25th ANNIVERSARY 1960-1985

District marks
Quarter-century
Service milestone
Official opening

Center to serve many learning needs

AC Transit’s Training and Education Center, officially opening this month, is an important new resource that will enable the District to develop the highly-trained, motivated employees who will plan and provide East Bay bus operations in the coming years.

This $2.5 million Center is the induction point for newly-hired bus drivers and entry-level maintenance employees. In addition to receiving basic orientation, drivers are trained on the Center’s own off-road driving course before facing the challenge of wheeling full-size buses in traffic on city streets.

Key features of the center include:
• An interactive computerized route training system.
• Classrooms equipped with the latest in data- and word-processing systems, and voice communications equipment.
• Fully-equipped Maintenance classrooms, with lift bays, service pits, tools and equipment similar to types found in the Operating Division shops.
• A replica of the bus component remanufacturing equipment and facilities employed at Central Maintenance Center.

Shepard takes national transit post

Ward V Director Linda I. Shepard, Board Vice-President, has been unanimously elected Vice President-Human Resources by the American Public Transit Association.

She will be involved in shaping improved employment and career advancement programs for a wide range of transportation personnel. “This is a great opportunity for me to address directly many of transit’s personnel-development issues,” Shepard said.

On AC Transit’s board since 1982, Shepard represents Fremont, Newark and South Hayward. She is a communications consultant.
MTC award honors transit coordination

Cooperative programs spotlighted

Acting General Manager Nat Gage (right) accepted the MTC's "Award of Merit" on behalf of all Regional Transit Association member firms. MTC Commissioner William Luclus (left) offered congratulations.

As one of the six member organizations which comprise the Regional Transit Association, AC Transit shared in the honors accorded RTA last month by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission at its 1985 awards ceremonies.

RTA's "Award of Merit" recognized joint efforts toward improved Bay Area transit coordination and toward helping female/minority-owned enterprises to do business with transit. RTA programs which earned MTC approval included:

- Coordination of public transit services during the Democratic National Convention in San Francisco with the aim of carrying regular patrons while accommodating the mobility needs of 30,000 delegates and other visitors. A special RTA task force met regularly prior to the convention to hammer out the complicated logistics and schedules involved in this undertaking.
- Creation of a clearing-house where employers can obtain passes for eight transit systems to sell to employees at work-sites.
- Establishment of a uniform certifying system for minority/female enterprises seeking contracts with Bay Area transit organizations and the MTC.
- Sponsorship of annual seminars to orient minority/female firms to the needs of transit operators and, conversely, to provide information about such firms to the operators.
- Organization of a career development program which graduated 110 transit employees last summer after they had completed sessions in supervisory and management skills.

Acting General Manager Nat Gage accepted the "Award of Merit" on behalf of all the RTA organizations, which, besides AC Transit, include BART, MUNI, SamTrans, Golden Gate Transit, and Santa Clara County Transit.

AC, BART study new pact for linkage

For the second year, AC Transit and BART are considering an agreement for greater linkage of operations through a network of bus-to-train, train-to-bus service. The proposal discussed by AC Transit Directors September 24 calls for the District to provide some $3.8 million in "feeder" bus service during a period which extends through June, 1986. It provides also for a $1.7 million payment by BART as partial recompense for passenger transfers issued in the course of the wheels-to-rails service.

In the new agreement, AC Transit will be aiming to achieve the maximum number of coordinated bus/train "meets" (five to seven-minute transfer times between bus and train).

AC Transit's initial pact for providing beefed-up service to East Bay BART stations, signed in September, 1984, extended through June, 1985. BART Express bus services (part of that 1984 agreement) remain unchanged for Fiscal 1985-86.

District drivers Poston and Price, three retirees die

Two AC Transit drivers and three retirees have died within recent weeks.

Ardell Poston, 60, an East Oakland Division driver who had been employed by the District for nine years, died October 2 in Oakland. Poston is survived by a daughter, Rhonda Fredericks. He lived in Oakland.

Louis Price, 53, who was a Richmond Division driver with 15 years of AC Transit service, died October 3 in Pittsburg. He leaves a daughter, Karen Price. Price was a resident of Pittsburg.

A long-time transit retiree, Franklyn R. Lloyd, 94, died September 19. His retirement occurred in 1955, when he completed a 45-year career with Key System, AC Transit's predecessor. His position at retirement was purchasing agent.

Lloyd, whose home was in Santa Rosa, is survived by a son, Franklyn J., and three daughters. They are Rebecca Griswold, Ruth Rodriguez, Lila Heuer, Roy Pitts, and John Pitts.

Frank J. Howell, 73, who was an Emeryville Division driver when he retired in 1973 after nearly 27 years of service, died October 20 in Vancouver, Washington, where he made his home.

Survivors include his widow, Sue, and daughters Sandra Mikeself and Sue Howell.
District’s history is tied to growing with an expanding Bay region

1960: building on a long-time transit tradition

AC Transit, California’s first public transit district, noted its quarter-century of service this month. Though the System actually dates from 1955 passage of a California law establishing the state’s first special transit service district, buses bearing the District’s now-familiar winged-oval logo rolled out of the yard for the first time on October 1, 1960.

Twenty-five years ago when the new public agency took over from a failing private operator, bus service to the East Bay required some 600 coaches to serve 38 million annual riders in an area populated by about 900,000. Today, the District requires an 850-bus fleet to carry 80 million passengers annually among a population which has ballooned to 1.6 million.

Service growth in the past quarter-century has been as dramatic as the changes in population centers of the metropolitan and suburban East Bay. In 1960, the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District’s operating area consisted of 13 cities in the two counties indicated in the agency’s formal title. In 1985, AC Transit operates some 170 routes (some under contract with other jurisdictions) that spread out to cover about 650 square miles of the two counties. A few routes still are operated in near-rural spaces; but today, those routes are far removed from Oakland, the hub of the service area, and the intervening expanses are filled with burgeoning suburbs.

The District got off to an auspicious start in 1960 by adding 250 then-new GMC coaches and a host of innovations, such as intercity express routes, to the service inherited from its predecessor organization. And in the ensuing years, AC Transit built a national reputation for excellence in service delivery and fleet maintenance.

Today, the fleet includes a wide range of revenue vehicles — from 60-foot articulated MANs to new 23-foot Neoplan acquired for testing in neighborhood service. Support for this diverse fleet — and for tomorrow’s additions —

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FOCUS: Transit People and Projects

More recognition awards Go to District employees

With selection of the latest honorees in the Employee Recognition Program (pictured on this page), the District announced plans for a new competition among those employees who keep AC Transit buses clean, fueled, and ready for service. Ground rules are now being established for this new program, kicked-off by a surprise inspection of coaches for cleanliness of seats, floors, stairwells, windows (inside and out), and exteriors, especially wheels and rear panels.

Planners of this upcoming competition-for-excellence among service employees are Diane Nygaard, programming and analysis manager; Gene Gardiner, operations center manager; and Glenn Andrade, purchases and stores manager.

TOP PERFORMERS — In the words of his immediate supervisor, Emeryville Superintendent "Mo" Gross, who nominated him as Employee of the Quarter, Thomas P. Ward (top, with wife Greta) "is an outstanding Dispatcher and is an asset to the District." He was commended further for his good working habits, dependability, and dedication. In Ward, longevity combines with quality, because he has been a transit employee since 1946, when he joined AC Transit's predecessor as a driver. He has served as a dispatcher since 1954. A second Emeryville employee singled out for honors this month is Larry Slate (above, left, with wife Sharon), who was chosen Mechanic of the Quarter. According to Slate's immediate supervisor, Herman Johnson, the award winner "has received numerous letters of commendation for his conscientious work." Slate joined the District in 1969 as a driver, transferring to Maintenance in 1975 as a mechanic. He recently was promoted to Mechanic AA. This month's third person to receive Employee Recognition honors is James C. Taylor (above, right). In the words of his immediate supervisor, Richmond Division Superintendent Lee Skilling, Taylor "has consistently demonstrated a high level of productivity, along with a high quality of work performance, during his 30-plus years with AC Transit and its predecessor company, Key System Transit Lines." Taylor, also a 25-year Safe Driver, received added praise for his outstanding job attendance record.

TURNING SILVER — The marking of AC Transit's "official" 25th birthday at the divisions began very early on the mornings of October 1 and 2, with ceremonies honoring a range of employees who have given extra measures of conscientious service over a period of years. Also offered were such traditional party touches as banners and refreshments, including catered breakfasts or lunches served throughout the celebration days so as to include different work-shifts. The food and fanfare over, however, employees such as these at Richmond Division, took up the daily routine of bringing District bus service to East Bay passengers.

AC UPDATE — AC Transit Board President William J. Bettencourt, guest of honor at the October meeting of the Retirees Club, described recent events and suggested ways in which District "alumni" can lend continued support. In addition, he presented members of the group with 25-year anniversary pins. Retirees Club officer John Krajcar, former Purchases and Stores manager, is at right.
It's not such a small wall after all

China's Great Wall may be more famed and photographed, but Emeryville Division's Small Wall is currently getting a measure of attention too. It's a structure some 400-feet in length stretching across the front of AC Transit's 45th and San Pablo Ave. yard, where serious construction is now underway.

The District's Little Wall, however, is just one part of a construction program which is giving Emeryville Division personnel plenty of challenges.

Getting all the mass of equipment and personnel organized in a new mode of operations while continuing to meet service demands, Emeryville people have found, can put major demands on the skills and patience of the whole division.

According to Emeryville's General Superintendent Loren Ball, the yard is currently operating "with less than one-third the area previously available" before facilities improvement construction started earlier this year. To meet this space problem, 100 buses are stored part-time at a temporary location in Berkeley. An additional 16 buses have been moved to the Richmond operational yard, and another 9 are being held at Newark.

"We have been able to maintain operations quite well under the circumstances," Ball says, looking over the busy yard. "We have not missed any runs as a result of the current construction, but it has been tense a few times."

Behind the length of wall, which parallels San Pablo Avenue, construction workers are busy putting up a new operations building, installing a bus wash rack and fuel island, and tearing up old chunks of asphalt for replacement. The barrier - for security and noise reduction - is made of 6,000 textured blocks and rises to between 11 and 12-feet. In time, the wall will run all the way around the perimeter of the division.

"This is going to be a very impressive operational facility," Ball says of the future yard.

Current construction time-tables call for the Emeryville facility to be fully operational in late 1986.
At an adjourned regular meeting September 24, the Board of Directors:

- Authorized two District representatives to attend APTA's annual Transit Data Summaries Conference in November in Orlando, Florida, on motion of Director Shepard.
- Authorized Acting General Manager to enter into contract with BART to provide “feeder” bus services for Fiscal Year 1985-86, subject to specified revisions and legal approval, on motion of Director Fajans (see story, Pg. 5).
- Approved contract award to S. J. Amoroso Construction Company/Verrett Construction Company for East Oakland Division reconstruction; authorized Acting General Manager to issue Request for Proposal for a fleet maintenance training program, on motion of Director McDonnell.
- Authorized four added non-management Print Shop positions, on motion of Director McDonnell.
- Authorized travel of Director Wiggins to attend the October COMTO meeting in Los Angeles, on motion of Director Nakadegawa.

Now 25, System is modernizing, adapting to meet new era.

Equally important are the new tools incorporated in the facilities and the new processes being adopted and adapted to District usage.

Even while celebrating with pride a quarter-century of accomplishment, AC Transit looks with great anticipation and keen interest to the completion of this comprehensive modernization program for meeting the challenges of a demanding decade.