

Vol. 20, No. 12

JUNE 1978

# Transit-Times



**Articulated coaches will ease  
Space crunch on heavily-used lines**



A couple of weeks ago when I was riding the 78 bus to work, I somehow forgot my purse when I got off. By the time I missed it, the bus had already started. To make an almost tragic story short, thanks to two of your employees, I got my purse back before the day was over.

I would like to express my extreme gratitude to the bus driver and to *Lorrie Trevino* in the Lost and Found department.

Shirley A. Dozier  
Richmond

\* \* \*

I wanted to take a few moments to express my appreciation of one of your employees. Bus driver *Fanny Lucas* is one of the nicest, friendliest, and most considerate drivers I've met.

She always made a point to have a cheery "hello" ready, and when I caught her bus late at night, it was comforting to have such a cheerful driver.

Our thanks to Fanny.

Mr. and Mrs. James Fredenburg  
Oakland

\* \* \*

We would like to express our appreciation to Driver *J. J. Colvin* for the services provided for a field trip to Mission San Jose/Fremont last month.

Mr. Colvin's courteous service and consideration added to the pleasure of the day for the 49 fourth graders of Bay School. Most of all, his obvious concern for the comfort and safety of his passengers helped us all relax and enjoy the bus ride!

Adelaide Jenike  
Jo Ellen Gardner  
E. Bagnes,  
Bay School  
San Leandro

## Our 'Stockholders' Write

Today I boarded a bus at 12th & Oak.

Having an arm in a sling because of a fractured shoulder, I found it quite difficult to ride the bus because the driver started and stopped with such suddenness that it was difficult balancing myself even while seated. I think the driver should realize that he has people on the bus.

Diva Butler  
Oakland

(Ed. Note: Your letter has been referred to the Transportation Department for investigation and corrective action, since you provided sufficient information to identify the operator.)

\* \* \*

Since I will be unable to attend your meeting June 14 at which I understand you will discuss measures to respond to cuts imposed (or expected) as a result of Prop. 13 — I am writing to express my views.

I am highly dependent on AC Transit bus service. I would ask that you consider persons like myself and others such as the elderly, before cutting all weekend bus service and transbay service paralleling BART runs.

In regard to weekend service, I'd far rather have buses run (e.g. on Telegraph) only once an hour and pay a higher (35¢) fare than have the runs completely cut out.

Thank you for your consideration — and the best of good thinking in this difficult chore.

Susan E. Miller  
Berkeley

(Ed. Note: AC Transit's Directors and management are seeking assistance from all possible sources in the wake of passage of Proposition 13 in order to maintain a maximum of bus service and minimize inconvenience and hardship to our patrons.)

## Proposition 13 aftermath

### Board seeks higher fares, State aid

District Directors are turning to fare boxes and the State Legislature for greater financial support in the wake of passage of Proposition 13.

At a meeting June 28, Directors received an initial analysis — which they requested earlier — of environmental impact which could result from fare adjustments.

That analysis, required by State law, indicated a ten-cent raise in the basic local fare — 25 cents since 1958 — would, with increases in other fares, generate substantially more revenue yet have no "significant adverse impact" on the environment.

Directors are scheduled to consider fare adjustments in mid-July.

In the State Legislature, the District's post-election plight — after passage of Prop. 13, the Jarvis-Gann property tax limiting measure — has prompted interest among lawmakers, Acting General Manager Robert E. Nisbet told Directors.

Sen. James Mills, President pro Tempore of the State Senate, and others, in-

cluding Assembly Speaker Leo McCarthy, drafted legislation which would assure AC Transit of continued use of \$17 million in Transportation Development Act funds.

In addition, Nisbet noted, lawmakers have assured that the District will get its proportion of property taxes permitted by Jarvis-Gann — a share estimated at \$5.5 million.

"These funds, together with increased fare box revenue, will permit us to operate about 60 percent of our current service," Nisbet said.

"While the prognosis for additional funds looks favorable," he added, "we cannot at this time assume we'll receive sufficient funds to operate more than the 60 percent level."

"It would appear that the final operating estimate for fiscal 1978-79 could be adopted in August with any necessary cuts in service and layoffs of personnel commencing thereafter," Nisbet said.

### Fare box to take higher toll?

These are typical fare increases being considered by the Board of Directors. If adjustments go into effect, only senior citizen/handicapped fares would remain at the current level.

		Present	Proposed
Local	Adult	25¢	35¢
	Youth	15	25
	Sunday & Holiday		
	Pass	60	70
Express	Adult Zone 1	25	35
	Adult Zone 2	35	45
	Adult Zone 3	40	50
	Adult Zone 4	50	60
	Youth (No Zone)	15	25
Transbay			
	Adult Zone 1	60	75
	Adult Zone 2	70	\$1.00
	Adult Zone 3	75	1.10
	Adult Zone 4	85	1.25
	Youth Zone 1	25	30
	Youth Zone 2	30	35
	Youth Zone 3	30	35
	Youth Zone 4	35	40

In an appeal to State legislators, Acting General Manager Robert E. Nisbet sought support which would give the District its share of property taxes and release State monies already earmarked for AC Transit.

"Even with these requests granted," Nisbet told the lawmakers, "it's our best estimate that we will be able to operate only 60-to-70 percent of our current service."

"If, in addition, restrictions are removed on that 25 percent portion of the local half-cent sales tax available to support transit, we could continue an even higher level of service."

"Our District is in the process of raising fares 40 percent. Also, we are taking steps to inaugurate service cuts and employee layoffs."

"Without our requests being granted or other funds being made available, our District would have to cease operations this Fall. It's not possible for fares to be raised sufficiently to pay all operating costs."

## AC Transit aids Radio Alert system

AC Transit is participating in a Radio Alert program in cooperation with police in Fremont, Union City, and Newark. It is similar to an existing alert system in Richmond, Oakland, and Hayward.

Aim of the program is faster police response to such driver-reported situations as traffic accidents or hazards, actual street crime, suspicious activity indicating potential crime, or persons in distress.

Problems on board buses are to be reported in the same manner — drivers reporting to Central Dispatch, which, in turn, contacts police. Buses will display a Radio Alert placard furnished by police.

### Deaths of two pensioners G. Toniatti, M. Reite Reported in recent weeks

Two transit veterans, both of whom retired in 1967, died in May.

*George Toniatti*, 62, a retired driver, died May 6 in Carson City, Nev. He had been employed, initially as a trainman, then as a driver at Emeryville Division, for 21 years at the time of his retirement in 1967. He served in the U. S. Army during World War II.

Funeral services and burial were in Reno.

Toniatti is survived by a son, Edward.

*Martin L. Reite*, 77, an employment supervisor at the time of his retirement in 1967, died May 22 in Denver. At the time he entered retirement, it was noted that, during his 23 years of service for Key System and AC Transit, he was the first "contact" for thousands of employees hired. Though employment was his specialty, he also worked for a time in the charter bureau.

Funeral services were held in Oakland followed by burial in Mountain View. Reite is survived by his widow, Esther, and a son, Dr. Martin Reite, Jr. He lived in Danville.

As part of the reciprocal program, Tri-City police will notify AC Transit dispatchers of any condition requiring re-routing of service or of any law-breaker suspected to be fleeing by bus. This augments AC Transit's own procedure for notifying drivers of such unusual situations.

Feed back on the program will come through quarterly bulletins published by police, giving drivers follow-up information about individual incidents reported.

**THE COVER** — The first of 30 new articulated buses receives finishing touches in the A.M. General plant at Marshall, Texas. These vehicles, designed by Maschinenfabrik Augsburg-Nurnberg of Germany, are scheduled to begin arriving here in mid-July and to go into revenue service shortly thereafter. This lengthy 60-foot coach bends in the middle to better negotiate city streets. During an East Bay road test of a prototype in 1974 (two years before the buses were ordered), riders voiced complimentary comments about the vehicle's comfort, and bus drivers reported it had superior handling qualities. These longer buses will be employed on heavily-patronized lines where their greater capacity will yield direct benefits in terms of operating efficiency. Each articulated coach will seat 69 riders, while standard 40-foot buses seat only 51.

### Divisions meet safety goals

Newark Division drivers shone in last month's safe-driving figures, averaging 71,135 miles between accidents. The other three divisions also met May's safe-driving goal of 13,250 miles per accident.

Seminary Division averaged 16,997 miles per accident in May; Emeryville Division, 13,864 miles; and Richmond Division, 13,318 miles.

Total miles logged by all divisions during the month was 2,702,537.



### Transit Time-Capsule

Was Peralta jinxed?  
1928, 1933 incidents  
Lead some to say so

Was the ferry boat Peralta giving advance warning of what was to be its luckless history when it resisted being launched into Oakland Estuary in 1926?

Those who believe that a craft can be jinxed will find some support for the theory in the ferry's story, though — aside from her balky launching — everything looked auspicious for the Peralta when it was put into service in 1927 as one of the two most up-to-date of the four Key System commute ferries.

Shortly afterwards, however, one of the first of its numerous pier-ramming incidents occurred. Result: \$35,000 in damages to the pier in San Francisco.

This proved only a prelude to the much grimmer mishap which occurred the following year. On Feb. 17, 1928, five of the Peralta's passengers drowned after being washed overboard when the ferry's foredeck suddenly dipped into the bay. The 50-year-old tragedy is still a mystery, though the craft's water ballast system was widely, though unofficially, blamed.

Still to come was the Peralta's — and the Key System's — ordeal by fire. This occurred May 6, 1933, when a \$3 million fire destroyed the ornate Oakland pier terminal. Included in the loss were 14 of the rail coaches used to carry transbay commuters to and from the ferries and — the Peralta itself.

As in the 1928 bay incident, a mystery evolved which never was officially ex-

plained. However, 32 years later a "secret" pier fire report was uncovered which labeled the fire as "definitely incendiary". The report (discovered in old files as AC Transit was moving into its present Oakland headquarters) alluded to a "mysterious man in gray", seen carrying a bundle on the pier the evening of the fire. Was he the "malicious agent" responsible for temporarily halting transbay service, inconveniencing thousands of commuters, and destroying millions in transit property?

The Peralta itself underwent something of a reincarnation when its remains were towed to Puget Sound to become the basic structure for the ferry Kalakala.

Despite the transformation, however, the craft continued the pattern of unexplained mishaps: several pier-ramming incidents occurred before the former Peralta was converted into a cannery in 1967.

**JINXED?** Photographed near Yerba Buena Island during a brief moment of glory (above) the ferry Peralta was reduced in 1933 to a gutted, charred hulk (right). The upper photo was taken near the same spot where, in 1928, five of the Peralta's passengers drowned in a mysterious malfunction of the commute craft.





Adele Vollmer



C. E. Lenhardt



John Nix

## Retirement roster

### End of careers means new beginnings

This spring marks two significant new beginnings for *Adele Vollmer*: her wedding to Eric C. Kinsey and her retirement after 17 years as secretary/receptionist.

Adele's employment dates from the District's formative days. She was secretary to the late Harold Davis, personnel manager, for her first few years of service then functioned in a similar role for about 15 years for E. Sam Davis, who headed the original research and planning function.

Just prior to retirement, she was secretary to Don Larson, current research and planning manager; served as Executive Office receptionist; and maintained the mailing list for Transit-Times.

Her immediate post-retirement, post-wedding plans include a three-week trip to Hawaii. Long-range, she plans to do volunteer work and to enjoy such favorite pursuits as fishing, golfing, and hiking.

Her family includes a son, Gerald Conley, and three grandchildren: Mark, 15; Jerilyn, 13; and Brian, 11.

Operator *John Nix* isn't changing homes as he retires; he's just changing addresses. The mobile home in which he lived in San Pablo has been moved to Clear Lake, where he expects to enjoy the quiet, the scenic vistas, and the fishing.

After nearly 34 years of transporting bus passengers — nearly 17 of these as a driver for AC Transit — Nix now expects to concentrate on transporting himself and wife Charlotte on pleasure trips to various parts

of the U.S. A trip that's already on their schedule is one to Alaska.

Nix joined AC Transit as a driver, mostly for Emeryville Division, after 17 years of previous experience with a Sacramento bus company. Keeping in touch with what's going on here shouldn't be too difficult, even in retirement, since his stepson, Gary Baker, and his brother-in-law, Charles Farrell, both work in the Transportation Department.

From ships to streetcars to buses: that was the route for Operator *C. E. Lenhardt*, retiring June 1, who came to work for Key System in 1945 after four years of Navy duty, including about 32 months in Pacific combat zones.

Exchanging his Navy Chief's uniform for a streetcar motorman's outfit, Lenhardt began his 32½ year transit career. He's served about 30 years as a bus driver, working out of Seminary Division since 1950.

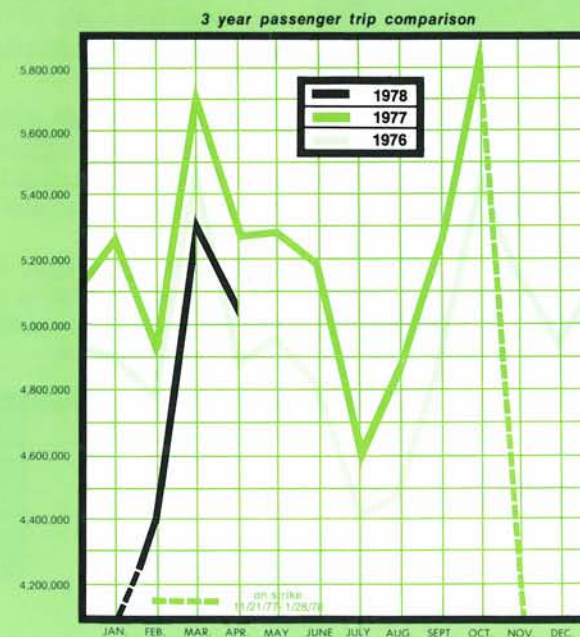
Lenhardt expects to divide his leisure time between maintaining his home in San Lorenzo and keeping tabs on the large family which was created when he and wife Inez combined their children by previous marriages — his six and her four. Now, the couple shares a total of 21 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Devoting time to this large family isn't as complicated as it may sound, Lenhardt says, since most all the offspring live close by in Alameda County.

## April Report

Passenger Trips	April, 1978	April, 1977	% Change
East Bay.....	3,636,120	3,802,687	-4.4
Transbay.....	1,130,187	1,168,825	-3.3
Fremont/Newark.....	108,269	108,774	-.5
Contract Services:			
BART.....	99,539	99,647	-.1
Concord.....	51,192	48,966	4.5
Pleasant Hill.....	11,118	11,234	-1.0
Moraga/Orinda.....	11,226	11,080	1.3
Pittsburg/Antioch/Brentwood*.....	10,085	—	—
Total.....	5,057,736	5,251,213	-3.7
Fare Revenue			
East Bay.....	\$683,565	\$739,037	-7.5
Transbay.....	591,218	613,719	-3.7
Fremont/Newark.....	20,901	20,481	2.1
Contract Services:			
BART.....	32,023	32,058	-.1
Concord.....	8,690	8,376	3.7
Pleasant Hill.....	1,685	1,497	12.6
Moraga/Orinda.....	1,786	1,720	3.8
Pittsburg/Antioch/Brentwood*.....	2,521	—	—
Total.....	\$1,342,389	\$1,416,888	-5.3
Service Miles			
East Bay.....	1,353,874	1,401,917	-3.4
Transbay.....	775,190	778,919	-.5
Fremont/Newark.....	126,412	120,872	4.6
Contract Services:			
BART.....	134,718	134,998	-.2
Concord.....	44,073	44,782	-1.6
Pleasant Hill.....	9,424	9,912	-4.9
Moraga/Orinda.....	15,880	15,047	5.5
Pittsburg/Antioch/Brentwood*.....	31,240	—	—
Total.....	2,490,811	2,506,447	-.6

\*Contract service in Pittsburg/Antioch/Brentwood inaugurated June 6, 1977.



# Actions of the Board

At a regular meeting June 14, the Board of Directors:

- Authorized Acting General Manager to complete an initial environmental analysis to determine whether proposed fare increases could have a significant effect upon the environment, on motion of Director Bettencourt. (See story, Pg. 3)

## San Leandro cancels "Gold Card" program

In the wake of the Jarvis-Gann Initiative, San Leandro is discontinuing its popular "Gold Card" contractual arrangement with AC Transit.

Since the program's inception in 1974, almost 1600 cards have been issued to residents who use them in lieu of fares on off-peak bus service.

San Leandro cites budget cuts resulting from passage of Jarvis-Gann as the reason for discontinuing the program after June 30th.

Gold Card holders 65 or older may still enjoy a seniors' fare discount by obtaining a Bay Region Transit Discount Card.

### Some Saturday service cut

Ten transbay bus lines began operating less frequently on Saturdays as of June 10 because of decreased patronage.

Adjustments were made on Line A-Downtown Oakland, Line B-Grand Ave., Line C-Piedmont, Line E-Clairemont Ave., Line F-Shattuck Ave., Line K-Havenscourt, Line L-Richmond, Line N-MacArthur Blvd., Line O-Alameda and Line R-Hayward.

Pocket timetables with the new Saturday schedules are available from drivers on these lines.

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Oakland, California 94612

Return Requested

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BERKELEY, CA 94707

## Transit Times

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## Park/Ride proves popular

Since opening in mid-March, CALTRANS' "Park-and-Ride" lot at Fruitvale Avenue and the MacArthur Freeway has attracted many motorists.

Traffic checks reveal that 65 to 85 rush-hour travelers park there weekdays and ride peak-hour-only N-F-MacArthur Express buses for the transbay commute trip.

## Train light alerts drivers

A train arrival light is being tested at BART/Bayfair, alerting U-L Line drivers of possible train-to-bus transfer passengers.

The red signal light, installed opposite the U-L coach stop, is activated for 2½ minutes when an eastbound train approaches the station.

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