeal to President Reagan to retain assistance for transit operations in the FY'86 federal budget.

Community leaders say the appeal became necessary when Budget Director David Stockman recently announced his intention to eliminate federal support for virtually every mass transit program now benefiting millions of Americans. If Stockman gets his way, transit operators across the country would lose millions of dollars that help make low-cost public transportation possible. In some regions, this would result in reduced services and fare hikes at best, and operational shutdowns in other areas at worst.

At the local level, RTD stands to lose as much as \$50 million a year in operating subsidies alone. And if alternate sources cannot be identified to recoup this substantial loss, local riders would see reduced service and perhaps higher fares, especially in areas outlining Los Angeles.

### 'TOO MUCH AT STAKE'

"There's too much at stake here," says public transit advocate June Swenson. "Its unfortunate enough that fares will be going up in July due to the reduced Proposition A county subsidies. But to expect bus riders — especially the elderly, handicapped, students and transit-dependent people — to needlessly take on additional fare increases is a moral travesty!

"Every taxpayer in the county should wire or call the President and demand that our transit tax dollars be returned here for our mobility needs." Several private citizens and organizations have spearheaded letter-writing and telephone campaigns to protest Stockman's proposal.

### RAIL TRANSIT THREATENED

Vital operating subsidies are not the only item on Stockman's "transit hit list." He also wants to eliminate federal capital funds from rail transit projects. Such a proposal comes at the worst possible time, insofar as Metro Rail, the initial segment of the county's long-awaited rail system, is ready to be built.

However, several legislators and Administration insiders have questioned Stockman's authority in this matter, indicating that his Office of Management and Budget (OMB) may have overstepped its authority in an "area where the responsibility for administering the mass transit grant program has been very clearly placed within the Department of Transportation."

Such questions have uncovered a blatant policy conflict within the Reagan Administration, inasmuch as the **Department of Transportation has approved funding for Metro**



*Cost-effective Investments—Public transit operators rely on federal operating and capital assistance to provide their communities efficient, low-cost transportation and to develop rail systems. Above are some recent RTD investments lauded by the U.S. Department of Transportation.*

**Rail's construction.** In other words, Transportation Secretary Elizabeth Dole intends to build Metro Rail, but Budget Director Stockman doesn't. Whose decision prevails? Clearly, it's up to the President.

RTD and several elected officials have brought this matter to Stockman's attention (see excerpts on back) and have requested an explanation of OMB's role in the allocation of the Mass Transit Trust Fund. Furthermore, political observers believe the President is not fully aware of this policy conflict, or the devastating impact Stockman's proposal could have on Los Angeles' public transit master plan — especially since Metro Rail is the backbone segment of the entire 150-mile regional rail system.

### 'CAN'T LOSE GAINS'

"We can't afford to lose our unprecedented gains," says Steve Gavin, President of the Greater Los Angeles Transportation Coalition. "More than \$200 million have been invested in design and pre-construction activities. All local funding commitments have been secured. Congress has earmarked the federal share to construct the project, and the Department of Transportation has approved the release of those funds so that construction can begin within the next 90 days.

"The people of L.A. must speak now. We must get the President to approve federal funding for the project, or we'll have to spend the next century raising enough local money to build the entire countywide rail system."



# Metro News BULLETIN



*Kids for Transit—Challengers Director Lou Dantzler and Educational Director Marshanette Pleasant coordinate letter-writing campaign. Youth club is part of regional coalition supporting federal transit funding.*

## Regional Transit Movement Gains Momentum

*Local appeals for federal transit funding make impact on Capitol Hill*

**B**usinesses are calling. Mothers are wiring. Senior citizens are writing. Kids are mailing. People of all ages, incomes and communities have joined the blossoming countywide movement to preserve federal funding for public transit programs. All their communications are being channeled directly to President Reagan, asking him to reverse his Administration's proposal to eliminate assistance for transit operations in the FY'86 federal budget.

The private-sector movement is being coordinated by several local organizations whose members and constituents are largely dependent on public transportation. These persons—senior citizens, the handicapped, students and bus commuters—would be hit hardest if the Administration's proposals are accepted by Congress this year.

"Reduced services and higher fares would result from our losing these federal operating subsidies," notes Lou Dantzler, Executive Director of the South Central-based Challengers Boys' and Girls' Club. Many of his 1,000 youth members rely on public transit for basic needs. "Such increases will cause undue hardship on these kids and their parents. That's why my members and their parents have put together a letter-writing campaign to appeal to the President. We already have the support of our representatives in Washington and Sacramento, but they said there's nothing like the impact of grassroots support on an issue. So that's what Washington's going to get!"

Dantzler's club is just one of many organizations involved in the pro-transit movement. Others include groups and public officials in Los Angeles and outlying areas such as South Gate, Long Beach, the San Fernando Valley, the San Gabriel Valley, East Los Angeles, the Foothills and South Bay. (See sample statements on back.) Not only are they championing the cause of public transit in general, but also that of Metro Rail, the initial segment of the county's rail transit system. Without federal assistance, state and local sources would not be able to finance the construction of this vital backbone segment. The private sector understands this and realizes that Metro Rail's fate will be decided by the President, inasmuch as Congress and the U.S. Department of Transportation have approved the project for immediate construction. But Budget Director David Stockman has withdrawn his earlier commitment.

While it is too early to determine the movement's ultimate impact on the Administration's budget proposals, White House sources note that thousands of letters, telegrams and phone calls have inundated the President's Oval Office.

According to support groups like the Greater Los Angeles Transportation Coalition, this is just the beginning. Other plans will be implemented over the next several weeks to demonstrate to Capitol Hill the wide scope of support that public transportation and Metro Rail have in the Los Angeles region.



*Towards Accessible Transportation*

# ACCESS

Volume 1

Number 1

February 1985

## *The New Mobility*

### RTD Program Serves Elderly, Disabled Passengers

**R**educed fares. Expanded service. Wheelchair lifts. Emergency hotline. Priority seating. Service dog provisions.

These major services are part of RTD's long-term program designed to make its expansive bus network totally accessible to all patrons, especially the elderly and disabled. Such improvements are the result of several years' effort and planning, which represent the strong commitment RTD has made to this special segment of its vast community of riders.

The RTD Accessible Service Program has been in place for more than 10 years, beginning in 1974 when the RTD Board of Directors decided to equip all of its new buses with wheelchair lifts. In taking that action, the District became the nation's first transit agency to adopt a policy of full accessibility. To assist in developing the program, the Board established the Citizen's Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation (CACAT) in 1975. Today the committee continues to provide valuable input into further development of the program. (See CACAT article on page 4.)

In a recent development, the Board formed an Ad Hoc Committee on Accessible Transportation in 1983. Headed by RTD Director John F. Day, the committee helps draft new policy guidelines governing the District's Accessible Service Program. The committee also maintains open lines of communication with the handicapped community, reviews all phases of accessible service and makes recommendations to the Board.

"This action reaffirms the District's commitment to serve all persons who depend upon public transportation, whether they are able-bodied or in wheelchairs," Day notes.

Since 1974, RTD has implemented major components of the program to make riding the bus easier for elderly and disabled patrons. The following is a summary of major accomplishments:



■ **Expanded Service.** RTD now operates more than 1,800 wheelchair lift-equipped buses to serve the disabled. The District began this special service in 1980 with 84 buses. Today, the District provides accessible service on more than half of its fleet on 176 lines. Currently, RTD is evaluating the other lines in the 220-route system to determine which lines may need additional lift-equipped coaches.

*(Continued on page 2)*

#### *Premiere Issue*

#### **Our Goal: Accessible Information**

This is the premiere issue of *Access*, the quarterly newsletter highlighting the accomplishments and progress of the RTD Accessible Service Program. This first issue provides an introduction to RTD's effort to develop a totally accessible transit system.

In future editions, we will keep you abreast of issues, legislation and services relative to transportation for the elderly and disabled community. We hope you benefit from the information. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. —The Editor