New system will update and improve Data processing capabilities
Our 'Stockholders' Write

Since moving to the San Ramon area, I have been using AC Transit from this area to Concord, my place of employment. I like to arrive either early on my job or at least when I am expected to report. Your drivers, although I find them to be most courteous, do not know the route. When they ask me to direct them, I do so willingly, but, instead of relaxing, reading and enjoying the ride, I find myself working mentally — watching the road, telling them when to make a left turn, a right, when to exit and enter the freeway, etc.

Irene Hopeland
San Ramon

I wish to take this time to express our appreciation for one of your drivers, Mr. James Daniels. Without his honesty, our son’s class ring never would have been returned.

Our son is in the Air Force and flying out to New Jersey, he left his ring in the men’s room. Mr. Daniels turned it in to Lost and Found.

I’m sure you have several good men, but we want to say “Thank You, Mr. Daniels”. Mr. & Mrs. L.E. Peregoy
Newark

Tonight the bus driver (Thomas J. Lauer, Jr.) rode with did what he could to help a stranger in distress.

No, it was not I who was in distress, nor was it a passenger on the bus. The driver’s thoughtfulness and kindness in attempting to help his fellow man is something seldom seen these days.

I guess his humanitarian act touched me more deeply since I, too, have been in distress many times in public over the past 40 years as a result of a physical condition from which I suffer. I’ve had people and cars pass by while I’ve been lying prone on the sidewalk. At least your driver stopped to see if he could help.

William A. Pepetone
Oakland

Here is a compliment to your people who are handling the crowds at MacArthur Station of BART.

They are doing, in my opinion, a terrific job, and have been since this problem started. THANK YOU.

S.S. McNeill
Lafayette

Board names Fajans Ward 1 Director

Urban planner Michael H. Fajans has been appointed to the Board of Directors to represent the District’s Ward 1 — portions of Berkeley and Oakland.

Fajans was selected by current board members after a month-long search which resulted in ten applicants for the vacant seat. The six board members unanimously elected Fajans during a regular meeting, March 5.

A resident of Berkeley, Fajans earned his master’s degree from the University of California in 1970.

He had pursued a planning career both in this country and in Europe prior to joining John Blayney Associates, urban and regional planners located in San Francisco, early last year.

Fajans will fulfill the term of office vacated by Director Roy Nakadegawa of Berkeley, who sought and won the single at-large directorship on the ballot in the November, 1978, election.

The current term for the Ward 1 seat expires in 1981. This ward includes portions of Berkeley east of Grove Street, and North Oakland, West Oakland and the downtown area of Oakland east to Fruitvale Ave.

THE COVER — James H. Lowe (left), information systems director, tests new system console for Hewlett-Packard 3000-series III computer as Richard A. Fratus, assistant treasurer-controller, checks the printout.

The new computer system, installed this month in a dust-free, air-conditioned environment on the second floor of the Latham Square Building, will update and improve the System’s data processing capabilities in a changeover expected to be completed in 1981. Its acquisition, made possible by funding which included an 80% federal grant, marks the start of phase-out of the present IBM 360/30 system. Payroll and financial systems will be the first to be implemented, with July set as a target date. Later, certain Transportation Department and Schedule procedures (such as monitoring diesel fuel usage by individual coaches and route analysis/planning) will be handled by the system, which represents, according to Fratus, a “large step forward for AC Transit in data processing.”

Public meetings set to discuss 5-year-plan

An analysis of financial and operational possibilities during fiscal 1979-80 and the four following years was presented to District Directors at a March 21 meeting. This five-year forecast, in the form of a 158-page report prepared by Research and Planning Department, will be the subject of discussion at three public meetings in April.

The first such meeting is scheduled for April 17 at Hayward Centennial Hall; the second is April 18 at Richmond City Hall; and the final forum is April 25 at the BART Board Room. All meetings will begin at 7:30 p.m. Interested parties are invited to study the report.
AC Transit coach is winner in transbay Race against other modes of commuting

It was a real race — though of an unofficial nature — but with a difference. The difference was that different modes of transportation were vying to see which could make the east-to-west morning commute in the fastest time.

And while it may have lacked official prizes, AC Transit definitely won honors.

The mid-March event — to determine which mode of transport could carry a commuter across the bay to the Hyatt Regency, San Francisco, in the shortest time — was sponsored by the Save Our Ferry Committee of Berkeley, where all contestants began their trek.

First to reach the finish line was AC Transit’s entry, which carried John Maack — and other patrons of the regular transbay service run — to San Francisco in 24 minutes. Second place went to a Porsche 924, piloted by Mike Yovino-Young, who made the trip in 37 minutes but stirred up a controversy, since he did not park the car — a maneuver that would have added to his score. (Yovino-Young felt compelled to counter criticism regarding his time by saying that, to his credit, he did adhere to the legal speed limit during the transbay trip, though he claimed many other car commuters were passing him!)

The two other contestants in the transit race clocked in at 44 minutes each. They were Tom Turner, who traveled by bicycle and ferry, and Vi McFall, who used automobile and ferry.

Basically, the competition was to encourage continued operation of Berkeley-San Francisco ferry service even after BART’s transbay train service — interrupted since mid-January — resumes.

Retirees’ service totals 70 years

For John Ramos, February represented a month of milestones — he retired after 32 years in the Maintenance Department at Emeryville, and he and wife Evelyn celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary.

Ramos was employed as a Key System airbrakeman-trainee in 1946 under a GI Bill program. He was assigned to maintenance on the trains at 40th and San Pablo, which he described as “dirty work.” This phase of his career ended with the switch to motor coaches, with Ramos subsequently performing a variety of machine shop duties prior to being promoted to foreman of Emeryville’s machine shop 10 years ago.

The Ramos’ have two grown children and three grandchildren. Even though he enjoys fishing and working in his wood shop, Ramos says that his immediate retirement plan is to “loaf, because after so many years, I’m entitled to it!”

Evelyn will be joining him in the leisure life soon, as she plans retirement at the end of the year.

Clear Lake bound

For Alfred Young, known as “Okie” to his co-workers, the nickname can be said to represent more than just his state of origin. It could also represent Oakland, where he came to work in 1963 as an AC Transit operator after 13 years as a civil service bus driver at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. It’s also appropriate for his retirement home, Clear Lake Oaks.

Young, who drove with Seminary Division for all but about two of his 15 years here, completed his career at Newark Division. There, he says, Dial-A-Ride stands out as his favorite driving duty.

But at Clear Lake, where he and wife Pearl own a lot and mobile home, he’ll also be settling in to a second career — as a carpenter’s helper for a construction firm. He expects also to have enough leisure time to enjoy some of the Clear Lake area’s recreational attractions.

The Youngs, whose home has been in San Jose for the past eight years, have one daughter, Monti Jo, and a three-year-old grandson, Shane.

Those who have known Bill Arbogast only as a long-time Richmond Division driver might be surprised to know that in his church and community work he’s known as “Father Bill.” It’s in this capacity — as a part-time clergyman, hospital chaplain, and crisis intervention/alcoholism counselor — that he expects to operate full-time during his retirement after 23 years of service.

When Arbogast joined Key System after moving from Massachusetts, he viewed driving as just a temporary position: his real goal was to get into the insurance business. However, the fact that his previous background had always included some form of church work was a strong element helping to determine which path he took. He stayed with driving, and juggled his church/education/service activities until such time as he felt he could promote them to full-time status. His current goal: to become pastor of “a good-sized congregation.”

A divorced father of two and grandfather of four, Arbogast has fondest memories of his “good rapport with kids” during his years of service in Richmond, which also has been his home since he became a driver.
Newark drivers top standings

Newark Division operators once again topped the month's standings in safe-driving statistics, February figures show. They averaged 38,247 miles per chargeable accident. Second in the standings was Richmond Division, whose drivers averaged 17,566 miles per mishap. Emeryville Division's record was 13,250 miles per accident.

In all, AC Transit operators drove 2,432,196 miles during the past month for a cumulative average of 14,830 miles per accident. Safe-driving "bogey" is 13,250 miles per accident.

Two Emeryville Division drivers and one retiree die

Two Emeryville Division drivers — both victims of heart attacks — and a retiree died within recent weeks.

Roy A. Pritchard, 64, anoperator since 1968, died in an Oakland hospital February 4. Inurnment was at Mountain View Mausoleum.

Pritchard is survived by his widow, Evelyn, and sons, George and Raymond.

Charles Johnson, 41, had been an operator since 1974. His death occurred at a hospital in San Leandro.

He is survived by his widow, Rita, and five children: Carline, Darryl, Linda, John, and Cynthia.

Clifford D. Robbins, 77, who retired as a driver in 1967 after more than 25 years of service on trains and buses, died February 16 while hospitalized in San Leandro. Burial was at Chapel of the Chimes, Hayward.

Robbins' transit career began in 1941 when he became a train conductor. Making the switch to buses in 1958, he served until his retirement on the Grove Street and 14th Avenue lines.

He is survived by his widow, Ruth, also a former train conductor; and four children: Clifford, Jr.; Robert; Dorothy Gore; and Betty Weiser.
At an adjourned regular meeting February 28, the Board of Directors:

- Referred proposal for purchase of milling machine to management for a recommendation, since there were no bidders on the item, on motion of Director Berk.
- Referred bids for furnishing two coin counter/sorter machines to management for evaluation and recommendation, on motion of Director Nakadegawa.
- Awarded contract for furnishing uniform trousers and slacks to the Hub Schneiders, on motion of Director Rinehart.
- Authorized General Manager to advertise and seek bids for purchase of 17 intermediate-size diesel automobiles and 6 trucks, with option for 9 more automobiles, on motion of Director Rinehart.
- Authorized General Manager to advertise and seek bids for purchase of 142 advance design buses and spare unit packages, with an option for 24 more buses, subject to UMTA approval, on motion of Director Rinehart.
- Authorized continuance on a semi-regular basis of Line L service extension to the Willamette Shipyards; rerouting of Line 24, Mission San Jose, to serve Fremont Municipal Court and Kaiser Center; and operation of Pedal Hopper service on weekends during shut-down of BART transbay operations, on motion of Director Rinehart.
- Authorized General Manager or his designee to represent the District on the ParaTransit Coordinating Councils of Alameda and Contra Costa counties, on motion of Director Rinehart.
- Adopted revised Minority Business Enterprise Affirmative Action Program, on motion of Director Holmes.

Nominated Anthony Lucchesi for MTC Award for outstanding contribution to public transit in the area of maintenance, on motion of Director Nakadegawa.

At an adjourned regular meeting March 5, the Board of Directors:

- Appointed Michael H. Fajans to the board to fill the Ward I vacancy, on motion of Director Nakadegawa (See story, Pg. 3).

Transit Times welcomes additions to its mailing list. Patrons, employees, and others interested in public transit who wish to receive copies may call 654-7878, Ext. 277, or write Marketing Department, AC Transit, Latham Square Building, Oakland, CA. 94612.