W. D. Normann, Golden Wheel winner
Twenty-year record of safe driving
Fares, tax rate kept at same level

AC Transit will keep the same fares and property tax rate during the coming fiscal year, even though expenses are expected to increase 4.8 percent.

The final operating estimate approved by the Board of Directors totaled $19,748,000, an increase of $898,700 over the 1967-68 fiscal period.

Despite escalating costs, the District expects to end the current fiscal period with a net surplus of $12,500, an increase of $898,700 over the amount of funds expended during the 1967-68 fiscal period.

An increase in assessed property valuations also is expected. Additional savings, totaling approximately $280,000 annually, will be realized from recent State legislation reducing diesel fuel taxes paid by the District.

Total operating expenses reflect a 7.9 percent increase in the cost of labor. The labor bill, including fringe benefits, accounts for 75.4 percent of the budget.

Although the tax rate remains the same individual tax bills in Alameda and Contra Costa counties are being adjusted under assessment equalization formula required by State law.

In Alameda County, the new tax rate will be 19.7 cents per $100 of assessed valuation, a slight increase over the 19.5 cent rate in effect last year. The Contra Costa County rate was set at 17.3 cents, a decrease of nearly one cent below last year's levy.

Veteran driver honored for record
Behind wheel and with customers

A flip of a coin put William "Doug" Norman, 66, in second spot in seniority with AC Transit, but a long safe driving record has given him a number one place—first driver to tally 20 years without a chargeable accident.

Norman's years of service as an outstanding driver—and the District's "safest" operator, won him the Golden Wheel Award for Distinguished Service this month.

"Doug" was presented with his award by Alan L. Bingham, general manager, at a meeting of the Board of Directors, and congratulated for superior rating as to ability, trustworthiness and the manner in which he treats his customers.

The Golden Wheel winner tallied his 20 years of safe driving record in February and now is well embarked into the 21st year.

According to G. G. Wadsworth, safety engineer, Norman is a "real pro," who knows "how to drive."

Mechanics of driving

"He knows all the mechanics of good driving and he's intelligent and alert enough to practice them. He has the kind of blank pages on his safety record that we enjoy looking at."

"Norman just does an all-around good job."

The operator, who lives at 3843 Coolidge Ave., Oakland, has his own answers for what makes a safe driver. He believes it's "just using common sense."

Safe driving is driving for other people. You must have complete alertness at all times and stay on your toes," Norman said.

He started to work for Key System as a street car conductor Dec. 21, 1925, at the same time as veteran driver J. R. Hahn. The two flipped a coin to decide seniority and Norman lost. He's now next to Hahn with the longest service record.

Norman switched from streetcars to buses in 1927 and with 41 years behind the wheel, is one of the "old pros" among operators. His most jarring memories, however, date back to streetcar days and the motorman who was such a "fast operator he was cited for speeding 55 miles an hour on University Ave. in Berkeley. That was in 1926, imagine!"

The same motorman made such sudden starts, passengers would be thrown against the windows and occasionally, one would put a shoulder through the glass, Norman recalls.

One of the driver's favorite hobbies is tying trout flies, which he sells or gives away—or uses himself on fishing expeditions. He plans to retire next year and is giving thought now to going into business, selling coins.

An appropriate occupation, he thinks, for a long-time bus driver.
Who's a Super Pro? 
Contest underway to Test driving skill

A day off—with pay—will be the reward for the District's top "super safety pro" in a new contest which rolled off in high late this month.

The "Skill is my business" contest was open to all bus drivers at each division. Three winners will be picked every two weeks for the day-off prize.

Banners announced the contest, while posters carried entry blanks and the simple contest rules. The entry blanks featured a traffic situation with three possible answers. The driver is to select an answer and drop it in a contest container.

At this point, luck enters the game.

Youth starts own fleet with toy bus

One of the happiest boys in town this month was Collin Jones, 14, of 231 Makin Rd., Oakland, who won the District's "rarest" prize—a toy bus—in a drawing at the "Toy Fair" staged by television station KBHK, channel 44.

AC Transit participated in the fair to promote the sale of its new youth fare tickets, developed as part of the "Ready Fare" plan which has eliminated monetary stock carried by bus drivers.

Although the District had only five bus models, it decided to give away one of the coveted toys to help call attention to the children fare tickets. At the same time, the possibility of having additional model buses manufactured was under investigation.

Collin, son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Jones and a student at James Madison Junior High, picked up his prize at an appropriate setting—in front of a real coach at Seminary Division.
The bus service has been very good. I like it better this way (no money on buses). It speeds up the transportation, and the bus drivers have not appeared to be so harassed. They like it, too! I asked all of the drivers. I ride two buses to work. I hope it continues to be so good!

Florence Skeer
Oakland

... a burglary occurred in this city and the person believed responsible was observed by a gardener ... he gave chase ... and stopped and asked M. M. McMillan, coach driver 1717, to radio police assistance. This was promptly done by Mr. McMillan. Mr. McMillan was able to identify a photograph of the suspect which enabled this department to apprehend him ... I feel you are fortunate in having a driver as alert and helpful as Mr. McMillan. I ask that you commend him for his fine assistance ...

Louis E. Guidier
Chief of Police
Piedmont, Calif.

... Driver #368 (H. L. Hornage) took a load of cerebral palsied youngsters from the United Cerebral Palsy Center to Tilden Park ... and went with the youngsters on their hike. There were not enough people to push wheelchairs, so the driver helped us in this way the whole day. It was a very tiring hike and the day was hot, but with this gentleman's help, it was a great success ... Please extend to him our thanks.

Dale Dawson
Oakland

... I want to take this opportunity to commend the AC Transit Company for the splendid service that I have experienced for over the past several years, when we have used charter services to bus our many student groups. I would particularly like to commend Mr. Russ Benninger for his constant interest and assistance whenever we have needed your services.

E. Rollin Silflies, director
Music Recreation Program
Oakland

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Off and rolling on United Crusade; Campaign aims for full participation

Workers had additional reason to give their "Fair Share" to the United Crusade this month as campaign leaders aimed for 100 percent participation in the annual drive for funds to support 176 Bay area Crusade agencies.

Alan L. Bingham, general manager, set the keynote for this year's participation at a "kick-off" dinner for departmental representatives.

"This is a time when management and labor can link arms to help people and their needs," he said.

"Our physical and mental problems have increased and will continue to increase. The need is great.

Community help

A tremendous segment of the community has come to our help with support of the "Ready-Fair" plan to assure the safety of our drivers and passengers.

"This is the year, perhaps more than other years, when we should extend our support to the public in return, by giving a "Ready-Fair" share to the United Crusade," the general manager declared.

C. E. "Ed" Pedersen, retired principal of the Berkeley Adult School, as dinner speaker for the Crusade, pointed to the facts which "tell the story" on last year's campaign results.

All benefit

One out of every three persons in the area benefits directly from the United Crusade—and almost everyone benefits in some way, he pointed out.

In 1967, the Crusade helped 360,000 youths, 295,000 senior citizens, 65,045 families and children and an untold number of service men and victims of disaster.

"Many people need help to help themselves," Pedersen said. "Thousands were overlooked last year because of lack of funds."

The drive again will concentrate on participation by all departments and on "Fair Share" giving of one hour's pay per month for those earning less than $10,000 a year and one percent of annual income for all earning more than that amount.
Systems "go" on bus crime study

The study project being piloted by AC Transit into feasible methods for reducing assaults and robberies of bus drivers, expanded into national scope this month with "all systems go."

A report on the project, launched by the District with financial assistance from the U.S. Government, was featured at the opening day session of the annual meeting of the American Transit Association in Cleveland, O. on Sept. 16.

Taking part in the presentation and making the introductions, was George M. Taylor, project director and assistant general manager for administration.

Meeting highlights

Dr. Gordon E. Misner, visiting associate professor, School of Criminology, University of California, spoke on the project from the viewpoint of the criminologist. Dr. Paul Gray, senior research engineer, Systems Evaluation Department, Stanford Research Institute, gave the viewpoint of the systems analyst.

The first meeting of the advisory council also took place at Cleveland, preceding the ATA convention.

Dr. Misner and Dr. Gray, was Dr. Gordon E. Misner, visiting associate professor, School of Criminology, University of California, who is serving as consultant.

A federal grant of $206,000 is covering two-thirds of total project costs. The study to determine most promising methods for reducing bus crimes is expected to benefit the nation's entire transit industry.

No more highsings
From Supervisor Smith

Supervisor L.E. Smith, 68, who has waved hundreds of buses to their loading zones at the Transbay Transit Terminal in San Francisco over the years, plans to direct things on a quieter level now in retirement.

Smith, who turns in his brass effective Oct. 1, has been signaling buses at the terminal "since about 1938. They were still running trains upstairs when I was made supervisor and went to work on swinging the buses around the loop in front of the building."

The transit excursions are suggested as fun trips, comfortable and unharrassed. They are presented with the invitation to "park your cares . . . relax in the sun, wander through the hills and look down on the Bay . . . ."

The edition features 40 pages of riding ideas, including new attractions. It will be available at Chambers of Commerce and other informational locations, as well as through Transit Information.

Equipment to give buses cleaner look

A brighter, cleaner look for buses was in prospect this month as the District moved to acquire vacuum-type cleaners and a modern, brush-around bus washer for installation at Seminary Division. The cyclone type cleaners will automatically "inhale" papers, debris and dust from the fronts and interiors, providing more efficient daily cleaning of the inside of coaches.

Plans call for installation on each of the three fuel lines, with a common, elevated trash house.

The wrap-around washer will give buses a complete brush bath, including the front and rear sections, which presently have to be washed by hand.

Richmond operators set Safe driving record; Top goal for fifth time

Bus drivers at Richmond Division have chalked up a new all-time record for infrequency of accidents, giving passengers their safest ride yet.

The operators drove 18,817 miles per accident in August, surpassing the record of 18,601 miles set by the same division in September, 1965.

Richmond drivers will collect another free treat of coffee and doughnuts for surpassing the safety goal for the fifth time this year. Emeryville operators also topped the goal of 13,000 miles per accident with a tally of 14,508 miles, to share the treat.

Let's Go Exploring

"Sunshine Trails"
Tour booklet issued

A new issue of "Sunshine Trails," the District's popular tour booklet, rolled from the presses this month with a bright "face" and a different approach to adventuring by bus.

The booklet, produced with the theme of "Let's Go Exploring," features trips that can be made within the service area with different buses, a "bit of walking and enough time to enjoy a sightseeing holiday."

For installation at Seminary Division. The cyclone type cleaners will automatically "inhale" papers, debris and dust from the interiors, providing more efficient daily cleaning of the inside of coaches.

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Win a wife

New advertising campaign gives the word: Ride the bus. Save.

How much do you save by riding the bus? Enough for a mink . . . and a trip to Hawaii . . .

A new advertising campaign, to be launched by the District near the end of the month, will show what can be done with money saved by riding AC Transit. The program, designed to lure motorists from automobiles onto buses, will be built around the costs of operating a private car for city travel.

Copy, based on recent studies by U.S. Bureau of Roads, will show the costs of operating a car approximates 12 cents a mile. What can be done with that money will be the theme of the campaign.

The first of the series will carry the headline, “Win a Wife.” The illustration will show a young wife registering joy as her husband places a mink stole around her shoulders. The copy will say: “Win a wife. Ride the bus. Save. Buy her mink.”

The message will appear in newspaper ads, both daily and weeklies, and on large outdoor painted bulletins, 60 feet by 20 feet. The photograph will be painted in full color. Three radio stations will carry the same message.

Following the “Win a wife” theme, another “glamor” approach will be taken.

The large billboards will feature a color scene of Hawaii, with a bus in the foreground, and the line “Ride the bus . . . to Hawaii . . . on what you save riding AC Transit.” Newspaper ads will take the same approach in black and white.

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The new campaign was developed by Scott-Hermansky advertising agency.

Cal State students get own timetable

Students at California State College at Hayward not only are able to ride direct to the campus for morning classes with AC Transit, they have their own “psychedelic” timetable to aid them “take a bus to school.”

The schedule, printed in shades of red and purple, details lines and time points for service connections with the main campus Line 91A. Included is the schedule for new direct service provided by extending a trip on Line 30 express from West Grand Ave. and Broadway in Oakland direct to the college, in time for 8 o’clock classes.

Pensioned driver dies

Luther L. Wilson, 63, of 1114 Evelyn Ave., Albany, pensioned June 1, 1967, with plans of “taking it easy for awhile,” died on August 31. He entered service in 1945, spent last driving years on the Treasure Island line. He worked out of Emeryville Division.
Puzzle solved; work of artist identified

Transit historians may have wondered “Who was McSorley?” the boy who sketched trolleys, cable cars and horse cars around the turn of the century, but not his many friends who still live in the East Bay.

Everybody, it seemed, knows the young artist was the late William T. McSorley, veteran Alameda County court reporter, whose skill with a pencil was well known to childhood friends.

The question as to McSorley’s identity, asked in Transit Times and in a subsequent article in the Oakland Tribune, brought a deluge of answers.

McSorley drew pictures of trolley cars on slates and in his own scrap book, some of those friends remembered. His brother, A. Sterling McSorley of Walnut Creek, also recalled visits to the old car barn at 14th Ave. and East 18th St. to look at equipment.

Historians consider McSorley’s drawings of early equipment extremely accurate and an important record because of car numbers and exact detail.

Charles A. Smallwood, foreman at the Cable Car repair shops in San Francisco, found the scrap book in a second hand store in Oakland some 30 years ago, but had no clue to the identity of the young artist. The book contained only the name: “W. McSorley” and the date: “May 4, 1900.”

It was only after Transit Times asked the question that it developed McSorley was well known indeed. Superior Judges Folger Emerson and William J. McGuiness were among those who recalled McSorley as a dexterous court reporter, son of a one-time Oakland police captain. McSorley, who died in 1940 at the age of 48, now is credited—28 years later—as a major contributor to bay area transportation history.