



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.

• MAY OSA MEETING

The next regular meetings of the Omnibus Society of America will be on May 7, 2004, in the Anderson Pavilion of Swedish Covenant Hospital, 2751 W. Winona Avenue, Chicago, Illinois. The meeting will be start at 7:30 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.

Our program, "Intercity Motor Transit" a look at intercity buses around the United States, will be a slide presentation by John LeBeau.

• CTA HAPPENINGS

The Chicago Transit Authority is enhancing its bus service by adding two new routes and restoring two experimental routes to their original routing. Some of the changes are related to the 180-day experimental restructuring of routes serving the Lake Shore Drive corridor, which began last August. The experiment addressed, for the first time in decades, the growing ridership and changing travel patterns of the area.

The adjustments are a result of customer feedback, as well as observation and analysis by CTA staff. The CTA expects to implement the changes this summer. All changes comply with the Service Standards adopted by the Board in 2001.

Weekend ridership on Lake Shore Drive bus routes increased in 2004. Saturday ridership is up 4.4 percent for January and February of this year over the same period last year. Sunday/holiday ridership is up 4.8 percent for the same time period.

Service modifications approved by the Board include

returning the **#15 Jeffery Local** to its original routing at the time the Lake Shore Drive experiment began last August. Currently, service operates via Lake Park Boulevard instead of Hyde Park Boulevard between 56th and 51st Streets. Instead of operating on Lake Park Boulevard, service will return to operating via South Hyde Park Boulevard between East Hyde Park Boulevard and East 57th Street.

The route name and number of the **#28 Stony Island Express** will be changed back to **#28 Stony Island** and will operate between 103rd/Stony Island and 47th/Lake Park via Lake Park between East 56th and 47th Streets returning service to Lake Park north of 56th Street

As a result, a new **#X28 Stony Island Express** route will be implemented to continue providing weekday rush period express service between 103rd/Stony Island and downtown via South Hyde Park Boulevard between East 57th Street and East Hyde Park Boulevard. This new route will continue to provide a second express option to downtown during rush hours. Additional service on the **#6 Jackson Park Express** will be provided during off-peak hours when the **#X28 Stony Island Express** is not operating.

The Chicago Transit Board also approved the creation of weekend shuttle service to tourist attractions on the near south and southwest sides for 31 days between Memorial Day and Labor Day. The shuttle was created in partnership with the Chinatown Chamber of Commerce and the Pilsen Little Village Information Center; those organizations will provide a partial subsidy. The remainder will be funded with a federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) grant that funds projects geared to help attract customers to transit. The City of Chicago provided a similar service for the past three years supported by CMAQ grants.

The Chinatown/Pilsen Shuttle will provide free service on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays between the Chinatown and Pilsen neighborhoods, Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum, the Field Museum and Shedd Aquarium at the Museum Campus, the Prairie Avenue Historical District and the Sunday Maxwell Street Market (7 a.m. until 3 p.m. Sundays). The shuttle will complement local service for customers wanting to make connections to attractions along the route. Service will operate every 20 minutes from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. (www.yourcta.com 4/14/04)

April 14, 2004, saw the Chicago Transit Board approve a \$2.4 million contract to perform an alternatives analysis study for the proposed Circle Line Project. (Cont on Page 2)

(Cont from page 1)

CTA

The proposed Circle Line would leverage the CTA's ongoing investment in its rail infrastructure by connecting nearly all of the city's major employment and special event destinations with CTA and Metra rail lines. This would make rail service more attractive to all transit customers and help to reduce travel times.

"CTA's current infrastructure provides a solid foundation for expanding regional public transit. It is the core system with the most potential for cost-effectively connecting to other public transit lines," said Chicago Transit Board Chairman Carole Brown. "The Circle Line would significantly reduce travel times between many CTA rail stations, and between Metra trains and Chicago destinations beyond the existing downtown Metra terminals."

"The proposed Circle Line is a way to link all of Chicago's CTA rail lines, and all of the Metra lines, with only 6.6 miles of new or rebuilt 'L' and subway tracks," said CTA President Frank Kruesi. "Building upon the existing rail lines is the wisest use of limited resources. The Circle Line's improved connections for CTA and Metra customers will create convenient transit links throughout the six-county region and help to further ease traffic congestion and improve travel times."

The CTA is providing the funding for the \$2.4 million contract which was awarded to the architectural and engineering services firm of DMJM+Harris/CTE, A Joint Venture. The alternatives analysis study will be conducted over the next 12 months.

DMJM+Harris specializes in transit/rail, highway and bridge, marine, aviation and energy infrastructures. Consoer Townsend Envirodyne (CTE) Engineers, Inc. specializes in planning, design and construction services, and has been responsible for the overall management of capital programs and transit system extensions for agencies nationwide. (www.yourcta.com)

The Chicago Transit Authority is enhancing its bus service by adding a new rush hour peak direction express route along Lake Shore Drive: returning two routes, including one along Lake Shore Drive, back to their original routing; making permanent an experimental change on one route; making modifications to a route that will provide more convenient overnight service; changing the terminals of two routes; extending weekday evening service on two routes; modifying a route to better serve Northwestern University and

improving weekday service on one route. Some of the changes are related to the experimental restructuring of routes serving the Lake Shore Drive corridor, which began last August.

The improvements will benefit customers by providing additional transit options, more direct and convenient service and reduced travel times. The changes took effect Sunday, April 25.

The changes are:

New Route - #148 Clarendon/Michigan Express will enter Lake Shore Drive at Irving Park (which the #145 did during the first part of the experiment). #148 buses operate peak direction express service during morning and afternoon rush periods. Morning trips will operate between Wilson/Ravenswood and Michigan/Congress. Afternoon trips will operate between State/Congress and Wilson/Ravenswood. Trips will operate express on Lake Shore Drive between Irving Park and Delaware. This will provide faster service during peak times for customers living north of Irving Park to Michigan Avenue.

#N4 Cottage Grove is being rerouted to add overnight owl service through the Illinois Center complex and a new southbound stop at Michigan/Randolph, which also serves #151 Sheridan and #N66 Chicago buses. Adding #N4 stops to the location creates a convenient transfer point for customers looking to complete their trips to the South Side. Service will run from Illinois Center to 63rd/Cottage Grove via Michigan north to Randolph; Randolph east to Columbus; Columbus north to South Water; South Water west to Michigan; Michigan south to Randolph; Randolph west to State; State south to Washington and the existing #N4 Cottage Grove route. The #N4 will continue to serve the downtown owl terminal at State/Washington.

#18 16th/18th buses were extended eastbound to connect with the Cermak-Chinatown station on the Red Line as a part of a service experiment launched in December 2002. Due to increased ridership as a result of this experiment, the CTA is making the extension permanent.

#X21 Cermak Express returns to its original hours and routing between North Riverside Park Mall and McCormick Place. As part of an experiment implemented on December 22, 2002, #X21 service was adjusted to serve downtown and the Medical District. A second 180-day experiment was approved last June, routing the bus along Damen instead of Marshall Boulevard and Ogden. (Cont on page 3)

(Cont from page 2)

CTA

Low ridership to the Medical District and downtown is the key factor in returning the #X21 to its original route and schedule. Service hours will be Saturdays, Sundays and holidays between 7:40 a.m. and 7:40 p.m. Customers needing to travel to destinations formally served by the #X21 can transfer to #50 Damen or #60 Blue Island/26th buses.

#37 Sedgwick/Ogden bus route moves its south terminal from Cermak/Karlov to the newly reopened Pulaski Station on the Cermak (Douglas) branch of the Blue Line. The new bus turnaround at the station is protected from inclement weather and provides a direct connection to the Blue Line.

#72 North buses will begin improved service west of Narragansett to Harlem Avenue. Every bus, instead of every other bus will run beyond Narragansett to/from Harlem from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. every ten minutes on weekdays. Service west of Narragansett to Harlem will run later on weekday evenings. The last bus will leave Harlem at 12:06 a.m. instead of 10:50 p.m. allowing for improved connections with Pace and area employers. Buses leave Harlem at 10:45 p.m., 11:05 p.m., 11:25 p.m., 11:45 p.m. and 12:06 a.m.

#96 Lunt buses operate to a new west terminal at Devon/Kedzie providing service into Lincolnwood Town Center instead of the Skokie Industrial Park. This provides direct service for shoppers and employees of the shopping center and a nearby grocery store.

#145 Wilson/Michigan reverts back to its original routing prior to the 180-day experiment to restructure bus service along the Lake Shore Drive corridor that took effect last August. Based on customer feedback and staff observations, this change will help alleviate crowding on the #146 Inner Drive/Michigan Express route in the densely populated corridor between Belmont and Irving Park. #145 buses will enter and exit Lake Shore Drive at Belmont, operating south on Michigan Avenue and north on State Street in the Loop.

#152 Addison service will operate one half-hour later on weekday evenings. The last eastbound bus from Cumberland will leave at 9:40 p.m. instead of 9:10 p.m. and the last westbound bus from Lake Shore Drive will leave at 10:30 p.m. instead of 10 p.m.

#156 LaSalle service will operate 30 minutes later on weekday evenings. The last southbound bus will leave

Belmont/Halsted at 7:30 p.m. and the last northbound bus will leave Desplaines/Harrison at 8:05 p.m.

#201 Central/Ridge will operate on Sheridan instead of Sherman in northeast Evanston to better serve Northwestern University.

• PACE PATTERN

Oswego residents who commute to Chicago will soon have a new public transit option that can save them time and money getting to work. Starting in late May, a Pace-operated van shuttle will carry riders between a new park-n-ride lot and the busy Aurora Metra Station during rush hours. The implementation date will be announced when it became available.

Pace and the Village of Oswego have worked together over the past few months to create this convenient and affordable service. Passengers will board the vans at the new parking lot at Orchard and Mill roads, which is the proposed site of a future Metra station along the Burlington Northern/Santa Fe tracks. Parking will be free, while the van ride will be just \$1.25 for a one-way trip. Passengers can sit back and relax during their 17-minute ride to catch the train.

The Village of Oswego obtained a federal Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality (CMAQ) grant to fund the new Pace service, which will cost \$51,500 annually. Two vans will be used to meet seven express trains during both the morning and evening rush hours. The Pace vans will depart the Oswego park-n-ride lot at 5:45 a.m., 6:25 a.m., 6:45 a.m., 7 a.m., 7:20 a.m. and 7:34 a.m., meeting trains that depart Aurora at 6:07 a.m., 6:27 a.m., 6:47 a.m., 7:07 a.m., 7:22 a.m., 7:42 a.m. and 8:02 a.m.

At the end of the work day, the Pace vans will be waiting at the Aurora Metra Station to meet passengers arriving from Chicago at 4:55 p.m., 5:29 p.m., 5:41 p.m., 5:56 p.m., 6:25 p.m., 6:38 p.m. and 7:06 p.m. The vans will be driven by Pace bus operators from the agency's Fox Valley Division in North Aurora.

Pace, the suburban transit agency, is making adjustments to Route 305 Cicero/River Forest to improve connections and better serve passengers at the Forest Park Transit Center. Also, additional Saturday trips will operate to and from Morton College in Cicero.

Route 305 provides dependable trips seven days a week, serving the near west suburbs of Cicero, Berwyn, Forest Park, Oak Park, River Forest and Elmwood Park. (Cont on page 4)

PACE

Major destinations along the route include the Harlem CTA Station, Forest Park Transit Center, 54th/Cermak CAT Station, Concordia College and Hawthorne Race Course.

Starting Sunday, March 28, all Route 305 trips conveniently began entering the south terminal of the Forest Park Transit Center instead of remaining on Desplaines Ave outside the terminal. Sunday trips that currently enter the north terminal were relocated to the south side as well.

With Saturday morning trips to Morton College already in place, Route 305 will offer afternoon service to the school on Saturdays beginning May 3. Buses will then arrive hourly at the college from 7:51 a.m. to 5:41 p.m., and depart hourly from 8:00 a.m. to 5:56 p.m.

• INDUSTRY NEWS

Bus passengers using the Rockford-to-O'Hare connection will see some changes in their routines next month.

Effective May 3, Rockford Coach Lines, part of Greyhound Operations, will no longer have a presence in Rockford. Its line runs and charter tours business have been acquired by Van Galder Bus Co., in a limited asset purchase agreement.

"We didn't buy the buses or any company property," said Dale Stebbins, Van Galder safety manager. "This will give us a few more people and we'll have full hourly service from Rockford".

There is a new schedule for those traveling from Rockford to Chicago's O'Hare Airport. Customers will also have fewer site choices for catching the buses. The four sites formally offered by Rockford Coach will no longer be an option; those locales were the company's terminal at 5247 American Road, Sweden House Lodge, and the Holiday Inn and the Ramada Suites hotels near I-90.

Van Galder buses will leave for O'Hare from the Clock Tower Resort & Conference Center and the company's terminal across from the Clock Tower on Walton Street.

At the Van Galder terminal, Stebbins said buses will leave at 3:30 a.m., 4:10 a.m., and then every hour on the hour from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m. The buses will leave from the Clock Tower 10 minutes later than each of the scheduled departures from the terminal.

Stebbins said all tickets already purchased for Rockford Coach trips will be honored by Van Galder. After customers get used to the new schedule, Stebbins believes customers should be happy with the service.
Journal-Standard Freeport, IL

- CALENDAR OF EVENTS -

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

May 14. 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."***

May 14. Kenosha Streetcar Society meeting. 7:30pm.- 9:45pm. Immanuel Methodist Church (54th/Sheridan - 1-1/2 blocks east of the Kenosha Metra/UP Train Station), Kenosha, WI. Program - Movies from the Ludwig Scheuerle Collection, including PCC cars on Clark/Wentworth, North Shore Line, South Shore Line and Shaker Heights Rapid Transit.

May 21. 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 - ***"Illinois Central - Mainline of Mid America,"*** a slide presentation by noted rail photographer James J. Arvites.

May 28. Central Electric Railfans' Association meeting. 7:30pm. 205 W. Wacker Drive Suite 200 (Securities Training Corp). Admission is free. Program - There will be no program this date due to an out of town trip to Latvia and St. Petersburg, Russia.

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