



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE OMNIBUS SOCIETY OF AMERICA, INC.

Welcome to another issue of The Green Pennant Special, the official publication of The Omnibus Society of America.

Through this publication we hope to keep our readers informed of events happening in the transit industry in Chicago and other cities in the United States.

• JUNE OSA MEETING

The June meeting of The Omnibus Society of America will be held on Saturday, June 2, 2001, at which time we will travel to the Illinois Railway Museum in Union, Illinois.

Our charter bus will leave the Forest Park station of the Blue line at 0920 with a pickup at Rosemont station at 1000am. We will leave Union about 5:00 p.m. for our return back to Chicago, stopping for lunch/dinner on the way. Arrival back in Chicago should be between 8:00pm and 8:30pm.

The fare will be \$10 for OSA members in good standing, and \$20 for all others. **Entrance to the museum is not included in this fare.**

The Omnibus Society of America is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year, and the board would like to hear from our members who might have ideas how we should go about celebrating this milestone.

If you have an idea, please speak to one of the board members,

• CHICAGO TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Mother's Day weekend saw the resumption of service on CTA's #130 Grant Park Treasures buses between the Ogilvie Transportation Center (North Western Station), Union Station and the city's downtown lakefront museums. The buses will operate Saturdays, Sundays and holidays from Saturday, May 12, through Labor Day, Monday, September 3.

#130 buses begin their trips in front of the Ogilvie Center westbound on Madison just west of Canal. After Turning south on Clinton, the buses stop for

Union Station eastbound on Jackson at Canal. Continuing east on Jackson to Michigan, the buses go south to Balbo and east into Grant Park enroute to the lakefront museums.

#130 buses run every 15 minutes, with trips from the Ogilvie Center starting at 9:35 am on Saturdays and 10:35 am on Sundays and holidays. Return trips from the Adler Planetarium begin 30 minutes later, with the last bus leaving at 6:05 p.m..

May 2nd saw the CTA Board approve the permanent extension of weekday CTA bus service to the UPS facility in Southwest suburban Hodgkins. The service was established on an experimental basis one year ago.

The CTA's #169 69th-UPS Express buses are subsidized by UPS and serve shift changes at the UPS facility Monday through Friday, though service is open to all customers. The service has improved the express route along 79th Street and has far exceeded the initial ridership expectation of 180 riders per day and now carries an average of 685 riders per day.

Buses on the #169 69th-UPS Express route leave the 69th/Dan Ryan Red Line station at specific times weekdays between 2:31 am and 9:10 pm. The 50 to 55-minute trips are geared to bring employees to the facility for shift changes. Regular fares apply, and only limited stops are made between the Red Line station and Hodgkins. Return trips start between 3:31 am and 10 pm.

#169 buses leaving the 69th/Dan Ryan station operate west on 69th to Halsted, south on Halsted to 79th, and west on 79th to Archer. From there they travel southwest to Willow Springs Road and north to the UPS facility. Stops are made on Halsted at 79th, and on 79th at Ashland, Western and Pulaski in both directions so customers can connect with other bus lines.

Saturday, May 5th, saw the start of a new season of free Loop Tour Trains.

The trains will travel around the historic 1897 Loop
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CTA

'L' on tours offered at midday on Saturdays from May 5 through September 29. The tours start from the inner Loop station at Randolph/Wabash, using the CTA's newest air-conditioned trains, with docents from the Chicago Architecture Foundation (CAF) providing commentary.

Each tour includes three trips clockwise around the inner Loop 'L' above Wabash, Van Buren, Wells and Lake Streets. Using the train's public address systems, CAF guides provide information about the history of the city and the 'L' and point out buildings of architectural interest.

While tickets for the tours are free, they must be picked up on the same day the tour is to be taken from the Chicago Office of Tourism Visitor Information Center on the first floor of the Chicago Cultural Center at 77 East Randolph. From there it is only a few steps to the tour boarding point at the Randolph/Wabash Inner Loop station.

The CTA will be holding its Bus Roadeo at White Sox Park on June 16th and 17th and are looking for volunteers who would be interested in lending a hand at this event.

If any of our members are interested in volunteering to lend a hand at the roadeo, please contact Ludwig Scheurle at (708) 246-6305.

• PACE

Pace has set 19 public hearings between May 29 and June 2 to discuss 22 bus routes that are struggling to meet the agency's minimum productivity standards. The purpose of the hearings is to gather opinions from the communities to determine the future of the routes. Service reductions and route elimination's are possibilities.

Following are the specific routes being addressed:

Route 421 Wilmette Ave, Route 422 Lake Ave and Route 423 Sheridan Road - Proposed (for all) category change from local to regular fares, route modifications, and/or possible discontinuance.

Route 448 South Holland - Proposed discontinuance of service.

Route 451 Southeast Homewood - Proposed discontinuance of service.

Route 471 Highland Park/Deerfield - Proposed reduction of service.

Route 525/527 Farnsworth-Moecherville - Proposed reduction of Saturday service.

Route 549 McLean - Proposed reduction of service.

Route 554 Elgin-Streamwood-Schaumburg - Proposed discontinuance of service.

Route 601 Wood Dale Office Corridor - Proposed discontinuance of service.

Route 616 The Chancellory Connection - proposed reduction of service.

Route 654 South Glen Ellyn - Proposed discontinuance of service.

Route 690 Arlington Heights Road - Proposed reduction of service.

Route 703 South Central Villa Park Feeder - Proposed discontinuance of service.

Route 706 Southwest Glen Ellyn/SE Wheaton Feeder-College Ave - Proposed discontinuance of service.

Route 715 Central DuPage - Proposed reduction of Saturday service.

Routes 801 Elgin-Geneva and 802 Aurora-St Charles - Proposed reduction of Saturday service.

Route 819 Hunter's Woods/Lisle - Proposed discontinuance of service.

Route 820 University Heights/Lisle - proposed discontinuance of service.

Route 823 West Bolingbrook-Lisle Feeder - Proposed discontinuance of service.

Route 1006 Midway/Ford City Center/Country-side Plaza-Prairie Stone - Proposed discontinuance of service.

After holding public hearings the end of April, the Pace Board has decided on the following:

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PACE

Route 504/506 South Joliet/East Washington Saturday Flex Route - Saturday service on this route will be discontinued after the last trip on Saturday, June 9, 2001.

Route 534 Fox Valley Villages/Hwy. 59 - The level of service on this route will be reduced from a two bus to a one bus operation, beginning some time in August of 2001.

Route 555 Elgin-Prairie Stone-Schaumburg - This route will be discontinued after the last trip on Friday, June 8, 2001.

Route 636 Lake Cook Road Express - The level of service will be reduced on this route to five morning trips and four afternoon trips effective Monday, June 11, 2001.

Route 642 Southwest Elmhurst - This route will be discontinued after the last trip on June 8, 2001.

Route 700 Addison-Villa Park Feeder - This route will be discontinued after the last trip on June 8, 2001.

Route 723 Northeast Palatine-Arlington Heights - No decision has been made on the status of this route. It will be addressed at the next Pace Board meeting on June 6, 2001.

Route 737 West Suburban Limited - Due to poor performance, this service will be discontinued after the last trip on Friday, May 11.

Route 831 Joliet-Midway Sunday Service - Sunday service on this route will be eliminated after the last trip on Sunday, June 3, 2001.

Route 1018 Chicago-Northbrook - Due to poor performance, this service will be discontinued after its last trip on Friday, June 8. Passengers can take advantage of a new Shuttle Bug service from the Glen/Glenview Metra Station on Monday, June 11.

• METRA

A groundbreaking ceremony hosted on April 30, 2001, by officials from Metra and the village of Roselle kicked off construction of a new \$2.2 million

commuter rail station at the Roselle stop of the Metra Milwaukee West Line.

Located at 540 Irving Park Road, nearly 24 miles from the line's terminus in downtown Chicago, the current small and outdated station will be replaced with new and larger facilities.

With more than 1,600 boardings each weekday, Roselle ranks as the 20th busiest among 224 stations outside downtown Chicago. It is also the second busiest stop on the Milwaukee West Line, second only to Schaumburg in ridership.

The 12-month project includes the construction of a new 2,500 square foot depot, platform resurfacing with installation of tactile warning strips, and new platform lighting. Also, part of the project includes installation of a kiss and ride facility and taxi drop off point.

Metra is working with the City of Chicago to replace an entrance to the Van Buren Station on the Metra Electric with a Paris Metro entrance designed by the French artist, Hector Guimard.

Acquired in an art exchange with the City of Paris, the iron and glass structure will replace the existing Van Buren Station entrance located on the east side of Michigan Avenue at Van Buren Street.

The new entrance is in the well-known Art Nouveau style of the rapid rail transit entrances in Paris, designed by Guimard between 1899 and 1905.

The station itself is unique in its design and the second on the existing site. Built in 1896 by the Illinois Central Railroad and designed by architect Francis Bacon, the depot was sunk into the retaining wall that separates the commuter tracks from the rest of Grant Park.

Full of ornamental details in the Gothic and foliage motifs, the station underwent extensive alterations including a reworking of the entrances on the west side of Michigan Avenue in the 1920's, when Grant Park was reworked to its current layout. The current Van Buren Street Station replaced a small wood structure that was originally built to resemble a park gazebo. City planners evaluated a number of sites before finally deciding on the Van Buren Street station for the Guimard entrance. (cont. on page 4)

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METRA

A development joint venture between Metra and U.S. Equities will bring a bustling retail and restaurant attraction known as MetraMarket to the West Loop.

Transforming nearly two full city blocks of under utilized, street level space at Ogilvie Transportation Center (OTC), the new MetraMarket will have a double focus: The train station's suburban concourse between 118 N. Canal and 117 N. Clinton street will cater to commuters, while a renovated Randolph Street area will link Chicago's revived theater district to the east and the growing restaurant district to the west.

Bounded by Lake, Washington, Canal and Clinton streets, the 200,000 square foot development will feature 90,000 square feet of retail including a specialty food market, 36,000 square feet of restaurants and parking for 100 cars. Ground breaking is set for early 2002.

Used by about 95,000 commuters each weekday, OTC is the downtown terminal for 184 weekday and 114 weekend trains of Metra's Union Pacific North, Northwest and West lines.

In 2000, residential population in the area within one mile of Ogilvie Transportation Center had approached 39,000, with further growth expected. Six new office towers, either completed or under construction, will add 3.5 million square feet to the submarket, while proposed projects would add a further five million square feet.

In the photo below, we see one of the ex-Seattle Metro MAN articulated buses that the CTA has purchased operating on Route 147 Outerdrive Express. The bus is headed northbound on Sheridan . As can be seen, some buses still carry their Seattle colors.

