Federal grant sought to purchase 30 New buses, more two-way radios

A Federal grant was sought by the District this month to purchase another 30 new buses and to equip all of the modern fleet with two-way radios.

Directors authorized an application to the U.S. Housing and Urban Development Department for a capital grant of matching funds toward purchase of the buses and 160 radio units.

The projects were estimated at a total of $1,117,000, of which the grant would cover half, or $558,500.

Cost of the new buses was estimated at $969,900, while purchase of the additional two-way radios, plus other equipment necessary to link the buses into the present communications systems, was estimated at $147,000.

Federal aid would enable the District to continue its program of adding new buses to keep pace with operational requirements and planned service extensions. The purchase would bring the number of modern buses to 432. The District currently operates a fleet of 682 buses.

The new buses have additional safety devices, recently imposed by the Federal government, including windshield washers, additional roof lights and side turn signals.

With the grant, the District would be able to link another 153 buses into the radio network and provide seven additional units for standby use.

Radios would be installed on all modern coaches, plus 21 of the 2100 series, manufactured in 1958 and later purchased from Key System Transit Lines in 1958 and considered essential to operational needs.

A basic fleet of 300 buses now are radio equipped.

The radio project would include an additional base station for a third channel, a tape recorder and playback for central dispatching headquarters plus other equipment.

The district's present radio system, financed in part by a capital HUD grant of not more than $134,500, has boosted operational efficiency to new highs, while providing instant action in emergency situations.

A governmental grant of $410,000 in matching funds enabled the District to continue with its equipment purchasing program last year by buying 30 buses.

If the contemplated purchase is completed, the District will have spent nearly $11,858,500 in new equipment since it commenced operations in 1960.
Passenger revenue showed a slight increase during August, with transbay riding continuing its growth pattern. Revenue collected on East Bay and transbay lines totaled $1,148,022, up $5,348 or .47 percent compared to revenue of $1,142,674 dropped in fare boxes in August, 1966. On East Bay lines, revenue was down .96 percent, while on transbay lines, revenue showed an increase of 2.32 percent.

The number of passengers carried during the month reached 4,048,028, a decrease of 23,468 riders or .58 percent below the 4,071,496 who rode during the same month, a year ago. The passenger count was down 1.7 percent on East Bay lines, but up 2 percent on transbay buses. Commute book sales also were up, totaling $193,458, an increase of .6 percent over year ago sales of $192,366.

Operation costs during the month totaled $1,384,715, an increase of $95,849 or 7.44 percent over year-ago costs of $1,288,866. The District operated 1,961,841 miles of service, an increase of 36,109 miles.

Total income of $1,536,682 was sufficient to cover operational costs and bond debt requirements, but left a deficit of $38,763 in depreciation reserves.

Contract for District fuel needs awarded

A contract of $532,000 was awarded to Shell Oil Company this month to supply fuels, lubricants and greases for AC Transit for another year. Main item in the contract, which will become effective Dec. 1, concerns 4,700,000 gallons of diesel fuel, at a cost of 10.57 cents a gallon, or $497,000. The new contract boosts diesel costs by .29 of a cent per gallon above present prices.

The District's Board of Directors went behind the scenes this month to inspect some of the machinery that keeps the wheels turning.

They made their inspection tour at Emeryville Division, where workers had "turned to" in an outstanding effort to present every activity in first-class order. Department heads and assistants took turns in explaining functions.

During the "red carpet" tour, the board members rode through the wash racks in a bus and took an interested, and careful, look at many of the departments, ranging from welding and the body shop to maintenance, purchase and stores, PBX/Information, schedules, central dispatch and the gilley room.

The inspection was designed as a "pilot" for future tours by visitors.
Crusade added
To driver's list

The "neighborliness" he retains from his native Kentucky hills — and the tragedies and loneliness which tempered his own life — led Joseph S. McKenney, 31, bus driver at Emeryville Division, to contribute far above his "fair share" to the current United Crusade drive.

In joining other workers contributing to the campaign, McKenney is adding to top-bracket donations he also makes to the Red Cross and Heart Association.

"I give to the Red Cross," McKenney explained simply, "because when I was with the Navy in Japan and my son died, they got me home. He was one year old. I give to the heart fund because my father died from heart disease.

"Then I give to the United Crusade because it helps the U.S.O. and I know how much the U.S.O. meant to me when I was in the Navy."

McKenney, a veteran of Korea and the "Suez Canal crisis," spent a year and a half in Japan and found the U.S.O. a place where he could hear "English spoken" and which provided entertainment and help for men overseas.

A bus driver for the past two years, McKenney finds, like other operators, that working with people makes him conscious of the "needs of people."

During the first three weeks of the drive, workers have contributed $10,344.

Welcome mat out for new employees

New District workers include:

Executive Offices
Public Relations: Christine Benscoter, Pittsburg, secretary.

Emeryville Division


Richmond Division
Maintenance: Douglas M. Brandy, Oakland, service employee.

Bus operators: C. G. Cartner, Richmond; W. J. Frink, Concord.

Seminary Division

Appeal filed on court rule upholding District right to regulate bus ads

A State Appellate Court ruling, which reinstated AC Transit's right to regulate the advertising it accepts for display on buses, was on appeal this month before the State Supreme Court.

Legal proceeding have continued through the courts since Oct., 1965, when District directors refused to accept a pacifist ad from Women for Peace, a Berkeley organization.

The appeal, filed by attorneys for the American Civil Liberties Union in behalf of Women for Peace, takes issue with a recent appellate court decision. The appellate court reversed a lower court injunction prohibiting the transit district from banning pacifist ads on its buses.

In its ruling, the appellate court upheld the District's position that it accepts only commercial advertising, except during times of local elections, when persons running for election or supporting issues actually on the ballot, may purchase political advertising space.

In the initial legal action, an Alameda County Superior Court judge issued a temporary injunction sought by the Women for Peace, finding it was a violation of constitutional rights for AC Transit to reject pacifist ads.

Personalized travel plan
Makes bus riding easy
For new area residents

A new personalized travel plan, designed to take the wandering and waiting out of bus service, was offered free this month to would-be riders.

All that's required was a note or a phone call to AC Transit Information.

The potential rider reports his address and travel needs. Information clerks then fill out an individual plan, using an attractive card which can be folded and kept in a pocket or purse. It lists bus service, stops, times of departure and arrivals. There's even an alternate if the rider misses the suggested bus.

The plan is being mailed to homes with a "Welcome Aboard" leaflet, printed in black on matching yellow stock. It tells of AC Transit's bonus services — and lists basic fares for the benefit of first-time riders.

The package also includes a route map, schedules for lines involved and a copy of the tour booklet, "Sunshine Trails."

The plan was developed particularly for newcomers to a neighborhood or an area and information on its availability was widely circulated. A sample of the leaflet and a letter explaining the plan were sent to industries and real estate firms in the service area. Similarly, the information was made available to city and county agencies and other appropriate sources.

The plan also is being highlighted in newspaper and radio advertising. Bus riders are "getting the word" through cards posted in all buses.

"STEP TO THE REAR" Bus transportation may be more informal in Vietnam, but it does indeed exist, according to this photographic report dispatched to the District by Robert Heisey, former Oakland Tribune reporter. Heisey, who reported on AC Transit activities before leaving for Saigon, described this "bus" as a three-wheeled vehicle, with nine passengers on the outside and an undetermined number inside.
It's a new safe driving record!

OVER THE TOP — Operators started a new safety contest in “high gear,” falling the system’s best average yet during September — 13,805 miles per accident. Both Emeryville and Richmond Divisions beat the safety goal of 12,900 miles and drivers collected the traditional treat of coffee and doughnuts. At Emeryville, where the record reached 14,844 miles per accident, drivers had J. D. Goodman, transportation superintendent, doing the honors. At Richmond, operators turned in 14,781 miles per accident and collected their reward from superintendent Nicholas P. Alvoros. Everything was roses — except for “Nick’s” derby and cigar. He presented corsages to women drivers, including Mary McMahan, who helped with the treat. The roses came from the garden of Operator W. R. Papworth. Driver W. L. Prather helped decorate.

Death comes to veteran schedule analyst

L. D. Cogswell, 65, analyst in the scheduling department and a veteran of 43 years of service, died on Sept. 26 after a brief illness.

In more than four decades with AC Transit and predecessor companies, Mr. Cogswell had exceptional experience in two phases of operations.

He went to work for Key System in April, 1924 and after a brief “breaking-in” as a conductor on the street cars, became one of the early motor coach operators.

It was while he was driving on the 35th Ave. line that he met the girl student, Edna, who became his wife in 1929. She survives, as does a son, Edmond, and three granddaughters.

After Mr. Cogswell lost the sight of an eye in 1937, he became a clerk in the operating department, moving into scheduling in 1942. As a schedule analyst, he supervised the processing and distribution of general statistics, including the daily running sheets or “paddles” for the District’s bus drivers.

Retirement Planned

An ardent gardener, Mr. Cogswell also was adept with power tools and was making plans for retirement hobby projects at his home, 5926 Mauritanian Ave., Oakland, as well as for traveling, when he contracted his fatal illness.

Death also came last month to John E. Waller, 68, of 4352 Virginia Ave., Oakland. He went to work for the Key System in 1938 in the operating department and switched over to motor coach operating in 1958. Mr. Waller retired in April, 1963.

Budding artist starts at top

Stories of artists — starving and unrecognized on the “Left Bank” of the Seine — may have to be rewritten in the light of what happened to Mrs. Leah “Lee” Kiesel, an operator at AC Transit’s PBX Information Center.

Lee participated in her first show at the recent Albany Art Festival and won the Mayor’s Award. She sold 12 of her 15 entries, and the work currently is on display at the Albany City Hall.

Her place in the winner’s circle on the “first time out” came for unusual yarn and twig wall decorations called “God’s Eyes.”

Lee herself had entered the decorations as “Psychedelic Squares,” but they were shown under “Oil Paintings.”

“One of the men in charge admitted he didn’t know how to spell ‘psychedelic,’” Lee explained.

A branch of art

One of the colorful patterns took the eye of Albany Mayor Richard Clark and was chosen for his award. It was purchased by the Albany Chamber of Commerce and now is on display with other winners.

Lee, who also does pen and ink drawings, collages and oil paintings at her home, 1329 Northside Ave., Berkeley, became one of the few experts at “God’s Eyes” by peeking.

She saw the first example of the art in a shop on Telegraph Ave.; peered long enough to determine it consisted of a yarn spiderweb woven around branches and went home and made one herself.

Different Patterns

Each pattern is different, according to the shape and the “give” of the branches, and how it comes out is always a surprise to Lee. Lee believes the name of the decoration comes from the fact that you start with an “eye” of wrapped yarn and work out in a changing pattern.

All of Lee’s family are artistic, including her two daughters, Mary Christine, 10, and Kimberly Sue, 8. She’s adding to her own skill by taking art classes on her days off.

Lee is especially proud of another accomplishment. She went back to school recently and completed her high school studies. In June, she received her diploma — with her children among the pleased audience.

D. A. McKinnis retires

D. A. McKinnis, 55, motor coach operator, on sick leave since May, 1965, was granted early retirement benefits effective Oct. 1. McKinnis, of 3833 Elston Ave., Oakland, went to work on the one-man street cars in 1946 and became a bus driver in 1948. He had worked most of the time at Emeryville Division.
At an adjourned regular meeting Sept. 27, the Board of Directors:
* Authorized Treasurer-Controller and District Secretary to accept nominations to American Transit Association committees and participate in meetings of respective groups, on motion of Director Rinehart.
* Authorized General Manager to execute lease for general and executive office facilities in Latham Square Bldg., on motion of Director Bettencourt.
* Approved additional expenditures of $3500 for remodeling costs at Richmond Division, on motion of Director Coburn.
* Denied request for additional $500 in subscription to Oakland Chamber of Commerce, on motion of Director Bettencourt.

At a regular meeting Oct. 11, the Board of Directors:
* Accepted low bid of Shell Oil for fuel and petroleum products, subject to confirmation of specifications, on motion of Director Coburn.
* Denied request for additional $500 in subscription to Oakland Chamber of Commerce, on motion of Director Bettencourt.

Urban Development for capital grant toward purchase of 30 new buses and 160 two-way mobile bus radios, on motion of Director Rinehart. (See story, Pg. 1.)
* Authorized General Manager to prepare specifications for purchase of new buses and radios and upon approval of application with HUD, to advertise for bids, on Motion of Director Rinehart.

**District ad campaign ‘Best in West’**

For the second time in four years, the District's advertising campaign has been judged one of the "Best in the West" in the annual competition of the American Advertising Federation.

Advertising campaigns of all types were entered in the competition. Experts in the field selected 10 for the special award, including AC Transit.