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# Transit-Times



Radio "voice" given  
modern bus fleet

TRANSIT



## Entire modern bus Fleet tied into two Way radio network

*INSTALLATION—Walter Sandoval mounts radio head control on bus.*



AC Transit's entire modern bus fleet was taking to the airways this month as two-way radio sets were installed in another 160 buses.

With 300 buses already tied into the instant communications network, completion of the current project will result in 460 coaches with radio units before the end of August.

Fifteen buses now on order and an option pending for 15 more will bring the total to 490 buses hooked into the radio system.

The installation program is proceeding at the rate of five buses a day and will bring "a voice" to every bus purchased by the District since it went into operation in 1960.

With the exception of 237 other model coaches, rolled into service during peak commute hours, all buses on local, intercity express and transbay lines will be equipped with radio communication.

## Leigh, Wilson, start active retirements

*Alvin G. Leigh* of Richmond Division ended 44 years of service with AC Transit in June and promptly left on an extended trip which took him to Alberta, Canada, among other places.

Activity and movement are normal for 68-year-old Leigh, however. Both he and his wife are active in a square dancing group and, a few years ago, Leigh went through a fast "do-sey-so" with a mem-

ber of the Japanese Royal Family while Her Highness was visiting the United States.

Cost of the equipment, including an additional base station for a third channel, is \$178,788. A federal grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation covers approximately half of total costs.

Since 1967, when the first radios were installed, the two-way system—linking buses and supervisor cars with central dispatching headquarters—has proven invaluable from an operational standpoint.

Radio direction permits instant rerouting around traffic tie-ups or other street conditions and permits improved use of equipment, which can be dispatched as needed.

An unexpected "dividend" has been valuable community assistance.

Drivers have spotted fires, robberies and assaults. They also have summoned help for passengers on board buses and for other residents in need, receiving credit in many cases for life-saving acts.

Among other honors, Leigh won the coveted "Golden Wheel Award for Distinguished Service" in June, 1968.

Calimesa, a San Diego suburb, gained a solid citizen last month when *Carl O. Wilson* moved to that Southern California town after 29 years of service.

## People to decide transit future

AC Transit will go directly to the people to determine what the people want in the way of future bus service.

Expectantly, that's the system of service AC Transit will provide when BART begins operations.

Alan L. Bingham, general manager of AC Transit, reiterated this District policy this month in the first of a series of appearances before community groups.

Bingham spoke before the Alameda County Mayors' Conference on future urban transportation objectives. Taking part were BART representatives.

Referring to what had been listed on the agenda as "competition for patron-

sent to AC Transit's Board of Directors for consideration.

Before the board takes final action, however, rerouting proposals will be submitted to numerous public agencies and organizations to aid in determining exact public wishes.

The District expects to continue service—at least during the initial period of BART operation—in those areas where transit users still can make a faster trip by bus rather than by using a feeder bus and transferring to a train at a BART station, Bingham said.

From Webster Street in Alameda, as an example, it is expected to take a

AC Transit and BART have changed "sides" in an unusual move toward resolving an important phase of coordination—physical procedures for adult passenger transfer between the two systems.

BART's preferred plan provides for passengers making a round trip.

AC Transit's preferred plan provides for round trip passengers, as well as those making a single one-way trip.

To try to reach a solution, BART is assuming AC Transit's objective and is attempting to develop its own plan to accomplish this purpose.

Conversely, AC Transit is following the same procedure with the BART plan.

Both agencies then will meet in the hope of arriving at a mutually agreeable plan for handling of intersystem passenger transfers.

age," Bingham said he felt there was no need to make allusion to competition with BART, since it didn't exist.

"Our purpose is to encourage more people to use public transit. We're competing with the private automobile and trying to improve the quality of public transportation to attract more people from their cars.

"In considering rerouting—and we have completed initial plans for changing virtually every bus line—we approached all communities and neighborhoods so each would have the best quality of transportation that economically can be provided," Bingham told civic leaders.

Rerouting plans have been sent to BART to get the thinking of their technical people from the viewpoint of rapid transit service. Plans then will be pre-

commuter 26 minutes to travel by feeder bus to the downtown Oakland BART station to transfer for a BART ride to San Francisco. It now takes a bus 21 minutes to make the same trip, the chief transit executive explained.

Even though the ride might take longer and involve transferring, some people may want to travel to BART for an exciting train ride in a subway under the bay, Bingham added.

"But if we want to do a conscientious job, we must use caution before abandoning service, in order not to lose any transit riders to private cars.

"With activation of BART, we want to not only retain all riders who are using public transit. We want to build on this foundation and add far greater ridership, as result of the transit speed BART will give many areas," Bingham said.



## "Transit Information—May I help you?"

The phones never ring at AC Transit Information Center. Instead, they wink. Twenty hours a day.

Winking lights indicate callers in need of help. "I'm at the corner of such-and-such streets, and I want to get from here to there." But even the simplest requests can get complicated when the caller is navigating by landmarks, as they frequently do.

Landmark navigation means "I want to go to the Walgreen's on Broadway," for example. Never mind the fact that the drug store hasn't been on that corner for years—the operators in Transit Information do their best to pinpoint the spot and quickly divulge the fastest and most convenient route by bus.

### Satisfaction High

Fourteen regular operators—five more on stand-by—have the information at their fingertips, but frequently they don't need to flip through the route files at all. Though schedule changes come in almost daily, the women who man the phones absorb data nearly as fast as they can read, and give out "the straight dope"

almost as rapidly.

Customer Services Supervisor Zada Malinak has been "on the phones" for 24 years. She has never lost her sense of anticipation, of "who knows what the next call will bring?" Judging from the low turnover, neither have most of her operators, who together handle an average of 2,500 to 3,000 callers a day.

"You have to enjoy dealing with the public—no question about that!" says Zada. "There's a great deal of satisfaction in helping people this way. And the change of pace keeps you constantly on your toes."

Zada, who has been supervising Transit Information for seven years, recalls with particular pleasure that midnight moment in 1960 when she switched from answering "Key System" to "AC Transit Information—may I help you?"

Another highpoint came in 1964 with the installation of the Automatic Call Distribution System. The ACDS, a highly sophisticated electronic device, receives calls and directs them approximately in the order received to available attend-



**LINE OF COMMUNICATION**—Zada Malinak (r), Customer Services Supervisor, helps keep communications flowing at Information Center, Emeryville.



**DOUBLECHECK**—Marilyn Tott scans the wall to make sure the route she recommends is best suited to the caller's need.

ants. When all stations are busy, the ACDS stores the calls until someone is available. Calls waiting for 15 seconds are connected to a delayed announcement machine which explains the wait to the caller.

Part of the ACDS is the supervisor's console, which tells Zada at a glance how many attendants are available, how many calls are connected, and how many customers are waiting.

It also registers the number of calls each operator handles, as well as the number of times all incoming lines are busy. These statistics help in scheduling work hours and in determining efficiency of service.

### "Where's My Lunch?"

A new Transit Information operator spends three months in training. She begins by drawing maps of each route until she is perfectly familiar with District service in all areas. Then she listens in on calls handled by a veteran operator. Before long she too is ready with answers on schedules, routes, special services, fares, transfers—even an occasional request to track down a particular bus that someone has left their lunch on!

Efficiency obviously is more than quantity—though quantity there is, with

nine operators working over a 20-hour weekday schedule.

"On a good day, one operator should be able to handle an average of 350 calls," Zada explains, "but we don't stress speed. Speed is not as important as accuracy and completeness of information. Taking your time with people is more than just good human relations—it cuts down on the number of call-backs."

### Mysterious Caller

Commute hours bring the heaviest business, but 9:30 a.m. is a popular time too. That's when the housewife has her family off to work and school; she's ready to go shopping. Senior citizens too are rarin' to go by bus, especially with their 10 cent fare in effect from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Operator Otha Guiles remembers a call that came in not long after the special rate went into effect.

"What do I have to do to qualify as a senior citizen?" the gentleman asked.

Something in his voice prompted her to ask, "Well, how old are you?"

"Eleven," the caller replied.

**IN A SLOW PERIOD**—Lorrie Mestas gathers pocket schedules, other printed matter for mailing on request. Lorrie often is called on to help Spanish-speaking passengers.







**THE NEW AND THE OLD**—In an experiment to improve interior appearance of coaches and give greater impact to advertisers, AC Transit has extended melamine ceiling panels to the top of standee windows in left photo. Photo at right shows the difference when historical advertising racks are in place.

## New "topside" look for buses

AC Transit wants to improve the interior appearance of its new buses—and at the same time, give more impact to inside advertising.

As result, 15 new coaches ordered for delivery later this year will have melamine ceiling panels extended to the tops of standee windows for a streamlined, open-appearing "new look."

Emphasis will be given, consequently, to the only remaining advertising, featured in 21 by 22 inch curved frames.

The treatment will eliminate historical advertising racks that have extended along the sides—and have occupied a

position above the heads of transit riders since horse car days.

One bus on the property already has been refurbished, with extended paneling, to show an "uncluttered" effect.

In the meantime, two of the 21 by 22 curved frames, one on each side of the coach—have been installed in 350 regular buses, with the possibility the number may be increased to four.

By eliminating other advertising, the space should become more valuable with no resulting loss in revenue.

The usual racks still will be available in the current fleet of 700 buses.

## Preliminary budget adopted for fiscal year

A preliminary operating budget of \$22,452,845 has been adopted for the current fiscal year by AC Transit.

The estimate, approved by the Board of Directors at a meeting late last month, does not provide for increased labor expenses, which are to be arbitrated under a Union-District agreement.

An interim wage increase of 36 cents an hour for bus drivers and a corresponding 8.7 percent boost for other workers is being paid pending the arbitration.

Under the preliminary estimate, total operating revenue is projected at \$17,105,700. Operating expenditures are estimated at \$20,047,145 and equipment renewal and payment of bonds at an additional \$2,405,700.

Anticipated tax receipts, at the current consolidated rate of 19.2 cents per \$100 of assessed valuation, are \$5,379,000. Preliminary figures, without anticipated labor increases, resulted in a balanced budget, with a net surplus of \$31,855.

## Super bus project

### Design sought for future coach

AC Transit's successful experimentation with its articulated bus, the Freeway Train, is being extended to a new super bus project which will change the pattern of future urban transportation.

Goal of the nation-wide program is development of a vehicle with substantially larger passenger carrying capacity.

The National Transportation Center, a non-profit corporation in Pittsburgh, Pa., and six transit properties—including AC Transit—are to participate in the program to design and test a super bus. Federal funds are expected to finance approximately two-thirds of total costs.

The District's part in the project was approved by directors this month. Other participants committed include Dallas, Pittsburgh and Minneapolis, with Atlanta, Los Angeles, New York and New Jersey as potential partners.

AC Transit's experience with the 60-foot long Freeway Train during the past four years has demonstrated a double bus can carry more riders—in this case 77—in greater comfort and at less cost per passenger than a regular 51-pas-

senger bus. As result, the District had pursued acquisition of a fleet of newly designed articulated buses for local transit needs.

That concept now will be given more extensive testing as result of the growing conviction among other operating properties and the U.S. Department of Transportation that a larger bus must be developed if operating expenses are to be kept within bounds.

#### Possible design

The project will begin with close examination of both the articulated bus and the double-decker, widely used now in western Europe. Other possibilities, including new designs, also will be studied. The entire project is estimated to cost \$10,525,000.

After two prototypes are built and tested, a pre-production fleet of up to 100 vehicles will be built and distributed to participants. As result, AC Transit, for its participation, would acquire 16 or 17 of the new models, at an approximate cost of \$32,300 each—less than the current cost of a 51-passenger bus.

## Scenic tour has attraction

The District's 1970 sightseeing tour was playing to a popular "house" this month as tourists and residents took advantage of the opportunity to see scenic attractions in Oakland, Alameda, Piedmont and Berkeley.

A motif of summertime color and flowers was featured in signs and advertising and was further exemplified in the happy attitude of sightseeing riders.

Bus driver Dave Scott again was at the wheel of the bus, while Oakland Chamber of Commerce hostesses took turns narrating "word pictures" of attractions over a loud-speaking system.

Early passengers included two blind women, Mrs. Harry Petrie of Berkeley

and Mrs. Carl Jarvie of Cascade, Idaho, who maintained "you don't have to see to take a sightseeing tour. Perception is mental."

They found the tour a "lot of fun and educational. We heard a lot we didn't know. We could sense the atmosphere."

Riding along was Mrs. Petrie's guide dog, Libby—who slept through the trip.

Among those taking their first look at the East Bay on the bus tour were a group of new Chinese arrivals from Hong Kong. Here for job training at the Opportunities Industrialization Center, they were first introduced to the intricacies of bus riding by training instructor George Silva.



## NEW EMPLOYEES



L. T. Baldonado  
Maintenance  
Seminary



W. E. Barham  
Transportation  
Emeryville



J. S. Barison  
Transportation  
Emeryville



W. R. Benedict  
Transportation  
Emeryville



D. A. Buttlar  
Transportation  
Emeryville



T. B. Davis  
Transportation  
Seminary



C. E. Dodge  
Transportation  
Emeryville



R. E. Gamber  
Transportation  
Emeryville



D. R. Hazen  
Transportation  
Emeryville



D. G. Hopkins  
Transportation  
Emeryville



G. A. Kast  
Schedules  
Emeryville



B. R. Kelly  
Transportation  
Emeryville



C. C. Kendall  
Maintenance  
Emeryville



M. R. Martin  
Transportation  
Seminary



R. D. McVay  
Transportation  
Emeryville



R. A. Peters  
Transportation  
Emeryville



J. W. Scanlon  
Transportation  
Emeryville



C. W. Scott  
Transportation  
Emeryville



H. J. Senst  
Transportation  
Emeryville



E. C. Sessions  
Transportation  
Emeryville



P. Z. Tayco  
Accounting  
General Office



C. L. Thomas  
Transportation  
Emeryville



E. L. Trevino  
Maintenance  
Richmond



T. L. Walls  
Transportation  
Emeryville



C. J. Williams  
Transportation  
Emeryville



T. D. Wright  
Transportation  
Emeryville



R. R. Wynne  
Personnel  
General Office

## Extension of service area seen

AC Transit's service area may be tripled by extending bus lines into sections of Contra Costa and Alameda Counties outside of District boundaries.

This may be the outcome of three separate studies of local and feeder transportation needs being conducted by BART, AC Transit and local governments.

Actual start of studies was awaiting approval of consultant contracts by the U.S. Department of Transportation. The government already has approved a grant of \$175,000 in Federal funds to finance two-thirds of costs.

The engineering studies, to be conducted by DeLeuw, Cather and Co., will recommend routings for BART feeders, as well as local transit service in various communities involved.

Taking part in studies, along with the tri-city region, are central and eastern Contra Costa County and Livermore, Pleasanton and Amador Valley.

AC Transit and BART have one vote apiece on the three boards of control, administering the studies, giving local governments considerable control over work.

Representing Contra Costa County is J. P. McBrien, county administrator, who was elected chairman of the Contra Costa Transportation Board.

Representing the tri-city area are William van Doorn, Fremont councilman, chairman; Robert Plowright, Newark councilman, and Irv Williams, councilman from Union City.

The Livermore-Amador Valley Transportation Board includes W. H. Parness, city manager of Livermore, chairman; James Fales, city manager, Pleasanton; and Paul Ryan, general manager, Valley Community Services District.

Alan L. Bingham, general manager, is representing AC Transit, while L. D. Dahms, director of Planning and Research, is representing BART.

## Records broken by three divisions



**RECORDS**—Safety Engineer Gordon Wadsworth finds records—and records.

Safety engineer Gordon G. Wadsworth was welcomed back from a hospital stay this month by shattered records—a gesture in behalf of the three operating divisions.

Along with giving Wadsworth some broken phonograph records, the drivers gave him something more exciting, a new record in safe operation.

The three divisions totaled 14,697 miles per accident during May. It was the best safe driving record in District history. Also for the first time since August, 1966, all three divisions exceeded the monthly goal of 13,100 miles per accident.

Emeryville Division tallied 14,079 miles Richmond had 16,363 safe driving miles per accident and Seminary Division, 14,644 miles. All drivers enjoyed complimentary doughnuts and coffee.

Wadsworth enjoyed just being back.





Anticipating a good day on the links, Richard Bertz, left, and E. J. Wales check their starting times.



The winners collect their trophies from Alan L. Bingham, general manager. From left: Tom Brand; Bingham; Rockne Green; Al Lawrence.

## Seminary 'pros' sweep Golf tournament

Seminary Division "swingers" made a clean sweep of top honors in the second annual golf tournament.

Despite high winds at Skywest Golf Course in Hayward, bus driver Thomas Brand turned in a low gross score of 81 to take first place. Runnerup Al Lawrence, maintenance, came in with a low gross 83. Rockne Green, also of maintenance, scored a 71 to take low net honors.

A. R. "Tony" Lucchesi headed the committee which arranged the event. Committee members included Bill Green, Jim Davis, Les Minear, D. C. Rodrigues, Mac McDonald, and Joe Galindo.



A happy trio of, left to right, Brad Harriman, Joe Galindo and Robert Gomes tote up their scores.



This toothsome twosome, Les Minear, left, and Revert Thornton, inspect their clubs carefully.

Golfers, left to right, Howard Beebe, John Larson, Frank Gardin and Ozro Gould discuss the hazards of Hayward's Skywest Course before setting out on a round of the "ancient and honorable game."



Jim Davis, left, and Walter Anderson, standing, find it hard to believe Don Boyer's and Howard Keltner's story that their golf balls weigh so much it was necessary to rent a golf car to ride in.



## Slight revenue gain

Passenger revenue showed an increase during May, but riding was down on East Bay and transbay lines.

Fare box revenue for the month totaled \$1,308,546, an increase of \$24,061 or 1.87 percent over \$1,284,485, collected in May, 1969. On East Bay lines, passenger revenue was \$704,698, a decrease of 1.52 percent compared to year ago revenue of \$715,593. Transbay revenue totaled \$603,848, up 6.14 percent over May, 1969 revenue of \$568,892.

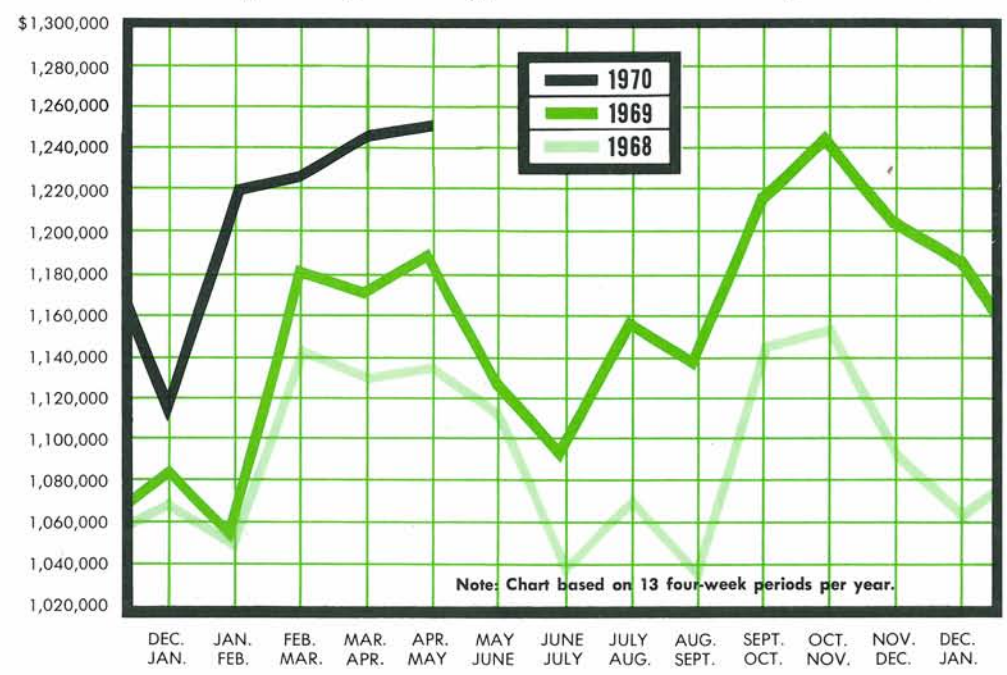
Commute book sales were up 13.1 percent, with a total of \$247,065, compared to sales of \$218,543 in the same month a year ago.

The number of passengers carried was 4,487,374, down 3.65 over the year-ago riding count of 4,657,483. East Bay riding showed a decrease of 3.35 percent, with a count of 3,248,381 passengers compared to the 3,360,967 who rode in May, 1969. On transbay lines, 1,238,993 riders were carried, down 4.44 percent over the 1,296,516 who rode in the same month a year ago.

Operations costs during the month were \$1,681,968, up \$102,245 or 6.48 percent over year-ago expenses of \$1,579,723. The District operated 2,106,589 miles of service, an increase of .14 percent over year-ago mileage of 2,103,686.

Total income of \$1,914,365 was sufficient to cover operational costs, depreciation and bond debt requirements. The transit industry nationally showed a decrease in revenue passengers for the month of 8.6 percent.

### 3 year passenger revenue comparison





# Actions of the Board

At a special meeting June 19, the Board of Directors:

- Authorized the General Manager to execute interim agreement between AC Transit and Division 192, Amalgamated Transit Union, on motion of Director Bettencourt.

- Instructed District Secretary to communicate appreciation and commendation to Superior Judge R. L. Bostick for efforts which led to resumption of bus service, on motion of Director Copeland.

- Granted non-union employees an increase in basic compensation and fringe benefits, on motion of Director McDonnell.

• • •

At an adjourned regular meeting June 24, the Board of Directors:

- Referred bids for bus transfers and identification checks to General Manager for review and recommendation, on motion of Director McDonnell.

- Adopted retention schedule for official historical records, on motion of Director Bettencourt.

- Adopted preliminary operating estimate of \$22,452,845, for 1970-71, on motion of Director Bettencourt. (See story, Pg. 6)

- Approved participation in nationwide project to develop improved recruiting and selection testing for driver applicants, on motion of Director Copeland.

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At a regular meeting July 8, the Board of Directors:

- Awarded contract to Globe Ticket Co. for transfers and identification

## Transit-Times

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Telephone (415) 654-7878

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checks, on motion of Director Copeland.

- Approved discontinuing special express service to Oakland Athletics games from downtown Oakland, El Cerrito Plaza and South Shore Shopping Center, Alameda, due to lack of patronage; re-routing Line 57C in Coliseum area; discontinuing extension on Line 12-West 14th St. into now inactive Oakland Army Base Post Office Annex, on motion of Director Bettencourt.

- Increased tariff on special express service operated to sporting events, on motion of Director Bettencourt.

- Authorized participation in project to develop super bus, on motion of Director Bettencourt. (See story, Pg. 7)

AC Transit  
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