



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.

• DECEMBER OSA MEETING

The next regular meetings of the Omnibus Society of America will be on December 6, 2002, in the Anderson Pavilion of Swedish Covenant Hospital, 2751 W. Winona Avenue, Chicago, Illinois. The meeting will be start at 7:00 pm.

The hospital is on California near Foster. Winona is one half block south of Foster. By public transportation, take the 92 Foster to California. From the Ravenswood Brown Line, take the 93 North California from Kimball, get off after it turns onto California from Foster and walk back south. Or, take the 11 Lincoln from Western, get off at Carmen (One block south of Foster) and walk west on Winona.

There is some parking on California and Winona. The parking structure is on the west side of California just south of Foster.

Ed Montejano and Myron Lane will combine resources to present a slide program on Milwaukee and Southeastern Wisconsin Motor Transit.

• ELECTION

Enclosed with this issue of the Green Pennant Special, all members in good standing will find a ballot for the election to fill the expiring terms of Melvin Bernero and Steve Klabish.

All ballots must be received before the beginning of the December meeting to be counted. Ballots can be either mailed to the address on the ballot or brought to the meeting.

• CTA HAPPENINGS

Due to a major water main break on Inner Lake Shore Drive on November 8, 2002, the following buses have been rerouted Southbound only:

#151 Sheridan

Via Sheridan to Halsted to Belmont, back to Lake Shore Drive.

#146 Marine-Michigan Express

Via Sheridan, Foster, Clark, Irving Park, Broadway, Halsted, Belmont, back to Lake Shore Drive.

#135 Wilson/LaSalle Express, #145 Wilson/Michigan Express

Via Clarendon, Broadway, Halsted, Belmont, back to Lake Shore Drive.

#X80 Irving Park Express, #80 Irving Park

Via Irving Park, Sheridan, Broadway, Clarendon, back to Irving Park.

#152 Addison

Via Addison, Clark, Belmont, Sheridan.

These reroutes were in effect until November 9, 2002, when Inner Lake Shore Drive was reopened to traffic.

The Chicago Transit Board on November 14, 2002 approved the recommendation of its real estate advisors to relocate its headquarters to a build-to-suit location at 555 West Lake Street in 2004. This relocation will reduce the CTA's annual operating expenses by saving an average of \$7.7 million annually over the life of a lease alternative.

A team led by Mesirow Stein Real Estate, Transwestern Commercial Services and OWP/P Architects presented its evaluation following an analysis of 70 alternatives including 14 submissions that met CTA's criteria and objectives for leasing, purchasing and build-to-suit proposals.

Currently, the CTA occupies office space at the Merchandise Mart, 350 N. Orleans and 120 N. Racine at an annual cost of \$5.5 million. Consolidating administrative offices and owning rather than leasing will provide the strongest long-term investment value and allow the CTA to use capital funds rather than operating funds for its office space. The total base building development cost is \$75.9 million, with additional costs such as architectural services, relocation costs, and furnishings bringing the total to \$94.6 million.

The developer of the 555 W. Lake location is Fifield Companies.

The timing of this decision was driven by CTA's current lease.

(Cont. on Page 2)

CTA

Although the lease with the Merchandise Mart runs through 2007, the lease agreement contains a clause that allows the CTA to leave the Mart in November 2004 as long as notification is provided by the end of November 2002.

The CTA's headquarters have been located in the Merchandise Mart since the agency's inception in 1947. The majority of the CTA's 11,500 employees work in transportation operations and maintenance, and report to bus garages, rail terminals and other field locations throughout the CTA's service area.

The Chicago Transit Board approved the proposed 2003 budget at its regular monthly meeting on November 14, 2002. The budget contains initiatives and projects that will advance the ongoing efforts to rebuild the CTA system, continue its commitments to customer service and improve transit services for customers.

At \$924.6 million, the operating budget is just 1.1 percent (\$9.8 million) higher than this year's budget. Ridership and revenue are forecast to grow by 1.1 percent and 1.4 percent respectively over this year's forecast, with a 2.7 percent increase in public funding over the 2002 budget.

The CTA projects a balanced budget as required by law. Public funding required for operations equals the funding mark of \$453.5 million set by the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA). The Recovery Ratio, which measures the portion of operating expenses the CTA has to fund from revenues it generates, is forecast at 52.6 percent, which is slightly higher than the required ratio set by the RTA.

The 2003 budget includes a capital improvement plan of \$539 million. Projects include: the ongoing rehabilitation of the Cermak (Douglas) Branch of the Blue Line; the Brown Line Capacity Expansion Project; delivery of 151 low-floor articulated buses; installation of an automated bus announcements system; upgrading of the bus turnaround at 95th Street; renovating eight stations on the Dan Ryan Branch of the Red Line; the reconfiguration of Harrison Curve; upgrades to the signal and communications system at Clark Junction; and preparation for the purchase of new 'L' cars.

2003 is a critical year for the CTA. The legislation that determines its federal funding levels, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), will expire. Both Illinois FIRST and TEA-21 provide the funding that has made the CTA's capital improvements possible.

The support the CTA has received from all levels of government acknowledges that public transit is an important part of the solution to regional traffic congestion.

The Chicago Transit Authority will generate more money each of the next five years from billboard advertising under a new contract approved by the Chicago Transit Board. The five-year, \$3 million agreement with Viacom Outdoor, Inc. guarantees CTA no less than \$600,000 per year for 18 billboards located on CTA property. The new contract represents a 25 percent increase over billboard revenues in 2001 and will more than double 2002 revenues, which generated only \$281,509 in a nine-month period.

Under the new agreement, the CTA will receive 65 percent of Viacom's net revenues with a guaranteed minimum of \$600,000 for the first two years of the contract. That amount will increase to 68 percent of net revenues during the third, fourth and fifth years.

(www.yourcta.com)

• PACE PATTERN

Pace, the suburban transit agency, demonstrated its new Intelligent Bus System (IBS) at the World Congress on Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) at McCormick Place in Chicago held between October 14-17.

The ITS World Congress is the largest annual gathering on surface transportation technology. There are presentations and discussions of advanced concepts, research results and deployment activities for leading transportation policy-makers, researchers, planners and manufacturers. The goal is to promote awareness and use of ITS technologies around the world.

In conjunction with Siemens Integrated Local Government Division (ILG), Pace provided attendees a chance to ride on an Intelligent Bus and learn about the agency's high-tech project during a tour of Chicago. The tour encompassed the theme of the World Congress, "Enriching our Lives," by showing how ITS technology can save time, money and lives. Pace purchased the technology from Siemens ILG, based in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Pace's project began in 2001 and will function system-wide by the end of 2003.

Representatives from across the globe boarded Pace's Intelligent Bus at McCormick Place and enjoyed a tour of scenic Chicago.

(Cont. on page 3)

PACE

The trip ended at Pace's North Shore Division bus garage in Evanston. Along the way, the bus demonstrated its Automatic Vehicle Location/Computer-Aided Dispatch System, and announced landmarks such as Soldier Field, Buckingham Fountain, Navy Pier and Loyola University.

At the Evanston garage, the dispatch and management components of the system were demonstrated. Other features of the IBS include immediate on-board transfer information to ensure connections to other buses; automatic visual and verbal announcements of bus stops; a comprehensive emergency notification system; and advanced vehicle system monitoring to warn of mechanical problems.

Pace has held a public hearing to discuss the possible discontinuance of a west suburban bus route that is serving a decreasing number of employees from United Parcel Service in Addison. The public meeting for Route 536 Aurora/UPS-Addison was from 9:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Monday, November 4, at United Parcel Service, 102 S. Lombard Road in Addison.

Route 536 provides weekday trips between Aurora and the UPS facility in Addison. UPS pays the operating cost of the service, but has decided to cancel that funding because of continued low ridership. Without the UPS subsidy, Route 536 would not meet any of Pace's minimum performance standards.

Pace held a public hearing to discuss a possible fare increase on all Shuttle Bug routes that operate in the north suburbs. The public hearing was from 11am to 1pm Monday, November 4 at the Lake Cook II Building, 1435 Lake Cook Road in Deerfield.

Pace's Shuttle Bug system consists of 17 routes that provide weekday rush-hour trips for work commuters from four train stations – the Braeside, Deerfield, Lake Cook Road and Lake Forest Metra stations. The buses operate to businesses along the major corridors of Lake Cook Road, Half Day Road, Kennedy Road and Willow Road.

The Shuttle Bugs are a partnership funded by Pace, Metra, the Transportation Management Associations of Lake Cook and local corporations. Due to the poor economy and a decline in Shuttle Bug revenues, the one-way fare is proposed to be raised from 50 cents to \$1. This is below Pace's regular fixed-route bus fare of \$1.50.

Employees of participating businesses are issued Pace Easy Rider Passes, which allow them free access to the Shuttle Bugs. Other passengers pay the cash fare when boarding. (www.pacebus.com)

• GREYHOUND DOINGS

Greyhound Lines, Inc. recently relocated its facility in Providence, RI, to the new Kennedy Plaza Intermodal Transportation Center at One Kennedy Plaza. The facility also houses Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) and Bonanza Bus Lines.

The new intermodal is approximately three blocks north of the former Greyhound agency in Providence at 102 Fountain Street, where the company operated for 11 years.

Located between the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument and the Fleet Skating Center on the Kennedy Plaza Center Island, the agency's hour of operation are seven days a week, including holidays, from 6 am to 8 p.m. with 21 daily schedules.

Greyhound has announced it has partnered with Pilot Travel Centers, LLC to provide comfortable, safe and convenient stops for Greyhound customers across the United States.

These locations serve as rest and meal stops, but many also sell tickets to residents from nearby communities who travel on Greyhound to larger cities. Many Pilot Travel Centers that Greyhound serves also offer Greyhound PackageXpress (GPX) service to customers.

Greyhound currently operates from 38 Pilot Travel Center locations in Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah, Wisconsin and Wyoming. The two companies are exploring plans to open 40 more locations in 2003.

On November 6, 2002, Greyhound Travel Services (GTS) announced it launched Gray Line of Houston/Galveston operations, giving visitors to the Space City and Texas Gulf Coast a new choice for their sightseeing and charter needs. Gray Line of Houston/Galveston is one of 30 companies within the GTS portfolio.

Gray Line of Houston/Galveston services include sight seeing tours, charter service, educational tours, meeting and convention services, customized tours and airport transfers. (Cont. on page 4)

GREYHOUND

In conjunction with Greyhound Shore Services, Gray Line of Houston/Galveston provides transportation for cruise passengers from both Houston airports to the cruise ship terminal in Galveston. Sightseeing tours are available for Historic Galveston, Johnson Space Center and Downtown Houston.

With the acquisition of 18 Gray Line franchises in the last nine months, GTS is now the largest single owner of Gray Line franchises in the world, serving more than 100 cities in North America. Through its Gray Line franchises, GTS offers hundreds of full-day and multi-day sightseeing and vacation tours in major cities. (www.greyhound.com)

- CALENDAR OF EVENTS -

In cooperation with the various rail and transit enthusiast organizations meeting in Chicago, we present this "Calendar of Events".

Dec 13. Chicago Chapter – Railway & Locomotive Historical Society meeting. 7:00pm. The Chicago Temple (77 W. Washington – Pierce Hall (lower level auditorium)). Admission is free. Program to be announced.

Dec 20. The Railroad Club of Chicago meeting. 7:30pm. The Chicago Temple (77 W. Washington – Pierce Hall (lower level auditorium)). Donation of \$3.00 requested for non-members. Program – *A Holiday Surprise*, by Barry Binder.

Dec 27. Central Electric Railfans' Association meeting. 7:30pm. 205 W. Wacker Drive Suite 200 (Securities Training Corp). \$5.00 admission for non-members. Program – "*Classic Chicago Electric Traction*". Presented by Jeff Wien who will show vintage movie footage taken by not only by Jeff Wien, but by the late John Andreson and William C. Hoffman.

An online version of our Calendar of Events is available, courtesy of the Shore Line Interurban Historical Society, at www.shore-line.org/calendar.html

ELECTION BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

JOHN ALLEN

I am a planner with the Regional Transportation Authority. Other transportation history organizations I belong to include the Central Electric Railfans' Association, and the historical societies for the Illinois Central, Pennsylvania, Baltimore & Ohio, Nickel Plate, Chicago & North Western, Milwaukee Road, Santa Fe and Canadian National. Since February 2002 I have been serving on the board of directors of the Hyde Park Historical Society.

MELVIN BERNERO

I am currently on the board of directors of the Omnibus Society of America. I also serve as Editor of the OSA newsletter "The Green Pennant Special". I am a member of the Central Electric Railfans' Association, Boston Street Railway Association, Electric Railroaders' Association, Light Rail Transit Association, Motor Bus Society, Bus History Association and the New York Transit Museum. I have helped OSA produce the last three calendars that were issued to our members.

WILLIAM SHAPOTKIN

William M. Shapotkin (#100) has been an OSA member for over twenty-five years. An active transit enthusiast, he is active in a number of local and national enthusiast organizations. He has served as a director of various Chicago-area groups, including OSA, CERA and The Railroad Club of Chicago and as a fantrip coordinator spanning a period of twenty-four straight years. Bill brings with him experience in these areas, as well as membership promotion and program management. It is his hope to aid the OSA in these areas and to increase or exposure in the transit fan community.