The bus fleet —

Old standbys, New additions
I am a senior citizen, 82 years, plus, of age. You are aware of the signs on the buses over the front seats asking younger passengers to "yield" those seats to the elderly and the handicapped. Unfortunately, most of the younger people can't read and so disregard those signs. But when I entered the bus this lovely driver (Betty Burnet) turned to a young person sitting in one of those seats and said, "Would you like to go to the back of the bus so this elderly man can sit there?"

When those specially reserved seats for the elderly were all filled, every time an elderly person boarded, she would turn around and say, "Will the younger people in the front of the bus kindly move to the back of the bus so that these seniors may not have to walk so far."

That bus ride made not only my day, but spread cheer and happiness for many days to come.

Reverend Siebe S. Feldmann
Oakland

It gives me great pleasure to write this letter to commend Luther Williams, driver of the 78A Line. He is a very courteous driver, considerate, kind and patient. He is a safe driver. No jumping or jerking, throwing you up and down the aisles. He has patience with the elderly. He waits until they are seated before he takes off.

Incidentally, I am a daily rider of Mr. Williams' bus.

Dorothy Capers
Oakland

I am a regular rider of the H Line. In the evenings I normally ride the 5:21 Express, eastbound. This bus is frequently quite crowded, and the passengers, especially those standing, are often subjected to a wild, jerky ride.

Last night, although I was standing, I had an unusually peaceful ride home. In spite of heavy traffic and rain, our excellent driver, Emont Mason, gave a smooth, safe, sane ride home. This woman is a magnificent driver who was also good-humored and most pleasant.

Mary Staats
Berkeley

I wish to nominate Rayford D. Rodgers as a perfect driver.

Besides being an excellent driver, he was thoughtful and courteous to everyone — from very young to the very old (like me).

Mary C. Ellis
Berkeley

I have been riding on your buses for about a year, and I saw problems on the bus I don't like. I've seen people in the back of the bus playing their radios loud, smoking marijuana, and writing on the bus.

I was on one bus and saw a camera. And the people were scared to smoke their marijuana. So if you have them on all buses, I think that would be helpful.

F. Turner
Oakland


The terms are confusing since the "New Look" buses actually are old — traditional coaches, still the mainstay of today's fleet, which were first introduced to the East Bay in 1960.

"Advanced Design" refers to the more futuristic models with generous expanses of dark-tinted windows, while "Old Look" buses have now been retired from service.

The definitions are timely because AC Transit plans to purchase both "New Look" and "Advanced Design" buses in the coming months.

Specifically, bids are being sought for 60 Advanced Design coaches to be purchased with about two-thirds of a federal grant of about $12.5 million. The remainder of that grant will go toward purchase of modern "New Look" vehicles.

When authorizing the purchase during a regular meeting February 3, District Directors noted that the purchase of both types of vehicles would allow an opportunity for side-by-side comparison of today's "state-of-the-art" in transit vehicle manufacture.

Prudent transit planning and purchasing has resulted in a variety of vehicles in the present fleet, said General Manager Robert E. Nisbet. Buses now on the road in service to District riders range in age from just a few weeks (for the newly-arrived Flyer buses) to two decades (for some of the older but still on-the-road General Motors "New Look" coaches).

Bus sizes range from 25-foot minibuses, used in suburban service and in Oakland's new "Downtown Shuttle", to huge 60-foot-long M.A.N. articulated coaches (the ones with a bend in the middle) that carry large numbers of passengers on the heavily-patronized commute routes.

While most of the present fleet consists of 35- and 40-foot GM "New Look" buses, many of these veteran coaches will be retired in coming weeks with the arrival of more modern "New Look" Flyer buses just coming off the assembly line.

Today's additions to the fleet — and tomorrow's too — have a new look that's matched by contemporary features to better serve District riders.

These features include: accurate, easily-read electronic destination signs on the front, side and nose rear of coaches; steps which convert to an eleva­tor-like platform to give people who aren't ambulatory access to buses; and a front suspension that "knees" to bring the steps closer to ground level, a convenience for seniors.

CHOOSING ADDITIONS — Two different manufacturers' versions of the "Advanced Design" bus are shown here in contrast to the GM "New Look" bus (center) which presently is the most numerous in AC Transit's fleet. The Board will soon award bids for 60 Advanced Design coaches. Among competitors are the Grumman Flxible (left) and the GM (right).
Three retirees die, including two veterans on the rolls

Three deaths have been reported from among the ranks of retirees.

Charles M. Pulsipher, 88, who was employed 35 years with transit organizations pre-dating AC Transit, died December 24 in Sacramento. His last position prior to his 1958 retirement was as a bus driver at Emeryville Division. His span of employment had begun in 1923.

Pulsipher is survived by his widow, Myrtle, and sons, Charles and Elmer.

Richard W. Stallard, 91, a veteran of East Bay rail transportation and one of the most senior retirees on the pension rolls, died February 5 in Oakland, where he made his home. He had completed a 43-year span of employment with AC Transit’s predecessor organization when he retired in 1954, having joined the ranks of transit workers in 1911.

Stallard saw service on streetcars, where he began his employment on the old Park Boulevard Line, and on Key System’s network of passenger trains, which carried both local and transbay riders. At various times, he served as a conductor and chauffeur, though he ended his career as train-master at the Transbay Terminal.

He is survived by a son, Harold.

Funeral services for recent retiree Arnold Lindsey, 60, were held February 13 in Vallejo, where he had made his home for more than a decade.

At the time of his retirement last August after 18 years of service, Lindsey was a dispatcher at Emeryville Division. Prior to joining AC Transit, he had lived in Canada and worked as a driver for Greyhound.

He is survived by his widow, Eva.

Niles and Newark patrons Get AC Transit Valentines In form of better service

Bus riders on Line 26 in Niles and Line 20 in Newark noted new service improvements beginning February 8.

In one change, a minor Line 20 reroute was expected to get commuters to work in Newark more efficiently. Previously, Line 20 buses operated in a counterclockwise loop in Newark via Cedar Blvd., Central Ave., Cherry St., and Mowry Ave. This loop has been reversed.

In making this change, Line 20 bus stops on this loop were moved across the street from their previous locations.

As a result of another service change, passengers of Line 20-Niles Canyon Heights are now able to ride into Upper Canyon Heights—on demand only. At all times except commute hours (6-9 a.m., 4-6 p.m. weekdays) patrons destined for Upper Canyon Heights must simply tell the driver their destination when boarding the bus, which then makes a minor detour to that point. However, passengers leaving Upper Canyon Heights must walk down to Wasatch and Canyon Heights Drives to catch Line 26 buses.

Safety tallies reported

Three divisions met last month’s safe-driving goal of 13,250 miles per chargeable accident. Newark Division was tops in the totals, averaging 64,210 miles per mishap; Seminary’s scorecard showed an average of 16,782 miles; Emeryville recorded 16,360 miles.

January’s driving totals, district-wide, amounted to 2,719,228 miles over service routes, urban and suburban.

In December, Newark Division also took the safe driving lead, recording a monthly average of 46,922 miles per accident. Richmond Division recorded 23,421 miles per mishap; Seminary, 14,134 miles; and Emeryville, 13,927 miles.
Three join the leisure-life ranks

Louis M. Gilmore, whose service to transit spanned 40 years, is enjoying the leisure life in beautiful Paradise Pines (between Chico and Oroville) where he and wife Arville occupy a mobile home on about an acre of land affording a scenic canyon vista and frequent visits by wandering deer. The Gilmores lived in Hayward before their post-retirement move to the retreat they had previously used for vacations and weekends.

So far, Gilmore is finding no lack of chores to do around the place now that they're in residence full-time. However, even with such work as walls and fences to put up, the couple do find time to bowl; and Gilmore has just become a member of the Elks.

His original service — performing general maintenance chores on Key System trains — was interrupted by four years in the Army during World War II. Afterwards, and before retiring from Emeryville Division as a truck driver/ parts clerk, Gilmore says he "wore out three trucks" (each with over 100,000 miles).

The Gilmores have not found retirement lonely, as Arville has five children and nine grandchildren who enjoy visiting there.

George J. Cook, formerly a driver at Richmond Division, doesn't plan to stray far from his native Bay Area while enjoying retirement after nearly 18 years of AC Transit service. Cook's employment began in 1962 and included time as transportation supervisor and dispatcher.

A native of Richmond, where he still makes his home, Cook finds that the leisure life gives him more opportunity for such pasttimes as gardening. He's also giving some thought to travel, with Hawaii being a likely destination.

Cook's background includes a total of about 12 years of service, including Reserve duty, with the Marines. This began when he was a 17-year-old Marine during World War II, in which he served 30 months in the Pacific with the First Marine Division. He was with the same division during the Korean conflict.

Cook and wife Betty, who works as a school crossing guard, have a family of three grown children — Sheryl, Sandy, and Gregory — and two granddaughters.

Retired after a total of about 42 years as a machinist, including 10 years with AC Transit's Maintenance Department, Emeryville Division; Charles "Chris" Kendall still isn't ready to shelve his considerable mechanical skills. In retirement, he's working part-time out of the shop at his East Oakland home, where he's lived for about 20 years.

A native San Franciscan, Kendall joined AC Transit rather than transfer with Greyhound to Los Angeles or Tucson. Currently, he's easing his way into retirement life with no particular plans other than keeping his skills well-honed.

Joining Kendall in retirement is wife Dorothy. They are the parents of five daughters — Debbi, Rita, Louella, Marlene, and Patty. Daughter Debbi Ward is an AC Transit employee in Schedule Department. The couple also has three granddaughters and one grandson.

George J. Cook

AC Transit and SF MUNI Will offer joint Pass, Aiding Transbay riders

Bus riders who use both AC Transit and San Francisco's MUNI soon will be able to purchase a joint monthly pass.

Currently, an estimated 3,000 riders regularly transfer from one system to the other at the Transbay Transit Terminal. At this meeting this month, Directors approved selling an AC/MUNI Pass at the District's Ticket Office in the Terminal.

Riders would purchase an AC Transit Transbay Pass ($36, Zone 1; $45, Zone 2; $54, Zone 3) and the ($16) MUNI "Fast Pass" at the same time. The single card would cost riders $50, $59, or $68 — two dollars less than the combined cost of the two passes purchased individually.

Implementation of the joint pass has been set tentatively for May, 1981. If successful, according to General Manager Robert E. Nisbet, it could lead to future development of a three-way AC/BART/MUNI pass.

Visual aid

TRAVELERS' AID—AC Transit maintenance workers George Spinella, left, and Herbert Driver install new, large bus line numbers for easier spotting by public transit users at the BART/Fremont station. The four-inch-high numerals help patrons quickly find their loading zones, speeding the BART/bus connection.

"Mea culpa!" write kids

Following a recent episode reportedly involving food-throwing on the bus and verbal disrespect toward the driver, two very young riders repented and penned notes of apology on school stationery, one of which is reproduced below.

Apologies accepted, C. and J!

Dear Sir,

I am sorry that I caused you trouble and I promise that I will never do it again. Please accept my apology.

Directors take new Posts in community

Two members of AC Transit's Board of Directors have been elected to positions in community organizations.

Director Ray Rinehart has been elected President of the Community Advisory Board of Providence Hospital, of which he has been a member for five years. Elected by members of the 16-person board, Rinehart will serve a one-year term.

Director William J. Bettencourt has been appointed to an advisory trustees group which provides support and in-put to the Board of Trustees of St. Rose Hospital, Hayward. Bettencourt is a longtime supporter of St. Rose, having served on the original citizens advisory committee for the facility, which opened in 1962. Bettencourt also is serving a third term as president of San Leandro's Downtown Development Committee, which works with the City Council on revitalization.
At an adjourned regular meeting January 28, the Board of Directors:

- Awarded contract to Curved Glass Distributors, in joint procurement with Regional Transit Association, for furnishing glass and glazing materials, on motion of Director Bettencourt.
- Authorized re-solicitation by Regional Transit Association of bids for Lucite SAR Glazing Materials, on motion of Director Bettencourt.
- Authorized purchase from regular suppliers of glass items for which no bid was received, on motion of Director Bettencourt.
- Authorized one Board member to attend APTA Governing Board Task Force meeting in Washington, D.C., on January 30-31, on motion of Director Bettencourt.

At an adjourned regular meeting February 3, the Board of Directors:

- Ratified award of $5,000 for information leading to arrest and conviction of persons or persons responsible for the January 31 assault on Operator Mark Quinney, on motion of Director McDonnell.
- Authorized request to UMTA for participation in New Bus Equipment Introduction Program, on motion of Director Rinehart.
- Authorized purchase of 60 Advanced Design buses and preparation of purchase specifications for as many “New Look” buses as remaining UMTA grant funding allows, on motion of Director Berk (see story, pg. 3).

At a regular meeting February 11, the Board of Directors:

- Authorized General Manager to advertise and seek bids for purchase of two bus wheelchair lifts to be used as spares, on motion of Director Rinehart.
- Authorized General Manager to advertise and seek bids for purchase of five service vehicles, declared as surplus for sale five old service vehicles, on motion of Director Fajans.
- Authorized General Manager to enter into agreement with MTC for funding of first phase of Central District Transit System Improvement Study and to enter into agreement with City of Oak-

(Continued on page 5)