

# Going Places

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM AROUND THE CTA

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## Blue Line Douglas Branch Funding On Its Way

**T**he CTA Blue Line Douglas Branch is poised to once again become true rapid transit. Early last February, Chicago Transit Board Chairman Valerie B. Jarrett and CTA President Frank Kruesi joined Mayor Richard M. Daley in thanking Vice President Al Gore and U.S. Secretary of Transportation Rodney Slater for the administration's intention to sign a Full-Funding Grant Agreement to fund the rebuilding of the Cermak (Douglas) Branch of the Blue Line.

The agreement is the federal government's commitment to share the \$450.8 million cost of reconstructing the 102-year old rapid transit line. This commitment is particularly noteworthy because proposed funding allocations for 2001 are drawn from a "new start

program" category that traditionally is made up of new projects or the expansion of current service. Under the agreement, the federal government would pay \$349 million, with most of the remaining money coming from Governor George Ryan's Illinois FIRST Program. The Full-Funding Grant Agreement is essentially a contract committing the federal government and the CTA to fund the project at a specified amount over a specified period.

"Thanks to the efforts of Mayor Daley, Chicago aldermen, our Congressmen and Governor Ryan's commitment to public transportation through his Illinois FIRST program, the federal funding is secured to rebuild the Blue Line Douglas branch," said Chicago Transit Board Chairman

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## U-PASS Program Becomes Permanent

**T**he Chicago Transit Board recently voted to make the CTA's University Pass, or U-PASS, a permanent fare-pass program. U-PASS provides full-time college students at participating colleges and universities with unlimited rides on CTA buses and trains during the academic year.

Since its inception in 1998, U-PASS customers have taken more than ten million rides on the CTA, and the number of participating schools has nearly doubled, with more growth anticipated. During the fall of 1999, nearly 40,000 students from 20 schools were served by the U-PASS program. This was a 33% increase over the same time period from the year before.

With the U-PASS, students enjoy the convenience of CTA service at a reduced rate. The Program has demonstrated its potential to expand CTA ridership by attracting new customers, specifically students, who tend to ride during off-peak hours. Students at participating schools pay for the discounted passes as part of the regular fees assessed by the institutions during each academic term.

By making the program permanent, the cost of the U-PASS will gradually increase to \$.60 per calendar day / per full-time student over the course of five years. The increases in price will permit the CTA to recover a greater percentage of its costs.

## WalkAmerica 2000 - "Be a Hero"

You're all invited to be a part of the CTA-March of Dimes Walk-America 2000" team on Sunday, April 30. The purpose of the walk is to raise funds and awareness for the March of Dimes, whose mission is to prevent birth defects and infant mortality through medical research, community services, advocacy and education.

The theme of this year's walk is "Be a Hero". CTA's goal is to have a minimum of 200 "hero" walkers raise over \$20,000 through pledges and donations. Last year, 150 employees participated in the walk and raised over \$11,000.

Information regarding the walk will be posted at all CTA locations. If you are interested in signing up to be a walker and/or team captain, please contact Joe Mitria at 312-664-7200, extension 4917. If you have a specific question regarding any aspect of the walk, please call the CTA March of Dimes Hotline at 312-664-7200, extension 3444.

**Come on, Everyone;—  
let's all be HEROES!**

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# Rail Rodeo

Applications are being accepted for this year's Rail Rodeo Performance Competition. Rail Operators and Customer Assistants are encouraged to showcase their knowledge and skills in this annual fun-filled challenge. The winners from the overall final competitions on July 16 will go on to compete in the International Competition in Boston.

Here is a schedule of events:



- **Now through April 15**  
Applications Accepted
- **Week of April 23**  
Eligible applicants' names posted
- **April 30 through May 13**  
Written tests administered
- **Week of May 16**  
Eligible applicants' names posted
- **May 23 through June 12**  
Route competitions
- **Week of June 25**  
Finalists' names posted
- **July 16**  
Final competition

Applications are available at each rail terminal. For further information, contact your Terminal Manager, Instructor or Customer Assistant Supervisor.

## Going Places

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# News & Views

## Plastic Ties Passing The Test At The CTA

In a continuing effort to find innovative, environmentally friendly and cost-effective ways to operate its system, the CTA has been experimenting for almost two years with using plastic ties for its tracks. The results are encouraging, and suggest that once again the CTA has established a precedent for the rest of the transit industry to follow.

The first 240 plastic ties were installed in 1998 near the California station on the Cermak branch of the Blue Line. A recent inspection showed no deterioration or track alignment problems, nor did the track gauge indicate any sign of widening. In February, the CTA Board approved a contract for 26,000 more plastic ties for the system. Many of these will be used for a tie replacement program this year on the Forest Park branch of the Blue Line.

The ties are made from recycled plastic, and are considered twice as strong as wood, and do not decay. It takes the equivalent of about 1,000 plastic milk bottles to make a single tie, so their use could result in the recycling of 26 million milk bottles. Unlike wood ties, plastic ties can be recycled when their useful life ends.

Plastic ties are expected to last up to 50 years—twice as long as wood ties. Their durability means less disruption for passengers because replacements are needed less frequently. With world supplies of hardwood diminishing, and environmental regulations becoming more stringent, plastic ties will provide a worthy alternative to wood treated with the preservative creosote. Also, by phasing out wood ties, CTA will be able to avoid problems associated with the use of creosoted wood, such as dripping in hot weather onto property below the structure.

## "Off-site" Vending Machines

"Off-site" vending machines are being located in areas of high transit use which do not have direct access to a CTA 'L' station. This initial program may be extended to other locations as the potential demand is evaluated.

Lawndale area businessman Cecil Butler, Dominick's representative Andrea Brands, CTA President Frank Kruesi, CTA Chairman Valerie B. Jarrett, and 24<sup>th</sup> Ward Alderman Michael Chandler at the newly installed CTA vending machine located at the Dominick's Finer Foods store at 3240 W. Roosevelt.



President Kruesi is joined by Navy Pier Director of Public Relations Marilyn Kelly at another TCVM, this one located in the north entryway to the Family Pavilion at Navy Pier.







at cta  
**EMPLOYEES COUNT**

# Employees Count

## What Makes A Champion?

**T**he *Employees Count!* program is proud to announce the "What Makes A Champion" luncheon/forum series to honor the finalists of the 1999 CTA Transit Operations Bus Roadeo and Rail Round-Up Performance Competitions. On February 15, the first of these events was held to honor the bus operators, who were the 1999 Bus Roadeo Circle 30 finalists.

The bus operators were treated to lunch and an opportunity to exchange their thoughts and suggestions on improving their jobs and the CTA overall with President Frank Kruesi and other CTA officials. In the coming weeks, dates for the remaining luncheons will be announced.



## South Shops

### 1st Employee Recognition Awards Ceremony

**O**n February 29, 2000, the South Shops held its first Employee Recognition Awards presentation. Fourteen employees from South Shops were honored with a certificate and *Employees Count!* gifts. Joyce Coleman, Vice President of Employee Services, Ralph Malec, General Manager (South Shops) and Frank LaCoco, Employee Recognition Program Chairman at South Shops were on hand to show support for the honorees.

#### Pictured top row from left:

Carmelita Hubbard, *Employees Count!* Committee; Rita Richardson, *Employees Count!* Committee; Daryl Humbles, award recipient; Mary Branch, award recipient; Mike Johnson, award recipient; Roger Diluigi, award recipient; Chad Jones, award recipient; Dennis Murphy, award recipient; Bill Nolan, award recipient and Joyce Coleman, Vice President of Employee Services

#### Pictured bottom row from left:

Kevin Haff, award recipient; Jeff Swetlik, award recipient; Cletis Parks, award recipient; Ken Nedbal, award recipient and Thomas Hovany, *Employees Count!* Committee

#### Award recipients not pictured:

James Hedin, Marty Lomayestewa and Willie Cox



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**Rolling**

THROUGH  
THE  
YEARS

Please join us in congratulating  
CTA employees who are celebrating  
Special anniversaries this month.

### 43 YEARS

**James Rigney** ..... March 22  
Elevator/Escalator Maintenance,  
Escalator Serviceman

### 35 YEARS

**Everett McBride** ..... March 25  
Bus Instruction, Bus Instructor II

### 30 YEARS

**Samuel Baker** ..... March 2  
Chicago Ave. Garage, Bus Service Supervisor II

**Matthew Frye, Jr.** ..... March 16  
Kedzie Garage, Bus Operator

**Willie Haynes** ..... March 30  
Forest Glen Garage, Bus Operator

**Sessor Howard** ..... March 2  
103<sup>rd</sup> Street Garage, Clerk IV(Bus)

**Rudolph Mayfield** ..... March 6  
Green Line, Yardmaster

**Ralph McKinnon** ..... March 4  
Chicago Avenue Garage, Bus Repairer

**Lugerald Moore** ..... March 26  
74<sup>th</sup> Garage, Bus Operator

**Robert Vandiver** ..... March 23  
Archer Garage, Bus Operator

**Stanley Wiggins** ..... March 5  
Service Delivery, Controller II

### 25 YEARS

**Niela Baronick** ..... March 10  
Claims, Utility Clerk I (Composite)

**Charles Cummins** ..... March 10  
Program and Grant Development,  
Manager CIP Development

**Rogers Dean** ..... March 13  
Chicago Ave. Garage, Bus Service Supervisor I

**August Elke** ..... March 24  
77<sup>th</sup> Garage, Bus Service Supervisor II

**Zaven Guediguian** ..... March 31  
Quality Assurance, Manager  
Procedures and Standards

**Ray Jones** ..... March 24  
Track Maintenance,  
Track Lubricator Maintainer

**Sallie Kilgore** ..... March 24  
Kedzie Garage, Bus Operator

**Rosalba Marton** ..... March 25  
Purchasing Department, Contact Clerk

**Nancy Moll** ..... March 27  
Green Line, Customer Assistant-SD

**Michael Perales** ..... March 3  
Chicago Ave. Garage, Bus Service Supervisor II

**Edward Smith** ..... March 20  
Chicago Avenue Garage, Bus Operator

**Juvenal Valles** ..... March 6  
Kedzie Garage, Bus Operator

**Jesus Vazquez** ..... March 27  
North Park Garage, Bus Operator

**Monica Williams** ..... March 27  
77<sup>th</sup> Garage, Bus Operator



# Employee Profile

## Theodore Allison: 1999 Rail Customer Assistant Champion

**I**n his first Rail Roundup Performance Competition, Theodore Allison demonstrated a high level of knowledge and professionalism that lead to him win the title of the 1999 Rail Customer Assistant Champion.

Currently a Customer Assistant at the Midway Orange Line Terminal, Theodore has been with the CTA for ten years. He has held various positions over the years including Trainman, Motorman, Towerman, Flagman, Ticket Agent, and Operator. This extensive experience contributed to his capture of the championship title.

In addition to enjoying the chance to compete against the CTA's best, Allison says that he likes to "see old friends and meet new ones" at the annual competition.





## Blue Line Funding

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Valerie B. Jarrett. "Now we can move ahead with this project at full speed and be able to greatly improve the quality of service we provide to the Southwest Side."

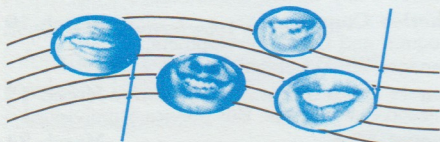
Over the years, the Cermak (Douglas) has deteriorated to the point that nearly half of its 6-1/2 mile length is in "slow zones" that require trains to slow to 15 mph instead of the normal 55 mph. The slow zones can make a trip from the terminal at 54<sup>th</sup>/Cermak to downtown take up to 45 minutes.

CTA President Frank Kruesi added, "Mayor Daley can pedal his bike faster than the speed at which trains travel on the Douglas branch. With the Full-Funding Grant Agreement in place, we will be able to rehabilitate this line and provide these customers with rapid transit that's on-time, clean, safe and friendly."

Thirty percent of the design phase is completed with the remaining design work to be completed by the end of the year, with construction expected to begin next year.

## Employees Count

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### Lending A Voice

Several employees at CTA are interested in starting a mass choir. Participation is strictly voluntary. Rehearsals will be held at CTA's Merchandise Mart offices from 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Details on exact dates will be announced soon.

If you are interested in participating, please call Rita Richardson (*Employees Count!* Employee Recognition Program) at extension 3496. Please leave a message stating your name, voice range and a number where you can be reached.

# Changing Gears

## BUS SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

To accommodate increased ridership and to better serve our customers, the following bus service improvements began with the spring pick on March 19:

### Route Changes

**#36 BROADWAY**—Extended to Desplaines/Harrison, via Harrison, after 10:30pm daily to serve Main Post Office shift change. These buses will not serve the Clark/Polk terminal.

**#63 63<sup>rd</sup>**—Extended to 63<sup>rd</sup> Street beach on weekends/holidays, 9am to 9:30pm. During summer pick, buses will serve the beach daily.

**#72 NORTH**—Extended to North Avenue beach on weekends/holidays, 9:00 am to 9:30pm. During summer pick, buses will serve the beach daily.

### Other Changes

#### #12 ROOSEVELT

Later service daily to Museum Campus (until 1:25am). More frequent service weekday afternoons between UIC Medical Center and Michigan Avenue.

#### #14 SOUTH LAKE SHORE

**EXPRESS**—More frequent morning rush service between 9:00am and 9:30am (every 5 minutes instead of every 10 minutes).

**#22 CLARK**—One additional afternoon evening rush service.

#### #52A SOUTH KEDZIE

All weekday afternoon rush hour trips will be extended to 115<sup>th</sup>/Pulaski, instead of ending at 63<sup>rd</sup>/Kedzie.

#### #57 LARAMIE

More frequent weekend/holiday service (every 15 minutes instead of every 20 minutes).

#### #79 79<sup>TH</sup>

More frequent morning rush service between Western and Lakefront (every 2 to 3 minutes instead of every 3 to 4 minutes).

#### #92 FOSTER

Later service on weekends and holidays, last trip leaves Jefferson Park at 8:00pm; Berywn Station at 8:35pm.

#### #135 WILSON/LASALLE

**EXPRESS**—Afternoon/evening rush hour service starts 15 minutes earlier at 4:00pm.

#### #145 WILSON-MICHIGAN

Increased trips from Irving Park during morning rush periods and from Wacker Drive during afternoon rush periods.

#### #146 MARINE-MICHIGAN

Increased trips during afternoon rush period from Wacker Drive.

#### #147 OUTER DRIVE EXPRESS

Morning rush service starts 15 minutes earlier, at 5:45am.

#### #151 SHERIDAN

Morning rush hour trips traveling south from Diversey between 8:30am and 9:15am.