Regional discount Program celebrates First anniversary
Bay Area to host national ‘Bus Roadeo’

The hunt for the best AC Transit driver is on — with the winner slated to carry the District colors into national competition at the First Annual Bus Roadeo of the American Public Transit Association.

The first nationally competitive “Bus Roadeo” will be held in San Francisco Oct. 18 and 19 with contestants representing APTA-member transit agencies from across the county.

Grand prize $1,000

Drivers will vie for the grand prize of a $1,000 savings bond, APTA traveling trophy and satisfaction of knowing his or her driving skills are thought to be the best in the nation.

Area competitions will be held prior to the national roadeo, with AC Transit selections scheduled for August.

District trials are Aug. 7, 14 and 21. Finalist competition will be Aug. 28. The winner will attend the national competition.

Dan Maroney, international president of Amalgamated Transit Union, has sent a letter to all locals encouraging participation in the roadeo.

“This roadeo provides an opportunity to extend recognition to bus operators for their contributions to the continued progress of local transit system,” Maroney wrote.

Four test categories

AC Transit drivers wishing to compete will face four categories of competence in the selections. They include a 20-question safety quiz, pre-trip inspection of a bus with several equipment problems, personal appearance and the driving test.

The operators will drive a coach through a test course designed with specific traffic problems. The driver’s safety habits and ability to smoothly resolve or avoid driving hazards will be graded.

In addition to the $1,000 savings bond and traveling trophy, the grand prize winner of the national competition will receive a personal trophy as will the property he or she represented.

Runner-up of the national roadeo will receive a $500 savings bond, a personal trophy and a trophy for the agency represented.

All participants in APTA’s national competition will be commemorated with a plaque signifying attendance.

All drivers entering AC Transit’s local roadeo will receive a “Bus Roadeo” shoulder patch. Those qualifying for semi-finals will be listed on a Certificate of Achievement posted at division yards.

First, second and third place winners will receive personal trophies.

Our 'Stockholders' Write

Before going to an A’s game recently, I had a most pleasant experience. My wife and I decided to take the bus to the ball game.

The bus driver, Daryl R. James, was the most courteous and efficient bus driver I have ever seen. After I had put in the wrong change he politely corrected the situation without embarrassment to either of us. When some crude and boisterous passengers shouted at him without any reason, he calmly handled the situation without incident.

As this was my first trip to the Coliseum by bus, I started to get off before arrival at the gate. He was sharp enough to discern that we were going to the ball game and told us to wait and to the Coliseum by bus, I started to get off before arrival at the gate. He was sharp enough to discern that we were going to the ball game and told us to wait and

Leo Fried
San Francisco

I wish to bring to your attention a complaint that I have about an incident which occurred on the U line.

I left my office at 5:15 p.m. only to notice that my bus was departing. It is scheduled to leave at 5:24 p.m. I had to wait for some time to board the next bus which passes the intersection.

I was upset about this because I was to meet my wife at the Coliseum BART station and she was forced to wait more than 20 minutes. This was a clear cut case of a bus running early and I hope this problem can be corrected.

Mike Lucas
Pleasanton

(Ed. Note: Your letter contained further information which allowed us to identify the driver. Corrective action has been taken.)

* * *

Just a note to thank you for providing such good public transportation and to commend one of your superb operators.

Recently just outside the Alameda tube our bus had to reroute via a roundabout way to get into Alameda because of an accident in the tube.

Driver C. A. Deller managed the situation in such a way that all passengers reached their destinations with just minor delay.

We know it is your good management that ensures such good operators. So thank you very much.

Violet Fitzgerald
Alameda

I called your service operator on June 30th at 7:30 p.m. With a possible BART strike expected it was very busy, I’m sure.

In view of this I would like to commend Beverly Maloney. She was extremely helpful and pleasant. Clerks as friendly and efficient as she are are a great asset to your service.

Linda Hodges
Kensington

Which driver will represent AC Transit?

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Buses: A Good Investment

One of the best investments taxpayers in the East Bay are making is the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District, despite the $36.1 million deficit AC Transit expects to run up this year.

Bus fares account for only $19.1 million of AC Transit's expenses with another $21.1 million coming from property taxes. This still leaves a deficit of almost $17 million, which AC Transit is asking in state and federal assistance.

That's the bad news. The good news is that the number of bus riders has increased significantly from 4.6 million in March, 1975 to 5.5 million in March, 1976.

Some people who use AC Transit means there are more people who are not driving their cars. In turn, that means less cars clogging our streets and highways, less air pollution and less consumption of gas.

One of the reasons for the big jump in riders is the expansion of bus service to suburban areas. But those services have proven to be big money losers.

While Oakland-Berkeley buses generate 33 percent of their operating costs in the fare box, the Fremont-Newark lines bring in only 10 percent and Pleasant Hill-Concord only 9 percent.

But AC Transit would be ill-advised to cut back on those suburban operations, for they must be allowed to get a foothold in their communities.

That's why it is imperative that state and federal assistance be forthcoming. The property taxpayer is willing to pay his share, the rider coughs up his quarter a ride and the state and federal governments should contribute their part.

AC Transit operates one of the finest bus lines in the nation and to keep it that way, it must provide extensive services at a reasonable cost for its users.

San Leandro ‘Gold Card’ program continues
Fare-free transit policy for senior citizens

San Leandro senior citizens will be able to continue free riding on District buses as guests of their city.

The Board of Directors last month approved continuation of the “Gold Card” program, which was started Sept. 1, 1974.

The program allows San Leandro senior citizens, 60 years or older, to ride buses free on local service during other than weekday commute hours.

The City of San Leandro covers expenses of the program.

Persons interested in obtaining the Gold Card may make application at San Leandro City Hall.

More agencies enter discount program,
Joint effort reaches first anniversary

Stories of gratitude and new-found mobility mark the first year of a discount program for senior citizens and handicapped riders developed jointly by San Francisco Bay Area transit agencies.

Thousands of eligible patrons are now riding at reduced rates. A photo identification card permits discounted fares and the one card alone is honored by all nine agencies.

Thousands ride at discount
The Bay Region Transit Discount program began on July 1, 1975. One year later, approximately 22,100 cards for senior citizens and 11,600 for handicapped persons had been issued by all properties together.

Cards are issued free and discount is determined by each agency.

Agencies participating include AC Transit, BART, Golden Gate Transit, San Francisco Municipal Railway, Petaluma Municipal Transit, Vallejo Transit, Santa Clara County Transit, Santa Rosa Municipal Railway, and San Mateo County Transit.

San Mateo, Vallejo and Petaluma began honoring the card most recently, with San Mateo joining the program July 1.

Mobile issuance center

The discount cards are issued by most agencies cooperating in the program. AC Transit, Golden Gate Transit and Santa Clara County Transit also offer a mobile card issuance center.

The three agencies travel to outlying areas to issue the card, making it more accessible to those who find traveling the most difficult.

Time spent with senior citizens and the handicapped nourishes confidence often needed for moving about, according to Val Houdyschell, who issues the card for AC Transit.

"At the schools, teachers say it's a real encouragement. It gives the handicapped kids an incentive and the confidence they can do something on their own," Miss Houdyschell recalled.

She's also been privy to the secret of long life from a gentleman who's mastered the golden years.

One of her favorite customers, 98-year-old gentleman, explains life has to be lived with gusto or not at all.

"Play it hard but don't get too tense about anything — and do your exercises!" he said, offering a soft-shoe rendition as proof of expertise.

Those living on fixed incomes are the most appreciative of the program, with scores of letters coming in to participating properties, indicating transportation would be impossible for them without the program.

All divisions
Beat safety goal
During May

All divisions beat the safe driving goal for the month of June, in terms of miles driven per accident.

With a goal of 13,250 miles per chargeable accident, the District-wide average for June was 17,343.

Division 6 tallied 38,517 miles while Division 4 drivers scored 18,899 miles per mishap.

During June, Division 2 achieved 15,877 miles and Division 3 marked up 13,924 miles driven per accident.
Newly designed coaches sought

Sleek styling graces planned 40-foot buses

District riders can look forward to traveling in sleek newly-designed buses in 1977.

The Board of Directors last month authorized solicitation of bids for 66 advanced design 40-foot coaches, 12 of which will be put into service in Fremont and Newark.

Specifications for the buses call for climate control and cantilevered seats for passenger comfort.

Additionally, each 47-passenger bus will have impact resistant bumpers and side windows to reduce maintenance costs. The special features, including snap-on side panels, are anticipated to save $13,637 per bus in maintenance and material costs over the 15-year life expectancy of each coach, resulting in a total savings of more than $900,000.

Projected costs for each bus are estimated at approximately $80,000 with delivery anticipated next Spring.

AC Transit is participating with five other properties in seeking a joint order, expected to exceed 418 of the modern design coaches. Bids are scheduled to be opened in Houston, Texas, Aug. 4.

Small buses authorized
For more suburban areas

Newly designed small buses will be purchased for operation in Pleasant Hill and Moraga/Orinda under action taken by the Board of Directors this month.

The District plans to begin service in Moraga/Orinda Sept. 13, where four of the small buses would be used. Two coaches would be placed in service already underway in Pleasant Hill.

Federal funding sought

In taking the action, directors also authorized filing an application with the Department of Transportation to amend a capital grant to help cover funding. Cost of the buses is slated at $52,944 per coach, including delivery and sales tax charges, with federal funds covering 80 percent of the purchase.

The 20 percent local share already has been allocated from California Transportation Development Act funds.

A contract with Minibus of Downey, Calif., for 23 small coaches awarded by AC Transit in April had an option for an additional 11 more buses for suburban areas. Board members opted for an additional six.

Service for new Hilltop Shopping Center
Scheduled with three-route extension

Residents of West Contra Costa County will have direct access to Hilltop Shopping Center by bus beginning on the center's opening day.

The center, whose opening was delayed from Aug. 4 due to an electrician's strike, is tentatively scheduled to open Aug. 26.

Lines 69A, 70 and 70A will be extended into Hilltop providing shoppers with public transit from El Sobrante, downtown Richmond, the San Pablo Ave. corridor and from BART/El Cerrito and BART/Del Norte.

SAFE driver Leroy Boardman, right, receives his 25-year safe driving identification card from General Manager Alan L. Bingham while Lawrence "Frenchy" Vadnais display 25-year arm patch at right.

Boardman, Vadnais join 25-year club

The District’s growing number of operators with 25 years of driving without a chargeable accident expanded to 16 this month, with the addition of Leroy Boardman and Lawrence "Frenchy" Vadnais.

Both men celebrated amid friends and co-workers at their respective divisions during ceremonies commemorating the event.

Boardman began his public transit career in December, 1946, when he was employed as a street car operator by Key System Transit Lines, AC Transit’s predecessor.

From street cars to buses

When buses replaced street cars, he transferred to Emeryville Division as a bus driver where he has remained — and was honored with 25-year safety arm patch and pin June 21.

Boardman earned his first-year safe driving award in 1949. Since then he has had only three avoidable accidents, none of which involved injury to a passenger.

He makes his home in Oakland with his wife, Martha. The Boardmans have five sons and eight grand-children.

Vadnais also began his career as a street car operator with Key System Transit Lines, starting the job in July, 1946.

He transferred to Emeryville Division in 1948 as a bus driver and in 1956 went to Seminary Division in the same capacity.

San Lorenzo is home for the Vadnais family. He and his wife, Martha, have three sons and one grand-daughter.

Increased ridership
Pattern continues

Ridership continues to increase on AC Transit lines, with a 6.7 percent jump during the first six months of 1976 as compared to the same period last year.

Some 8.6 percent more passenger trips were made on East Bay lines while transbay routes showed a .75 percent increase.

Comparing ridership during the four weeks of June 1976 to the four week period in May month previous, 5.9 percent more transbay passenger trips were made and East Bay lines noted a 2.7 percent increase.
NEW EMPLOYEES

AC Transit welcomes these new workers

Connie C. Bailey Jr.
Transportation
Emeryville

Charles E. Barber
Transportation
Emeryville

Gregory L. Beckerleg
Maintenance
Emeryville

Janice M. Bell
Transportation
Emeryville

Willie T. Bonner
Transportation
Emeryville

John D. Bryant
Transportation
Emeryville

Arthur Colbert
Transportation
Seminary

Lloyd L. Campbell
Transportation
Emeryville

Hollis T. Carr II
Transportation
Richmond

Jeanette A. Chest
Transportation
Seminary

Gloria D. Cuttley
PBX
Emeryville

Priscilla DuBose
Transportation
Richmond

Roberto M. Estrella
Transportation
Emeryville

Alexine D. Gates
Transportation
Seminary

Steven G. Hayes
Transportation
Richmond

Robert L. Hankins
Transportation
Richmond

Linda G. Harris
Transportation
Seminary

Cynthia J. Isom
PBX
Emeryville

Lindell P. Jackson
Transportation
Seminary

Willie Jackson III
Transportation
Seminary

James E. Johnson
Transportation
Seminary

Olewa Jones
Transportation
Seminary

Timmons B. Jones
Transportation
Emeryville

Thomel P. Kahl
Transportation
Seminary

Jerriell L. Leckhart
Transportation
Seminary

Samuel Mohammed
Transportation
Emeryville

Leonard C. Hodelsky
Transportation
Seminary

Rayford D. Rogers
Transportation
Richmond

Marion D. Scott
Transportation
Emeryville

Roosevelt Scott
Transportation
Richmond

Denora H. Shimmire
Transportation
Seminary

Lillie M. Smith
PBX
Emeryville

Laola A. Starks
Transportation
Seminary

Deedra F. Walker
Transportation
Seminary
LEARNING CIRCLE—AC
Transit Operator George Skinner recently visited the Native American Preschool in Oakland. Skinner, a Chippewa, did some transit teaching, sharing his experiences as a bus driver with boys and girls between the ages of two and five. Skinner's appearance at the school was part of a volunteer program involving adult American Indians spending a day with the children talking about what they do on the job.

"Outstanding Achievement"

United Way honors AC Transit

The United Way Crusade honored AC Transit this month for its 1975 "outstanding achievement" in breaking the District record of donations to the charitable organization. A number of District employees and individuals also were cited for separate commendation in raising money to support United Way activities.

In setting a new District record, AC Transit employee donations were 23.6 percent higher in 1975 than for the previous year.

Employees gave $21,104 during the recent campaign, as compared to $17,104 in 1974.

Chet Wren, United Way director, lauded the fund raising efforts of AC Transit employees, which were coordinated by the Treasurer-Controller.

People helping people

Alan L. Bingham, general manager, pointed to mutual efforts between labor and management in making the campaign a success as an example of the United Way’s purpose — people helping people.

Honor Awards in the form of plaques were presented to three District departments.

The Purchasing and Stores Department received a plaque for having 100 percent employee participation while Transportation Supervisors were praised with an Honor Award for averaging the highest donation per worker — some $272.60.

An Honor Award went to the PBX Information Department for having the largest increase in employee donors over last year, a 60 percent jump.

Seminary Division received a Merit Award for the largest dollar contribution per division.

Solitiers praised

Solicitations for the 1975 campaign were made by representatives of management and labor, with all "donor reps" receiving a Certificate of Appreciation for their efforts.

Solicitors include Joe Ann Ciccolo, Bob McKnight, Curtis Wells, Carl Knutson, George Akers, Zada Malinak, B. F. Williams, Daniel Quinlan, Loren A. Ball, Dorothy Gunthrop and D. C. Rodrigues.


Also, James R. Williams Jr., Ralph N. Williams, Charles Oden, Howard D. Reagen and Peggy Chambers.
At an adjourned regular meeting June 23, the Board of Directors:

- Authorized General Manager to seek bids for purchase of transfer tickets for AC/BART transfer machines, on motion of Director Nakadegawa.

- Authorized participation in APTA National Bus Roadeo, on motion of Director Bettencourt. (See story, Pg. 3)

- Authorized extension of Lines 69, 70 and 70A into Hilltop Shopping Center; authorized returning Line 24-Mission San Jose to original routing, on motion of Director Berk. (See story, Pg. 6)

- Authorized continuance of San Leandro Gold Card program, on motion of Director Berk. (See story, Pg. 4)

- Authorized 50 percent reduction of subsidy paid by Head-Royce School for direct supplementary service, on motion of Director Berk.

- Authorized seeking bids for sixty-six 40-foot advance design buses and spare parts and authorized the City of Houston responsibility for opening and evaluating bids, on motion of Director Berk.

- Authorized continuance of San Leandro Gold Card program, on motion of Director Berk.

- Authorized one management representative to participate in transportation seminar, on motion of Director Nakadegawa.

- Declared as surplus certain office machinery and equipment and authorized sale of these items, on motion of Director Bettencourt.

- Adopted resolutions establishing ward boundaries and calling for election of three Directors to the Board on Nov. 2, in consolidation with general election, on motions of Director Bettencourt.

- Authorized Board Members to attend APTA Annual Meeting in San Francisco Oct. 17 to 21, on motion of Director McGuire.

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