



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 next regular meetings of the Omnibus Society of America will be on June 4, 2004, in the Anderson Pavilion of Swedish Covenant Hospital, 2751 W. Winona Avenue, Chicago, Illinois. The meeting will 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 king structure is on the west side of California just south of Foster.

Our program, "Motor Buses of the lesser builders" will be a group participation program centering on buses built by Available, Aerocoach, Ford, Mack, White and others.

• CTA HAPPENINGS

On May 12, 2004, the Chicago Transit Board approved the permanent adoption of five experimental routes and modification to another experimental route at its monthly meeting.

The move is the result of customer feedback and CTA service analysis and is designed to more effectively align service with customer needs. All of the changes comply with the Service Standards adopted by the Board in 2001.

Permanent Changes

In April 2003, the Chicago Transit Board approved experimental service modifications to five downtown routes, which took effect on a temporary basis on June 20, 2003. Surveys and customer reaction show the changes have been well received by customers. As a result, the Board voted to make the changes permanent. The permanent changes are:

#56 Milwaukee buses now terminate at Michigan and Madison instead of Navy Pier. The #124 has replaced #56

service to Navy Pier.

#124 Navy Pier buses now operate seven day a week. Service operates from 8:30 a.m. until 10:30 p.m. (midnight during summer months). The route name is officially changed to #124 Navy Pier, dropping the term "Express," to reflect its local operation through the Loop.

#121 Union/Wacker Express buses now will board customers on the south side of Jackson between Clinton and Canal to help ease congestion at Union Station.

#122 Illinois Center/North Western Express buses now operate on street level instead of on Lower Wacker Drive.

#123 Illinois Center/Union Express buses now operate on street level instead of on Lower Wacker Drive and customers now board on the south side of Jackson between Clinton and Canal to ease congestion at Union Station.

Adjustment

The Board approved an adjustment in the **#145 Wilson/Michigan Express** route to operate westbound on Van Buren instead of Congress, between Michigan and Wells, to give customers a better connection to the LaSalle Street Metra station. This change is expected to take effect later this summer. (www.yourcta.com)

Four new businesses are on their way to the Red and Blue Lines, bringing new services to Chicago Transit Authority customers and an additional \$444,900 in rent and capital improvements for the CTA over the next five years. The new long-term lease agreements, approved by the Chicago Transit Board on May 12, 2004, bring the total number of new concession agreements this year to 32.

The CTA will lease the concession spaces to Project Management Advisors, Inc. of Chicago, Kedzie "L" News stand of Skokie; and AM Howard "L," Inc. of Lincolnwood. In return, the companies will provide rent and infrastructure upgrades to improve the appearance of the spaces involved. The approved contractors will construct and operate high quality businesses in that were previously either vacant or being leased on a month-to-month basis.

In return for the added security of long-term leases, vendors will make capital improvements to the property. The leases were competitively bid.

As part of its agreement with the CTA, Project Management Advisors, Inc. will lease, operate and make capital upgrades on a 350-square foot concession space located inside the Red Line Chicago/State station, and an 80-square foot space at the Blue Line-O'Hare/Damen "L" stop. (Cont on page 2)

(Cont from page 1)

CTA

The vendor has proposed operating gourmet coffee and specialty beverage concession stands inside the stations. Both concession spaces were previously vacant.

Kedzie "L" Newsstand and AM Howard "L," Inc. will operate convenience stores at the Blue Line Logan Square and Red Line Howard stations, respectively. Kedzie "L" Newsstands will lease a 250-square foot space for five years, and AM Howard "L," Inc. will lease a 146-square foot space for a period of two years, or until station renovations begin at the Howard station.

The CTA's Concession Redevelopment Program implements uniform lease terms that include longer lease periods, as well as, provisions for controlled merchandising and guidelines for improved presentation and appearance. Under this program, 59 CTA concession spaces throughout the CTA rail system have received or are on schedule to receive capital upgrades totaling \$5.3 million.

Capital improvements at the concession spaces typically consist of electrical, plumbing, heating and air conditioning improvements, as well as, new windows, counter tops, shelving, flooring and ceilings.
(www.yourcta.com)

The Chicago Transit Authority will test new bus tracking technology that can provide real time data to improve the efficiency and reliability of CTA bus service. The Chicago Transit Board on May 12, 2004, approved a \$1.3 million contract for Clever Devices, Ltd. to implement the real time communication system as part of a limited pilot program to test the viability of the system.

The new technology will be installed on up to 30 CTA buses over a 12-month period to demonstrate whether buses can be tracked in real time and if the system can provide enhanced monitoring of bus operations. One specially equipped bus shelter will provide customers real-time schedule information, as well.

CTA will test the real time system in conjunction with the automated announcement system already installed on select CTA buses. The existing systems provide stored data on a bus's position by using a combination of global positioning satellites, odometer inputs that provide distance traveled, and a gyroscope that observes changes in directions. The additional real time communication system will enable the information to be collected in real time.

The existing systems were installed on select CTA buses in 2003 and provide CTA operations and planning with an accurate count of where customers board and alight buses and the number of customers on board buses at any given point on a route.

The pilot is expected to begin this summer.
(www.yourcta.com)

Renovation work began the week of May 19, 2004, on the Chicago Transit Authority's Lake subway station on the Red Line. The project will rebuild the station's mezzanine and platform between Lake and Randolph streets. The new areas will feature attractive ceramic tile walls and ceilings, and brighter, more energy-efficient lighting.

Additionally, the project will expand the public area of the mezzanine level by 1,500 square feet, creating space for additional turnstiles. One new escalator will be installed between the platform and mezzanine level, while two escalators between the mezzanine and street level will be refurbished. Both will operate 25 percent faster than the existing escalators.

With the exception of the tactile edging, the platform that runs under State Street has not been renovated since it was built in the 1940's. The platform design follows the design motif incorporated at three rehabilitated Red Line subway stations: Chicago (2002), Jackson (2000), and Washington (1997). The design includes ceramic tiled vaulted ceiling panels and walls with a cityscape design. During the first year of the project, customers will be able to exit the Lake/Randolph platform from the Lake station, but will need to enter the Washington station in order to reach the Lake/Randolph platform.

CTA and CDOT have worked together to minimize the impact on Red Line customers throughout the project. Work on the \$15 million project began April 26, 2004, and is scheduled to be completed by early 2006. Funding is provided through the Federal Transit Administration (approximately 80 percent) and Illinois FIRST (about 20 percent). (www.yourcta.com)

The Chicago Transit Authority on Monday, May 17, 2004, rolled out a new configuration for its "L" cars – including New York-style seats that face into the rail cars and hanging fabric straps for passengers to get a grip.

It is only a test, and it will only affect two Brown Line cars. The CTA plans to move those two cars to other lines over the next month and survey riders.

(Cont on page 3)

(Cont from page2)

CTA

they're a hit, the agency could use the configuration on the more than 300 new cars it plans to buy in the coming years, CTA President Frank Kruesi said.

The new style removes almost all of the front and rear-facing pairs of side-by-side seats. They will be replaced with a stretch of seats with backs facing the windows.

The newest series of CTA train cars has 15 seats facing inward and 24 facing forward or backward.

The test configuration also has 39 seats, but only eight face forward or backward. The extra space created should allow for 10 more riders per car during busy times. Trains now can fit about 90 riders per car.

Metal poles to hold onto will be put between every two seats in the new plan, and straps will hang between those poles. New York used to have leather straps on its subway cars, but phased them out. (Chicago Sun-times May 16, 2004)

• PACE PATTERN

A group of transit planning forums held the week of May 21, 2004, in Skokie and Evanston enabled Pace to collect dozens of public comments on its proposals to improve bus routes in the North Shore area. It's all part of Pace's comprehensive Vision 2020 plan, which is increasing the efficiency and speed of public transit in the suburbs.

Pace's community-based marketing process during the past several months has included several chances for residents to provide input and gain a clear understanding of proposed adjustments to 16 routes serving Evanston, Lincolnwood, Skokie, Wilmette and surrounding towns. The restructuring of service will result in less transferring, faster trips, and less duplication of service.

The 16 Pace routes in the study area are 204 Dodge, 208 Church Street/Golf Road, 210 Lincoln Avenue, 212 Evanston/Glenview/Northbrook Court, 213 Green Bay Road, 215 Crawford/Howard, 225 Central/Howard, 226 Oakton, 250 Dempster, 254 North Cicero/Skokie Boulevard, 290 Touhy, 421 Wilmette Avenue, 422 Lake Avenue, 423 Sheridan Road, 426 Northwestern University Evanston/Chicago, and 626 Skokie Valley Limited.

At the forum held on Wednesday, May 19, 2004, at the Skokie Public Library and Thursday, May 20, 2004, at the Evanston Civic Center, residents voiced what they liked and disliked about the individual route designs. They gave their preferences on whether Pace should use its resources to increase frequency of service on major routes, or expand the geographic area of the North Shore bus network. Residents also reviewed Pace's long-range concept of converting an unused rail line adjacent to the busy Edens Expressway into a Bus Rapid Transit line.

Pace will invite the public to more transit forums in mid-July to review an updated draft of the North Shore restructuring plan before it is presented to Pace's Board of Directors in August. (www.pacebus.com)

• METRA MATTERS

Metra officials joined the Village of Libertyville on May 20, 2004, in dedicating a new station stop on the Milwaukee North Line to Fox Lake at Prairie Crossing. The new stop is located near the intersection of Illinois Route 137 and Harris Road in Libertyville, near an existing station with a similar name on Metra's North Central Service route from Antioch that crosses nearby.

The new stop features a 380-foot platform illuminated with decorative lighting, 400 parking spaces and a temporary station office. The new parking spaces now available at Prairie Crossing are expected to relieve pressure on the downtown Libertyville and Grayslake stations where parking expansion is restricted.

Both the new and existing Libertyville stations are situated near a mixed-use, transit-oriented development by Prairie Holdings Corp. Planning for the project began in 1996.

Plans for the future of the station include a permanent depot on site along with some limited commercial development. Pickus Construction of Waukegan completed the \$3.2 million project. Funding for the project came from the Illinois Department of Transportation, the Federal Transit Administration and Metra. (www.metrarail.com)

Philip Pagano, Metra's executive director, joined four northwest suburban village presidents urging area business leaders to lobby Congress on the STAR Line's behalf.

(Cont on page 4)

METRA

The STAR Line – along with a proposed line from Chicago to Crete, and major upgrades to the Union Pacific Northwest and West lines – is earmarked to receive federal funding under the transportation bill being debated in Congress.

But the bill's future is uncertain, especially in an election year, said Larry Bury, transportation director for the Northwest Municipal Conference, which represents 49 Northwest and North suburban communities.

Even so, Bury said the STAR Line stands a good chance of inclusion because it's the only suburb-to-suburb commuter rail line.

The 55-mile Suburban Transit Access Route is expected to cost \$1.2 billion and take 10 years to build.

The line would run along the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Railway from Joliet to Hoffman Estates, and then turn onto a new segment that would be built in the median of the Northwest Tollway (I-90) and run to O'Hare International Airport.

Self-propelled, three-car trains would run every 15 minutes during rush-hour and every 30 minutes at other times.

Pagano said Metra is about to begin a federally required alternative study – a \$2 million examination of transit alternatives to the STAR Line, environmental impact, operational and capital costs, potential ridership and nearby land use. That study should take between 12 and 18 months to complete, he said.

If the Federal Transit Administration approves the project, the STAR Line becomes eligible for federal funds covering preliminary and final engineering costs. (Daily Herald May 21, 2004)

Since 1999, Elburn has been working with Metra and Kane County to bring commuter service and an overpass to Elburn. Commuter service is planned to start December 2005.

The Elburn-Metra connection continues to progress on paper, as well as in actual construction.

The village board approved an intergovernmental agreement between Elburn, Kane County and Metra concerning the construction of a coach yard (for storing

and cleaning trains overnight) and the Anderson Road Bridge.

President Jim Willey showed trustees pictures of the footings or crash walls that will eventually support the Anderson Road overpass, which will cross the Union Pacific tracks used by Metra. Anderson Road is east of Route 47, Elburn's main street. The train station and coach yard will be between Anderson Road and Route 47.

Funding for the bridge, Willey explained, is in the federal transportation bills approved by the House and Senate, but not yet signed by President Bush.

Village Administrator Dave Morrison pointed out other assets Metra brought to the village, including a significant storm-water study and improvements to the flow of storm-water across the tracks throughout town. (Daily Herald May 18, 2004)

Metra Electric riders should be aware of the re-designation of the Hyde Park transfer station beginning May 30.

As part of the construction of new stations in Chicago's Hyde Park neighborhood, the current transfer point for Metra Electric commuters will shift from 59th Street to the newer 55th/56th/57th Street Station.

In addition, the Metra ticket office and ticket clerk will be moved from 59th Street to a new facility in the entrance of the 57th Street Station.

In general, off-peak Metra and NICTD South Shore trains that now stop at 59th Street will instead stop at 57th with a schedule adjustment of about two minutes.

The entrance at 57th Street – with an accessible elevator for people with disabilities – is more centrally located in the neighborhood. (On the Bi-Level May 2004)

• MILLENNIUM TRANSIT

The following information is taken from the Millennium Transit Services website and explains the new RTS buses that they hope to begin production on in the near future.

Millennium Transit was formed with the vision and purpose to develop, manufacture and distribute advanced transportation products on a worldwide basis. Millennium Transit will focus on industrial design, mechanical engineering as well as alternative fuel applications. (Cont on page 5)

(Cont from page 4)

MILLENNIUM TRANSIT

As a closely held, private company, Millennium Transit is committed to the heavy-duty transit industry for the long term. Therefore, we can elect to make investments today that will provide customers with immediate features and benefits, even when this means a longer payback to Millennium.

Millennium Transit has retained a seasoned group of executives to lead the business. Millennium Transit's senior leadership has specific, yet extensive, experience within the municipal transit market. This management team is solely responsible for directing the future of the RTS. The Millennium Transit team is focusing its efforts to immediately secure RTS Legend and RTS Express high floor model orders for production this summer, as well as accepting orders for the RTS Extreme product to be delivered during 2005.

The Millennium Transit team is working to continuously control costs with their vendors through competition, structured partnerships and packaging. If a vendor can supply the engine subassembly for less cost than it can be manufactured, they will be contracted to do so. However, quality will never be sacrificed solely for a lower cost. The management team will select partners committed to ensuring the highest levels of quality are maintained. These partners will be physically located in the manufacturing facility when appropriate.

Millennium Transit Services' is committed to exceptional operational efficiency throughout the business. In Concert with this strategy, the production line process will be drastically changed from the previous ownership. Rather than operating forty line stations with employees accountable and responsible for only a tiny portion of the entire bus manufacturing process, Millennium Transit Services will begin operations with only sixteen stations. This will offer more efficient production flow, increased job enrichment with more responsibility available to each individual employee and overall team approach to the completion of the final product. This proven production process encourages cross training and a more experienced and diverse employee base.

Product and Services

Description

The RTS product is a heavy duty, advance design, high floor transit bus that is available in a variety of models

and has many options and features to meet all city and suburban transit needs within the North American public transit market.

The product line has an excellent track record with over 25,000 buses that have been manufactured over the years, operating in the most demanding public transit environments.

High Floor Model

The RTS is available in the standard high floor configuration and utilizes a welded, modular stainless steel body construction. It is this feature that has contributed to the excellent reputation in the transit industry as being the most durable body structure available in the market.

Major Components and Subsystems

The RTS product line utilizes a t or v-drive engine configuration. The RTS offers a fully automatic transmission with brake retarder. Configurations are available that include a variety of alternate fuels including clean diesel, compressed natural gas (CNG), or liquefied natural gas (LNG).

The transit industry mandates that city buses be assessable to all riders, particularly the physically challenged passenger. The RTS meets these requirements by providing a wheelchair lift located in the entrance or exit door and a pneumatic suspension system that kneels to the curb to allow for ease of ingress and egress.

All models of the RTS include electrical circuitry that utilizes modular electrical subsystems and the state of the art multiplexing system to ensure reliability and ease of maintenance.

The climate control system includes a rear mount or room mounted fully integrated air conditioning and heating system. These systems provide an excellent climate control system for the passenger, using an automatic control system to adjust the temperature inside the vehicle to maintain a comfortable riding environment.

Vehicle Models and Sizes

The transit industry requires various sizes of public transit vehicles to meet its transportation needs. The RTS models include 40, 35, and 30-foot models.

(Cont on page 6)

MILLENNIUM TRANSIT

The buses are also available in the 102" or 96" widths to meet the requirements of the customer and their operating environment.

The models available also include a wide front door configuration or the standard narrow front entrance door. The wide front door feature allows for the wheelchair to be located in this area.

The city transit model RTS market allows for various seating configurations that depend on the length of the bus and the customer requirements. Seating for 27 to 47 passengers are available.

RTS - Express

Based on the legendary RTS transit bus, the **RTS EXPRESS** was developed for the regional transportation needs of the transit market

The interior amenities are the same as a much more costly coach and include the forward facing and reclining seats with overhead storage racks, lights, personal air vents and call buttons. Capable of being equipped with or without a rear door and ADA compliant wheelchair tie-downs as well as a door lift, the **RTS EXPRESS** exceeds the demands of the discriminating ridership and lowers the capital as well as operational costs of the transit operator. Others may offer lower costs, but no one offers the stainless steel, heavy-duty RTS with the options to **EXPRESS** your customers from the park-and-ride to downtown in such comfortable surroundings as does the **RTS EXPRESS**.

New Product Development

Millennium Transit has created a product development pipeline that addresses the key needs of the industry as well as the specific needs of our customers and their constituencies. The following are a few key projects Millennium Transit has currently in progress.

RTS Extreme

In an effort to provide our core customer base with a complete product line enabling our individual customers to have the opportunity to purchase all their transit products from one source, Millennium Transit has committed to introducing the new RTS Extreme (low entry) bus in 2005. The new low entry project includes designs for a 35', 40' 42.5' low floor bus utilizing a T-

drive engine configuration. The RTS Extreme design incorporates a similar design philosophy as the RTS Legend, using a welded, modular stainless steel body construction. The major objectives of the new bus design are to meet customer requirements including a more conventional rear centered T-drive engine offering, at a lower cost than comparable competitive products and provide larger engines, no rear facing seats and an increase in passenger seating capacity. The RTS Extreme is a standard rear drive high floor with a lowered middle and front section of the bus. This lowered area allows the benefits of the low floor entry and exit, but also the standard driveline equipment.

Management is utilizing a product development program that incorporates a gate approval process. The program involves stages where prototypes are designed and built and preliminary performance tests are conducted on the durability test track and on select customer routes. Customer feedback sessions will be held and market surveys conducted to ensure key customer acceptance and retention for the new project. The project includes review of documentation and testing data, vendor involvement startup, testing completion, production documentation development, quality standards, prototype builds and final reviews. Millennium Transit's strategy is to partner with a valued customer for the final testing and approval of the design. Millennium Transit and the customer will agree to a predetermined period of time to operate the vehicle on a test basis. The customer will be involved in the design review process during development of the vehicle as well as post-delivery reviews.

The company has begun the development of the RTS Extreme. The vehicle will be placed into production in 2005 with sales beginning now.

RTS Evolution

The RTS Evolution offers the customer a full range of choices for their transportation needs. It provides the customer with a smaller, lighter duty option, but continues to offer the RTS structure on top of a "Cut-away" chassis, purchased from other suppliers such as Ford Motor Company. The Evolution is targeted for the transit market, which uses on-demand service or a Para transit service. The Evolution also offers non-traditional customers such as hotels and airport shuttle customers a full ADA compliant bus not typically found in their market. Production is anticipated to begin in 2006.