



Welcome to another issue of The Green Pennant Special. It is through this publication that we endeavour to keep the membership informed on happenings in the organization and the transit industry.

*** DECEMBER MEETING ***

The December meeting of The Omnibus Society of America was held on December 6, 1991, at the Welles Park Field House, located at 2333 W. Sunnyside in Chicago. The meeting began at 7:00 pm.

Our program for the evening was presented by Tom Welsh and was a slide presentation of the different transit facilities formally and currently in use in that city.

This meeting also saw the annual election of directors to the OSA board. Directors Melvin Bernero and William Shapotkin were reelected to three year terms.

*** JANUARY MEETING ***

The January meeting of The Omnibus Society of America will be held on January 3, 1992, at the Welles Park Field House, located at 2333 W. Sunnyside in Chicago. The meeting will begin at 7:00 pm.

Member and OSA director William Reynolds will present a slide presentation entitled "BAY STATE MOTOR BUSES" featuring motor bus operations in Massachusetts outside the Boston area.

*** EXTRA BOARD ***

Amtrak train, the Silver Meteor, derailed in Palatka, Florida Tuesday, December 17, 1991. The train, traveling between New York and Tampa tore through two unoccupied homes when it left the tracks rounding a curve.

Fifty-five people were taken to hospitals with the most serious injuries being helicoptered to out-of-town hospitals.

When the Silver Meteor derailed it was carrying about 170 passengers and a crew of sixteen.

*** CTA CORNER ***

THE CTA HAS ANNOUNCED that it will renovate or spruce up 23 rapid transit stations, build a new one, test a computerized bus management system and continue to renovate rail cars and track under next years \$1649 million capital budget.

The spending plan, which is still tentative because of uncertainty over the amount and availability of state, federal and regional transportation funds, was to be considered by the CTA Board on December 11th.

Under the plan, the CTA will spend \$31 million for work on rapid transit stations. Eleven will receive extensive work, including design changes to make them accessible to passengers in wheelchairs.

These eleven stations are: State/Lake on the Loop "L"; Fullerton and Belmont on the Howard line; 35th on the South Side Main line and Ashland on the Englewood line; 95th on the Dan Ryan line, Harlem on the Lake Street line, Jefferson Park and Logan Square on the O'Hare line; Halsted on the Congress line, and 54th on the Douglas line.

Two other stations, Western on the O'Hare line and Western on the Ravenswood line, also will get extensive repairs (cont on page 3)

GREEN PENNANT SPECIAL STAFF

Melvin Bernero - Editor
William Shapotkin - Assistant Editor
John LeBeau - Circulation Manager
Andris Kristopans - Staff
William Shapotkin - Reporters

Please send any news articles to:

Melvin Bernero
3440 W. Evergreen Avenue
Chicago, IL 60651-2309

Green Pennant Special is distributed to the members of The Omnibus Society of America at no additional charge and is published in lieu of the regular meeting notice. There is no set frequency of issue.

(cont. from page 2)

Ten other stations will receive cosmetic improvements such as cleaning, painting and new lighting. Those stations are Oak Park, Austin, Central, Laramie, Homan and California on the Lake Street line; Clinton in the Dearborn Subway; Harrison in the State Street subway; Cicero on the Douglas line, and Desplaines on the Congress line.

The agency will spend \$32.6 million for track and structural work throughout the system, \$13.2 million to continue rehabilitation of rapid transit cars and \$13.6 million to upgrade rail maintenance shops.

The bus division plan calls for \$1.5 million to test a computer system to monitor the location of buses on the street and make adjustments to improve service. If the pilot project, which involves six South Side routes is successful, it will be expanded to the entire system by 1996.

THE CTA HAS NOTICED a huge increase in token sales since they announced a fare increase to take effect the end of December.

The CTA normally has 5 million tokens in circulation during a normal period, but close to 9 million tokens are now outstanding, nearly the entire full fare token supply of the authority.

The feeling at the authority is that some of the token vendors, primarily currency exchanges, are hoarding tokens until the fare hike goes into effect, thereby making a 30 cent profit on each token sold.

With this in mind, the CTA is talking about introducing a new token with the fare hike. The token would be bi-metal, brass with a steel center, about 23 mm in diameter. This token would be like the current token used by the NYCTA in New York.

The CTA may slow the planned change if enough vendors turn in their unsold tokens by Saturday, December 21st. Vendors who return unsold tokens will get a credit towards new tokens. After Saturday, if new tokens eventually are introduced, the vendors will be stuck with the unusable tokens.

However, the CTA will not even have a prototype of the new token for testing until December 20th, less than two weeks before the fare increase is scheduled to go in effect. In fact, the CTA has not even put out a contract for the 5 million new tokens that will be needed by December 29.

If the CTA does decide to go ahead with the token change, it will need to reconfigure 2,300 fare boxes to reject the old tokens and accept the new ones, as well as convert 125 older turnstiles to the new token size.

Some people are saying that the CTA is bluffing about introducing the new tokens. Only time will tell if a new token is introduced.

*** PACE HAPPENINGS ***

Pace, the suburban bus division of the RTA, has held a number of public hearings for comments on proposed fare increases.

Under the proposed increases, the basic Pace fare would increase to \$1.10. A transfer to the CTA would increase to 70 cents during peak hours, 40 cents non-peak. Reduced fare riders would pay 25 cents for a transfer during peak hours, 15 cents off-peak.

Adult Dial-A-Ride fares would increase to \$1.30, with reduced fares going to 65 cents. Special mobility limited fares will increase to \$1.50.

The Pace pass will also see changes. Pace is working with the CTA towards a Universal Monthly Pass that will be part of each agency's fare structure. The Universal Monthly Pass, which as proposed will cost \$60.00, would be honored at all times throughout the month on most services, with the possible exception of surcharges that will be required on some Pace express routes. A weekly pass for \$15.00 is also under consideration.

The proposed increases should generate \$1.6 million for the year.

*** STRAP HANGER ***

The Honolulu City Council has voted on a plan for Hawaii's first mass transit rail system, on the design of SkyTrain in Vancouver, Canada.

Ground will be broken in 1992 for a 15.6-mile elevated line that would cost \$1.7 billion to build. It would be completed in 1997.

Initial plans call for 22 stations between Waiawa, on the shore of Pearl Harbor, through downtown Honolulu to the University of Hawaii's Manoa campus.