Alert at 90

Archibald’s philosophy of life. “I try to sit down at the end of each day,” he says, “and think about two words—help and hurt. I ask myself if I have helped anyone today? Or have I hurt anyone? I always hope I can say I have helped someone.”

His helpfulness during his lifetime is reflected in the multitude of civic activities he has been involved in, ranging from Chairman of the Citizens Committee for Urban Renewal in San Francisco to Director and Vice President for the National Safety Council.

Commuting 65 years

The bus, usually driven by AC Transit operator AC Transit operator A.C. Giuliani, took him to San Francisco for a full day’s work. Giuliani says of his long-time passenger, “He is a fine gentleman, and always very friendly.”

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Commuting 65 years

After more than 65 years of commuting on public transit, Archibald is trying yet another form of getting to work. He is using BART to get to San Francisco.

“I’m looking forward to it,” he says. “I look forward to most things.”

Dial-A-Ride comes to Richmond

AC Transit now has a bus that makes house calls.

Dial-A-Ride, an innovative and experimental system which picks up riders at their doors and delivers them direct to their destinations, began operating in a five square mile area of the city of Richmond on September 16.

To call a bus, a resident of the Dial-A-Ride service area phones 237-7777, gives his address, phone number, destination, number of people in his party and the time he wants to be picked up.

Controllers then determine which bus is headed in the caller’s direction at the time he wants to go. Via two-way radio, a bus is assigned to the pick-up.

During the first day of operation, Dial-A-Ride buses carried 603 passengers, boosting that to 574 the next day and 633 the third day.

Compared with other dial-a-ride operations elsewhere in the United States, these figures are impressive.

Some smaller cities carried fewer than 100 patrons per day during start-ups while Haddonfield, New Jersey — comparable with Richmond in population — carried 266 riders on its first day and took six weeks to reach the 500 mark.
Escalating costs force directors
To raise local property taxes

Property taxes were raised by the Board of Directors on Aug. 30 to cover the escalating expenses of providing public transportation in 11 East Bay cities and across the Bay Bridge to San Francisco.

A new consolidated property tax rate of 53.6 cents per $100 will be levied in Alameda County and 51.3 cents levied in Contra Costa County. The rates are different to equalize different assessment ratios in the two counties.

The new consolidated rate is an increase of 22.5 cents over the rate of 31.1 cents per $100 of assessed valuation which was in effect for the past three years.

Commenting on the “sad necessity” of raising taxes, William J. Bettencourt, president of the board, said directors would be aggressively campaigning for government operating subsidies for transit so the property tax could be lowered by the 1975-76 fiscal year.

The new property tax is expected to raise $17,154,000 of the District’s projected expenditure of $44,797,000 for the current fiscal year.

Operating revenue, including fare box income, is estimated at $15,149,000. Due to the strike, passenger revenue is expected to be off 25 percent for the year.

Aid from Federal grants and State sales tax revenue totals $10,986,000. Wages and fringe benefits account for more than $30 million of expected expenditures.

Even with the tax increase, the District will have to take over $1 million in funds from uncommitted cash reserves and equipment replacement funds to help offset the deficit, according to General Manager Alan L. Bingham.

AC Transit did consider raising East Bay fares as a source of added income, the transit executive said.

If East Bay adult fares were doubled, from a basic 25 cents to 50 cents, revenue would have been increased by $1.4 million but 5.5 million or 33 1/2 percent of riders would have been lost, according to an engineering formula developed from the experience of other transit properties.

New contract wins approval

A new, three-year contract between AC Transit and Division 192, Amalgamated Transit Union, went into effect this month, maintaining drivers’ position as the highest paid bus drivers in the United States.

Drivers, mechanics and clerks came back to work September 1 after a two-month strike.

Drivers’ pay

Drivers returned to work at $6.85 per hour, an immediate increase of 23 cents per hour above their pre-strike hourly rate of $6.62.

The new contract also gives drivers another 22 cents per hour on July 1, 1975, and an additional 20 cents per hour effective July 1, 1976, bringing their base hourly wage at that time to $7.27.

Employees in other departments also received 23 cents per hour raises. New hourly rates in the Maintenance Department are: machinists $8.13; mechanics “AA” $8.03; mechanics “A” $7.93.

Clerical employees’ new rates range from $5.92 to $8.04 per hour.

Second and third year increases of 22 and 20 cents per hour also will be granted to all union employees. Non-union personnel will receive comparable percentage increases.

Cost-of-living

A cost-of-living clause which resulted in a $1.13 per hour increase under the old contract has been eliminated. A new clause provides for escalator increases to be paid quarterly.

Starting with the month of September, 1974, as the base, each 1/4 increase in the Federal Government’s Consumer Price Index (CPI) will result in a one cent per hour pay hike for employees, with the first hikes paid late in January, 1975.

Thereafter, quarterly adjustments on the 1/4 basis will be paid in April, July and October, 1975, and again in January, April, July and October, 1976.

After that, using the month of September, 1976, as a base, the formula will convert to a straight percentage increase following changes in the CPI. For example, a one percent increase in the CPI would result in a one percent increase in hourly wages effective late in January, 1977. Similar adjustments would be made in April of that year.

Improvements in fringe benefits were included in the package.

The ratio of the district’s to the employee’s share of dental costs will be changed from 80:20 to 90:10, effective March 1, 1975. Employees’ present $35 deductible is to be reduced to $25.

Sick leave and vacation

There were improvements in sick leave and vacation clauses and two new holidays, for a new total of ten days per year, were added.

With their return to work, employees received a “floating” holiday in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and, effective July 1, 1976, each employee’s birthday becomes his tenth holiday.

The new contract also provides for a number of changes in working conditions, including the elimination of overtimes and the resultant penalty points.

Pension increase

Pensioners received a $10 per month increase in payments immediately.

Effective January 1, 1976, pensioners on the rolls and those who retire between July 1, 1974, and June 30, 1975, will receive an additional $30 per month.

On January 1, 1977, pensioners then on the rolls and those who retire between July 1, 1974, and June 30, 1976, will have another $10 added to their checks each month.

Benefits for both union and non-union employees will cost the district an additional $1,965,000 for the current fiscal year while the total costs of the three-year package have been estimated to be $14,667,000.
Candidates file for AC Transit board

A total of 13 East Bay residents have qualified as candidates for seats on the AC Transit Board of Directors. Four positions will be filled at the November election.

Three incumbent directors filed qualifying papers. One other incumbent, Colonel Robert M. Copeland of Berkeley, chose not to run for another term and will retire from the board after 18 years.

The incumbents

The incumbents are: John McDonnell, Ward III, 5109 Cochrane Ave., Oakland, a nurseryman; William J. Bettencourt, Ward IV, 1213 Estudillo Ave., Hayward, a florist; Chester C. McGuire, Jr., 140 Fairlawn Rd., Hayward, a farmer; and Michael Brooks, 2693 - 68th Ave., Oakland, public administrator.

Miss Fujii will be opposed by: Jerri Bigelow, 20370 Wisteria St., Castro Valley, listed as director community affairs; and Kimi Fujii, Ward V, 25072 Soto Rd., Hayward, a nurseryman. Running against Bettencourt are: William J. Betten
court, Ward IV, 1213 Estudillo Ave., Hayward, a florist.

Running for Copeland's at-large seat are: Claude Daughtry, 601 Arlington Ave., Berkeley, who lists his occupation as appraiser-engineer; Chester C. McGuire, Jr. 140 Fairlawn Dr., Berkeley, professor city planning; and Tom Miles, 3251 Grove St., Oakland, lawyer.

Postponement given Fremont bus system

Fremont's interim bus system has been postponed by city officials until after Nov. 5, when voters will consider a ballot measure calling for annexation to AC Transit.

City officials said they wanted to wait until that time because of possible confusion over the ballot proposition and temporary service.

Regardless of the outcome of the election, Fremont has contracted with AC Transit to provide bus service for one year. Full service, including connections to BART/Union City and BART/Fremont, is scheduled Nov. 11. The ballot measure, which will also appear before Newark voters, calls for formation of a separate district from the current AC Transit area, but with operations to be handled by AC Transit. A maximum property tax rate of 33 cents per $100 assessed valuation to cover Fremont-Newark operations is included. AC Transit's present district will continue to operate separately under its own consolidated tax rate.

The ballot measures require a simple majority for approval.

Originally the Fremont interim system was scheduled to begin on a limited basis July 15, with full service slated for the Fall. The bus strike, however, caused a revision in plans.

A bus system in the two communities would provide service for nearly 150,000 residents.

Articulated buses get street testing

"It looks like a giant snake!"
"It's an overgrown caterpillar!"
"That sure is strange. It bends in the middle."

Passenger reactions to two articulated buses tested this month by AC Transit ranged from surprise to mild amusement.

"You have to wonder what AC Transit will come up with next," said one rider.

What has the public commenting are two double-length, European-built buses which traveled the streets of East Bay cities and on commute lines to San Francisco.

AC Transit experimented with the two extra-long buses to determine the feasibility of using them, or similar types, in regular revenue operation on heavily traveled lines.

Rider opinion will play an important part in AC Transit's consideration to buy an initial 30 articulated buses. Future estimates indicate as many as 156 articulated units could be needed.

General rider reaction is positive to the unusual looking buses. Passengers have expressed their approval of wider doors, larger window space for better sight seeing, and smoothness of the ride. Some have indicated, however, they believe American-made bus seats are more comfortable than those on the European units.

Opinions of bus drivers and maintenance personnel also have been optimistic. "I think these kinds of buses handle just as easy, if not easier, than regular coaches," said Donald F. Dean, after having operated one of the buses. "They corner very nicely."

Instructor Ralph H. Alcock says, "I think the articulated buses are just great. And the passengers seem to think so, too."

The two buses, one built by Volvo for Stockholm, Sweden, and the other by Maschinenfabrik Augsburg-Nuernberg (M. A. N.) unit from Munich, West Germany, traveled East Bay and transbay routes during nearly two weeks of testing.

The Volvo bus is 60 feet long and seats 75 people. The red and grey units turns on a shorter radius than the traditional 40-foot coach and bends around corners with ease because of the accordion-like middle section which connects the two separate parts.

The M. A. N. bus is 54 feet long and seats 63 passengers inside its light yellow and red striped exterior.

The buses cost in the $80,000-to-$85,000 range on the European market. The appearance of the two articulated buses is not the first time AC Transit has given the traveling public an extra-long bus to look at. The District has successfully experimented with its 77-passenger articulated bus called "The Freeway Train" for more than eight years.
At a regular meeting Sept. 11, the Board of Directors:
• Authorized the attorney for the District to attend A. T. A. conference in Washington, D. C., on motion of Director Rinehart.
* * *
At an adjourned regular meeting Aug. 30, the Board of Directors:
• Approved a memorandum of understanding between the District and Amalgamated Transit Union, Division 192, and authorized the General Manager to execute the memorandum, on motion of Director McDonnell. (See story, Pg. 5)
• Approved resolution fixing property tax rates in the District for fiscal 1974-75, on motion of Director Rinehart. (See story, Pg. 4)
• Approved extension of sightseeing tours through Sept. 29, on motion of Director Nakadegawa.
* * *
At an adjourned regular meeting Aug. 28, the Board of Directors:
• Authorized the advertising and seeking of bids for purchase of office machines and equipment, on motion of Director Rinehart.
• Authorized the General Manager to request proposals from consulting firms for the development of a master plan of bus maintenance, service and garage facilities for the District, on motion of Director Berk.
• Accepted finance committee report outlining estimated operating costs for fiscal 1974-75, on motion of Director Rinehart. (See story, Pg. 4)

Roberta Newell appointed to data processing

Roberta D. Newell, formerly Data Processing Supervisor for the East Bay Regional Parks District, has been appointed Data Processing Supervisor for AC Transit.

She replaces John L. Ebbinga, who left to go into private business after nearly nine years with the District.

The 35-year-old new Supervisor is a graduate of the IBM data processing training center and served as Supervisor of Accounting before taking over the data processing position with East Bay Regional Parks.

The daughter of a Navy officer, she was graduated from San Lorenzo High.

Currently, she and her 7-year-old daughter make their home in Oakland.