Bus of tomorrow unveiled
I would like to call your attention to a particularly courteous operator that you have in your employ Bardi Darcey. I refer to your Transit Information desk. Most of your personnel are helpful and courteous at all times but I feel Bardi stands out as an exemplary example.

Recently I was trying to determine how to get to a destination which involved several complex transfers and different buses. Bardi never lost her aplomb in determining times and bus numbers for me, and I probably never would have gotten there on time had it not been for this young lady's assistance.

I would like to encourage you to continue hiring people who are able to serve the public (a thankless job) in such a cheerful manner.

My wife and I — both over 79 years old — like very much to go to San Francisco with the excellent F bus and will use these opportunities still more.

Hartwig Haymann Berkeley

I write to register a complaint about one of your drivers. Although he waited for me to board the bus at the East Bay Terminal, after I thanked him warmly for waiting, he launched into an exposition on women's liberation, how women were taking away jobs, how he wouldn't stand for it — all in a very nasty tone of voice.

A few minutes later, he launched into a tale about how two girls picked his pockets, a story directed at no one in the bus but again told in a very unpleasant tone of voice.

This may seem like a minor complaint, but AC Transit drivers are usually noted for their courtesy and politeness, and such rudeness at an early hour in the morning left me with an unpleasant taste in my mouth.

Ann F. Hasse Berkeley

Linda S. Keating Hayward

It is with great pleasure that we learn that the bus drive to San Francisco is now considerably reduced for senior citizens. I wish to express our appreciation and thanks for this action.

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I would like to encourage you to continue hiring people who are able to serve the public (a thankless job) in such a cheerful manner.

Bardi stands out as an exemplary consumer of your services. General Motors indicated the prototype found it had high potential in improved passenger comfort and reduced maintenance costs.

At a meeting Oct. 8, Board members authorized General Manager Alan L. Bingham to proceed with steps involved in acquiring 41 of the new model coaches.

Federal funding for new buses already has been granted, but approval will need to be obtained from the Urban Mass Transportation Administration to buy the 40-foot buses under the new specifications.

The newly designed bus has been designated RTS-2 for Rapid Transit Services. General Motors indicated the bus would cost a minimum of $75,000. The first new buses are expected to roll off the assembly line late next summer and the District could be among the first properties to take delivery.

The new design features expanded viewing, with large tinted windows made of acrylic. The bus would have automatically controlled air conditioning and heating, to keep the interior at a desired temperature and a soft fluorescent interior lighting system.

The capacity model is 40-feet long and seats 47 passengers. In the future it will be available in 35 and 30-foot lengths.

Seats are wall-mounted and cantilevered, allowing for unobstructed floor space. The exterior is made of fiberglass panels, which can be removed in sections if necessary for repairs. The body structure is of stainless steel.

COVER BOX—The "new look" AC Transit coach, below, a familiar sight on local streets since 1961, may be replaced next year by the bus above, the nation's first completely new production transit bus design since 1959.

Exterior noise levels have been substantially reduced over current buses. A new suspension system and automatic transmission make for smoother riding and handling, plus improved performance, according to the manufacturer.

A number of features simplify maintenance and repair, at significant cost savings.
Seminary still leads in safety

Seminary Division continues to lead the way in number of consecutive months the safety goal has been reached as it attained the level of 17 straight months in September.

Richard and Emeryville both "beat the bogy" also with Emeryville only one month behind Seminary at 16 months.

The safety goal is 13,250 miles driven per accident.

Seminary's mileage was 15,717 miles per accident. Richmond attained 18,365 and Emeryville scored 15,071.

Students applaud aggressive campaign

To win greater campus ridership

According to both students and administration personnel, AC Transit out did itself this year in promoting public transit on the University of California-Berkeley campus during registration week.

"It was just marvelous and we couldn't be happier," Dorothy Walker, senior administrative analyst, said of the saturation campaign.

And her remarks were echoed by an unusual number of students who took the time to contact District headquarters complimenting "the aggressive attempt to get students to use the bus."

The campaign was marked by coordinated efforts between Cal and the District in posting 150 maps of Berkeley area service throughout the campus area.

Three large plexiglass maps, standing five-feet by three-feet, also were strategically located.

"Use the bus instead"

One was placed in the Parking Permits office along with plastic holders containing bus timetables and a brochure detailing routes. Office workers encouraged those seeking parking permits "to take the bus instead."

Another rack of timetables and brochures also was placed in the Student Union.

Wood to the gratitude of many disoriented freshmen, maintenance worker Ben Franzini and bus driver Vincent Groves, who have received "Communication" training, spent six days explaining service from a table located in the campus crossroads — Sproul Plaza.

Armed with crate loads of schedules, brochures, pamphlets and backed by one of the larger plexiglass maps, Groves and Franzini were deluged with interested inquiries.

Small buses for Fremont/Newark, 120 additional shelters approved

Bus passengers in Fremont and Newark can expect to be riding in new small buses next Spring.

And transit riders throughout Alameda and Contra Costa counties will have weather protection and benches for seating under expansion of a shelter program.

Approval to seek bids for small buses and another 120 passenger shelters was given by the Board of Directors Sept. 24.

Specifications call for the purchase of 23 small buses, 25 feet long, for use in mini-fixed route service during commute hours and Dial-A-Ride service during off peak periods in the Fremont-Newark area. Service will start after equipment is delivered.

The contract will include an option for the purchase of 34 additional small buses for future service expansion into other areas of Alameda and Contra Costa counties.

The price of the small bus was estimated at $45,000, including air conditioning, automatic transmission and special covering for walls and ceiling to help lower noise levels.

Solicitation of bids for the 120 bus shelters will permit further implementation of the program to provide weather protection at key bus boarding and transferring locations throughout the East Bay.

Seventy-five shelters will be allocated to Fremont-Newark; 30 shelters are for suburban service to BART stations and 15 shelters for Concord, where contract bus service began Sept. 8.

The shelters will be the same design as the 60 shelters purchased for the East Bay cities and currently being installed in locations from Richmond to Hayward.

Federal grants already have been approved to fund 80 percent of purchase price of equipment, shelters and related items.

Remainder of costs will be covered by sales tax funds allocated to the District by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission.

Operator reaches quarter century safe-driving

Operator Warner Salberg joined an elite cadre of professionals this month when he reached his 25th year of safe driving.

Some 70 co-workers, as well as his wife, Marjorie, were present Oct. 2 when Transportation Manager Dale Goodman presented Salberg with a pin signifying 25 long years of driving without a chargeable accident.

A large cake was divided in the gilly room after speeches of congratulation were made.

Salberg was born in Turlock Jan. 27, 1913 and joined the District's predecessor company on March 17, 1941, working on street cars.

He transfered to Seminary Division in 1948 and has worked Line 34 Express since the line was inaugurated.
AC Transit had its 15th birthday this month and as a present to its original 11 city service area riders, the fleet now serving them is comprised totally of new-look coaches.

Only the newer style buses, with big windows and silver fluted sides and built from 1960-1974, are being used in Special Transit Service District No. 1. This is from Richmond through Berkeley, Alameda and Oakland, south to Hayward.

Just 15 years ago, on Oct. 1, 1960, the name Key System disappeared from an East Bay scene that had known transit by that name since 1903. Harre Demoro, Oakland Tribune writer and historian took notice of the event in the following article.

By presenting a $7.5 million check to the company the taxpayers in the form of AC Transit became the owners and operators of the system.

"I think it probably was a fair value," recalled Alan L. Bingham, 50, since 1967 General Manager of AC Transit. The operation then was worth just what the taxpayers paid for it: $7.5 million, he said. Today, Bingham estimated, the District's investment totals $17.2 million. But that figure doesn't represent what it would cost to build a new bus system from scratch, he said.

The District has purchased 727 new buses since 1960 for a total cost of $24.8 million. A new bus in 1960 cost $35,000; today that same bus costs $75,000.

To duplicate the modern fleet in 1975 would cost $50 million, Bingham said. In 1960, the District assigned 482 buses plus spares held for maintenance to the area formerly served by Key System and in its first year of operation transported 45.1 million riders. The same service area today requires 646 buses plus spares and in 1973-74, 55.2 million riders were transported.

And in 1960, the property tax to support the District was a mere 2.9 cents per $100 assessed property valuation as compared to a rate today of 47.3 cents.

In 1960, there were only fare box and property taxes to subsidize operating costs. Today a gasoline sales tax and federal funds are also available. While inflation has been a factor, there are other reasons it costs more today to run the bus system, Bingham said.

AC Transit established intercity express routes linking East Bay cities and greatly expanded the Bay Bridge operation.

Under private ownership, the 25-cent East Bay fare probably would be 50 or 75 cents, Bingham said. Buses would be more crowded during commuter periods. Much of the evening and weekend service would have been abandoned, he said.

Bus fares have increased only moderately since 1960. The rate of 25-cents for a local East Bay ride remains the same, though a five rides for $1 token rate long ago disappeared.

Transbay rates were 50-cents in 1960 for a one-zone ride; today the fare is 60-cents.

Local buses no longer have zone fare rates, just the flat 25-cent fare.

And senior citizens and the handicapped have a discount 10-cent fare in the East Bay.

"I think that what is significant is that the quality of the service has improved and the public has responded," Bingham said. "A greater number of persons are using transit."

There were prophets who predicted doom when BART started, saying the trains would bankrupt AC Transit. But it didn't happen.

The District will continue to expand, he predicted.

"And once BART settles down and travel habits become fairly static, it will be time to explore the MacArthur Corridor as a light rail corridor," he said. The term "light rail" is a modern definition of streetcar, or trolley car.

If buses with orange fronts are a modern sign of AC Transit after 15 years of service, maybe when the system reaches 30, the clang of the trolley bell will be its symbol in 1990.
NEW EMPLOYEES

AC Transit welcomed these new workers in July, August and September

Colleen P. Bagley
Transportation
Seminary

Durelle E. Banksdale
Transportation
Seminary

Jeff D. Bragg
Transportation
Emeryville

Gary D. Lucas
Transportation
Seminary

Myrtie B. Marlow
Transportation
Richmond

Chara Eta McCurry
Transportation
Richmond

Bonnie J. Brewer
Transportation
Richmond

Berndetta Brown
Transportation
Seminary

Cecil L. Chiles
Transportation
Seminary

Laura Mingst
Transportation
Richmond

Orma J. Shackelford
Transportation
Richmond

Nalwyna E. Staples
Transportation
Richmond

James C. Garrett
Transportation
Seminary

Margaret R. Green
Transportation
Seminary

Emedde Haltom
Transportation
Seminary

Barbara J. Strong
Transportation
Emeryville

Barbara Taylor
Transportation
Richmond

Betty J. Williams
Transportation
Emeryville

Linda V. Holloway
Transportation
Emeryville

Andrew D. Houghtaling
Maintenance
Emeryville

Bernece E. Johnson
Transportation
Richmond

Mary A. Williams
Transportation
Emeryville

Valoreas S. Williams
Transportation
Emeryville

Paul J. Wilson
Transportation
Emeryville
**Kids just love That man Bill**

The appreciation a passenger offers is highly valued by all drivers, but not everyone has a daily reminder like Bill McGuinness.

McGuinness is developing a cult of young admirers. In fact, they like him so much they've plastered telephone poles along his route with friendly salutations.

Teenagers along McGuinness' 15A-Coolidge route find him particularly agreeable because of his youth and friendly nature, they said.

One sign greets him with: "Hi Bill the Bus Driver. Bus No. 545."

And another proclaims: "Yes Bus Drivers! Bill does have a fan club!"

McGuinness, 28, has worked for the District slightly more than two years and owns his home in Livermore. He has driven Line 15A-Coolidge for three months.

Death takes two pensioners, employees

Two District employees and two pensioners died in recent weeks.

Richard N. Reinberger, 46, died suddenly at home Sept. 28. He joined AC Transit Jan. 1, 1962 serving as a claims adjuster and resided in Concord.

Reinberger is survived by his widow, Reba; two sons, Richard and Thomas and three daughters, Karen, Debra and Christina.

Driver John L. Finch, 57, died Aug. 16 after having worked for the District 23 years. Finch, of Berkeley, is survived by his widow, Grace and three sons, John Jr., Terry and Robert.

Retired driver Marvin E. Nichols, 64, died Aug. 18. He had 29 years experience as a bus operator and was pensioned June 1, 1975.

He is survived by his widow, Dorothy, of Oakland and a daughter, Patricia Newstrom.

Former Driver Allie W. Barker, 73, died quietly in his sleep Sept. 30.

Barker, of Portsmouth, Ohio, retired on Oct. 1, 1973 after 43 years service as an operator.

He is survived by his widow, Ethel and a daughter, Mrs. Virginia LeVan.

**Concord ridership Surpasses estimates in early figures**

Ridership figures for the first weeks of District operation in Concord indicate passengers are using public transportation in greater numbers than had been anticipated.

Patronage levels have averaged more than 1,000 riders per day.

Early estimates predicted the 1,000 mark would be reached only occasionally during the inaugural service period.

Heaviest ridership is seen during midday, often with standing loads, while commute hour patronage grows steadily.

August ridership report

During August, 4,158,149 passenger trips were made on AC Transit. Ridership on East Bay lines amounted to 3,116,402. On transbay lines, 902, 144; Fremont and Newark, 60,341 and suburban service to BART stations, 65,399.

There are no comparable figures for August of last year due to a work stoppage.

Farebox revenue for the month was $1,204,774. The system operated 2,386,243 miles of service during the month, distributed as follows: East Bay lines, 1,397,333; transbay, 732,287; Newark and Fremont, 77,606; suburban service to BART stations, 155,397.

Nationally, the transit industry showed an increase of .40 percent in total passengers carried.

Finance Department boosts the A's

If anyone thinks people who work together don't care to socialize together, he or she dare not say it to the Finance Department.

A spontaneous desire to "get together" and support the Oakland Athletics led to formation of Family Night last summer — a night when Finance Department families enjoyed sack lunches prior to attending the games as a group.

The June 23 game saw 46 workers and their families attend and the number jumped to 74 on July 28.

The group ate in the parking lot before games and "some even brought their barbecues right to the lot," reported Elta Ball.
Actions of the Board

At an adjourned regular meeting September 24, the Board of Directors:

- Approved new trip from Line 95-Kelly St. terminal to Strobridge School in Hayward, dependent upon adjustment of school hours, on motion of Director Rinehart.
- Awarded contracts for some shop tools and equipment to lowest responsive bidders, on motion of Director McDonnell.
- Rejected bids on 13 shop tool and equipment items and authorized General Manager to negotiate on open market for those items, on motion of Director McDonnell.
- Authorized General Manager to exercise option to purchase additional 20 fire extinguishers, on motion of Director McDonnell.
- Designated Robert E. Nisbet as Acting Secretary for the period September 29 through October 2, 1975, and authorized Robert E. Nisbet and John L. McDonnell, Vice President, Board of Directors, to sign District warrants during that period, on motion of Director Nakadegawa.
- Approved routing of Line 22-Warm Springs direct on Grimmer Blvd. in lieu of the Park Meadow/Winding Ln. loop, on motion of Director Rinehart.
- Authorized executing agreement between the District and City of Pleasant Hill for local bus service, on motion of Director Rinehart.
- Authorized General Manager to seek bids for purchase of twenty-three 25-passenger buses, and 120 shelters with option for 34 additional buses, on motion of Director Rinehart. (See story, Pg. 5)

* * *

At a regular meeting October 8, the Board of Directors:

- Referred bids for office machines and equipment to management for evaluation and recommendations, on motion of Director Nakadegawa.
- Authorized General Manager to develop specifications on GMC RTS-2 bus in accordance with state law and federal guidelines, on motion of Director Berk. (See story, Pg. 3)
- Established boundaries for charter service at Alameda and Contra Costa County borders and lifted restriction on duration of overnight charter trips, on motion of Director Berk.
- Authorized General Manager to contract with Caltrans on behalf of Articulated Bus Consortium to provide services not to exceed $10,000 with each participating property contributing on a pro-rata share basis, on motion of Director Berk.
- Authorized General Manager to purchase one shelter to be located at 14th and Adeline Sts., dependent upon 100 percent funding by Oakland Redevelopment Agency, on motion of Director Berk.