This is the season to be thankful for our many blessings. One of mine is the AC Transit here in Concord.

I am a senior with slight handicap and use the 304, 305 and 307 Lines regularly. The drivers on these routes have got to be the best in the country, carrying many seniors. David Brooks is especially fine, always cool, calm and considerate, stopping at the curb for easy getting on or off bus. I cannot speak too highly and wish to give special thanks at this time to him and others like him.

Mrs. Helen Mirsky
Concord

I wish to commend Driver Barbara C. Young. Recently, shortly after I boarded the bus, this driver determined that a passenger was creating a disturbance to other passengers and should be removed. She stopped her bus on 20th Street, across from Kaiser Center, and signaled the AC Transit supervisor there. Within a few minutes, the disorderly person was removed by the security people and we proceeded on our way.

I feel that a driver with her courage and determination should be applauded for her concern for the passengers' safety and comfort.

Donald M. Clarke
Oakland

In these days when there is so little concern for others it is refreshing to meet a man who cares. I would publicly like to thank one of our AC Transit drivers, Mr. J.J. Williams on the 91 Tennyson Line, for his honesty and thoughtfulness.

Rose A. Bennett
Hayward

Jean Holmes — appointed to the Board of Directors in 1977, then elected to a seat the following year — was named President of AC Transit's policy-making body at the January 13 Board meeting. She had served as Vice President during the past year.

The Ward 5 Director (Fremont, Newark, Hayward and adjoining unincorporated areas) was elected to a one-year term by fellow board members at their first meeting of the year. She succeeds Roy Nakadegawa, Director-at-Large.

The Board's choice as Vice President for the year is Michael Fajans, appointed a Director in 1979, then elected to a seat in 1980. He represents Ward 1, which encompasses portions of Berkeley and Oakland.

Holmes owns and operates a business in Fremont, where she makes her home, and has been active for many years in Southern Alameda County civic affairs. She was serving as chairman of the Fremont Planning Commission, among other public and political involvements, at the time she was appointed to fill a vacancy on the Board.

Fajans, a Berkeley resident, is an urban planner who also has been active in civic groups, including the Berkeley Ad Hoc Transportation Committee and Berkeleyans for Fair Traffic Management.

System's salute to patrons

Seasonal festivities at the Transbay Terminal are a tradition, aided this year by St. Nick (Jim McCracken, Treasury) and a helper (Bessie McLen, Seminary Division).
Board approves revised transfer policy

A revised and greatly simplified transfer policy was adopted by Directors in late December, with implementation planned for Sunday, April 4.

Under the new policy, which was developed after considerable study and input garnered from a November, 1981, public hearing, the first transfer will be free upon payment of proper fare.

Subsequent transfers to complete a single trip would be issued, on request only, after payment of an additional amount equal to one-half of the rider’s base local fare.

Riders who frequently or regularly use many buses to make their trips will be provided options other than cash fares—particularly the Monthly Pass, now available to adults and soon to be available to senior citizens, handicapped riders and students.

A particular plus for riders under the new policy is that there will be no restriction on direction in which a patron may travel—a change which eliminates a cause for rider confusion in the present complex transfer system (it allows the rider to continue “...in the same general direction...” only).

The policy revisions are designed to yield simpler, more readily understood on-bus procedures, a benefit to both rider and bus driver. Additionally, actual operation of the simplified transfer system will be much less costly than the present transfer structure.

“Nuts-and-bolts” details of the revised policy will be released to bus riders and drivers in the coming weeks prior to the April 4 effective date.

United Way total increases

November’s in-house United Way campaign garnered $14,827.92—a 27% increase over the 1980 figure.

The annual drive aids the United Way’s financial support of a wide range of community organizations. Employee donations take the form of cash contributions or payroll-deduction pledges.

This year saw Seminary Division’s Transportation employees contributing the greatest dollar amount ($6,606.12) and that same division’s Maintenance group registering the highest percentage of participation (92%).

Horse racing enthusiasts will enjoy coach service

AC Transit will launch special “Pony Express” service for patrons this year on February 9 as buses deliver horse racing fans to the grandstands at Golden Gate Fields in Albany.

Fares will remain the same as last year, with local patrons using Line 94-Golden Gate Fields for 50 cents. Transbay riders will pay $1.75 each way between the Transbay Terminal in San Francisco and the track. No transfers will be accepted or issued, and senior citizen, handicapped and youth discounts are not given.

AC Transit monthly passes, however, are valid on local Line 94 and Line L to Gilman Street, but not on special transbay buses to the track.

“Pony Express” service begins approximately two hours before post-time on racing days.

What the Press is saying about transit

The Daily Review

Fragmenting transit

IF ANYONE knows a good reason for fragmenting Bay Area transportation into dozens of small and independent districts, we haven’t heard it...

In Fremont, some council members are agitating for legislation to permit the city to withdraw from AC Transit.

In Contra Costa County, a new transit district has already been formed and is preparing to replace the AC Transit service that now provides bus transportation for a wide area between Martinez and Walnut Creek.

The inefficiencies of such deannexing and splitting off should be apparent. Each new district needs its own set of managers and commensurate management salaries plus its own rolling stock and maintenance facilities that would duplicate in large part existing facilities and equipment.

All this fragmenting may be necessary to satisfy the egos of those who make notoriety a fetish of “local control” or have personal ambitions for creating their own transit fiefdom. But it doesn’t make many contributions toward improving public transportation anywhere in the Bay Area.

As gasoline prices continue to increase, the incentive to motorists to switch to public transportation will grow, and if the service can be delivered in an efficient manner, then public transportation can in fact build a better business.

Vice Mayor Jan Stillwell is leading the deannexation movement in Fremont, alleging AC Transit’s indifference to public complaints of service deficiencies, but she offers no current examples of service shortcomings to back up her demands.

Mayor Leon Mezzetti, whose concern about the service complaints prompted him to support Stillwell’s lobbying efforts, now says everything is OK. He sees no need to encourage passage of a bill by Assemblyman Alister McAlister, D-Fremont, that would permit the deannexation.

That’s good news, for any legislative or local action on transit should be in the direction of consolidation, not deannexation.

Even limited progress for the McAlister measure would serve to discourage any grass roots movements to establish local bus service where none now exists outside the AC Transit district boundaries.

AC Transit now provides, under contract with BART, a rather skeletal service to BART stations in Walnut Creek and Hayward. Little local service is available except in Livermore where the local RIDEO bus system operates.

If the burgeoning populations of the Livermore and San Ramon valleys are ever to get satisfactory local service—service that simply connects the major cities—it’ll probably be accomplished by joining with the AC Transit district as did voters in Fremont, Newark and Union City in 1974.

In contrast, we’re curious to see what magic the newly formed C C C T A will use to improve existing AC Transit service when it takes over the latter’s routes.

In the interests of efficiency and maximum cost control, let’s make the best use of existing transit management and operating know-how. AC Transit should run the buses. BART should run the trains. Whatever money is saved through consolidation could be used to buy more buses or more B A R T trains.
"Driver, do you take this Driver?" is the question during onboard nuptials.

ARTICULATED VOWS — Saying "I dos" in the bend-in-the-middle of an articulated bus this month were AC Transit drivers Joyce Stephenson and Victor Ramos, Jr. From Richmond Division, the wedding coach went to Kennedy Grove Park, for the vows, then to the yard for the reception.

THE COVER — Marching down the aisle for one January bride meant the aisle of an articulated bus (Joyce Stephenson and Victor Ramos, Jr., bride and groom, are AC Transit drivers). The onboard site proved particularly tight when newspaper and TV reporters showed up. Nevertheless, it had all the elements of the usual wedding: bouquets, a beaming bride and groom (larger photo), and best wishes being offered by one and all including (smaller photo) AC Transit Director William E. Berk.

CHARTERED BUSS — It's not every day that bus driver marries bus driver with bus drivers as attendants. It's even more unusual when the couple is married inside a bus by an ordained minister (Sam Clark) who also is a bus driver. As in more conventional nuptials, however, the couple headed for the reception afterwards. But in a bus, of course.

Thomas Lawson, veteran driver, dies

Thomas W. Lawson, Jr., 57, an Emeryville Division driver, died following a heart attack December 24. He had been an employee for 29 years.

Lawson apparently became ill while operating his Line E-San Francisco bus. He had activated an emergency alarm and pulled the vehicle to the curb at 47th and Grove Streets, Oakland. He was taken from the scene to Providence Hospital but was reported dead on arrival.

A resident of Richmond, Lawson is survived by his mother, Alice E. Lawson and sisters, Mariam Lawson and Irvil Holeyfield.

The retirement round-up

- Russell L. Beninger, Superintendent, Charter Service, 35 years.
- Larry Felty, Driver, Emeryville Division, 13 years.
- Bob Gettys, Assistant Risk Manager, 11 years.
- August Giuliani, Driver, Emeryville Division, 20 years.
- Carl Glover, Driver, Newark Division, 16 years.
- Stanley A. Hall, Jr., Maintenance, Emeryville Division, 25 years.
- Wilma Morgan, Driver, Richmond Division, 31 years.
- Daniel F. Quinlan, Driver, Seminary Division, 30 years.
- John E. Self, Driver, Seminary Division, 21 years.
Actions of the Board

At an adjourned regular meeting November 25, the Board of Directors:
- Referred to management for evaluation all bids received for furnishing shop tools and equipment, on motion of Director McDonnell.
- Approved a series of service changes, on motion of Director Rinehart.
- Authorized General Manager to undertake market survey in Fremont and Newark, on motion of Director McDonnell.

At a regular meeting December 9, the Board of Directors:
- Authorized General Manager to participate in joint procurement of automotive filters and to advertise and seek bids for printing timetables and for the modification of two bus washers, on motion of Director Rinehart.
- Awarded contract to Gillig Corp. for 131 buses, on motion of Director Rinehart.
- Approved service modifications on Lines A and B and 80/81, on motion of Director Fajans.
- Approved specified health and welfare benefits for Board members on motion of Director Bettencourt.

At an adjourned regular meeting December 23, the Board of Directors:
- Approved award of contract to Oil Filter Service Company for furnishing automotive filters, in joint procurement with Regional Transit Association, on motion of Director Bettencourt.
- Approved award of contract to lowest responsive bidders for furnishing shop tools and equipment and authorized General Manager to purchase on the open market those items for which no bids were received, on motion of Director Bettencourt.
- Approved revised District transfer policy and signed intent to offer, as soon as possible, monthly passes for students, youths, and the elderly/handicapped, on motion of Director Holmes (see story, pg. 4).
- Approved minor schedule modifications on Lines 64 and 40/43, on motion of Director Fajans.
- Adopted resolution fixing and establishing District ward boundaries, on motion of Director Bettencourt.
- Authorized President or appointee to attend “Transit at a Crossroads” conference in Denver Jan. 7-8, 1982, on motion of Director Bettencourt.