



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.

The Omnibus Society of America is happy to unveil its new website "www.osabus.com". At osabus.com we will be posting upcoming fan trips and meetings information, as well as membership information.

Please visit our site when you have a chance and give us your opinions and comments.

• DECEMBER OSA MEETING

The next regular meeting of the Omnibus Society of America will be on Dec. 3, 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 parking structure is on the west side of California just south of Foster.

Our program, "**Vintage Chicago Transit**", will be a slide presentation on rapid transit/streetcar/trackless trolley and motor bus transportation in the Windy City by Mike Charnota.

• CTA CORNER

The Chicago Transit Board on November 8th approved two versions of CTA's 2005 budget – one that assumes additional state funding and one that does not. The CTA is seeking increased regional transit funding from the Illinois General Assembly. The version of the budget that ultimately is implemented will depend on whether or not the General Assembly increases transit funding during the to session that convenes the week of November 8.

The Regional Mobility version of CTA's 2005 budget was developed in the hopes that the General Assembly will acknowledge the importance of public transit to the region, and reverse the out-dated funding structure for public transit. The Gridlock version anticipated no new funding from the General Assembly and includes significant service cuts. Although the board passed both budgets, it deferred approval of specific service cuts until next month.

Since CTA President Frank Kruesi submitted both proposed budgets to board members on October 4, the plan outlining service cuts and the reduction of CTA's workforce has undergone careful scrutiny by board members as well as the general public at a series of four public hearings held last month.

At its October meeting, the Chicago Transit Board asked CTA staff for an analysis of the impact a base fare increase would have on the proposed service cuts. In 2004, the CTA raised base fares for the first time in 12 years in order to eliminate an \$88 million deficit. In a report to the board on November 8, staff reported that another fare increase would not eliminate the need for service cuts and doing both would lead to an accelerated decrease in ridership in 2005 and beyond. In sum, a combination of fare increases and service cuts would do more harm to the stability of the system overall than service cuts alone.

In voting to keep the base fare at \$1.75, Chicago Transit Board Chairman Carole Brown noted that CTA's fares have risen 95% since 1983 which is also the last time the funding structure was changed. "CTA customers should not continue to pay the price for a broken funding system," she said.

The board approved the budgets proposed by President Kruesi, but with some modifications. Although approving a fare increase for paratransit services, the board voted to allow children of paratransit customers to receive discounts similar to those on mainline service. Children under six can ride free and children aged seven to 11 will pay \$1.75, a 50 percent discount on the paratransit fare of \$3.50.

The board approved a rate increase to \$2 for Park-and-Ride lots, but asked that staff continue to evaluate opportunities to maximize revenue and use. The board also requested quarterly reports on bus bunching mitigation, joint health care purchasing and other initiatives that could lead to additional efficiencies.

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(Cont from page 1)

CTA

To encourage even greater use of the Chicago Card Plus, the board voted to waive the \$5 fee from January through March 31, 2005 for customers who are in the tax-free Transit Benefit program. Finally, the board said the budget could no longer fund free passes for retirees.

The Regional Mobility budget recommends an operating budget of \$1.02 billion that would include a public funding level of \$524 million – an increase of \$82.5 million over 2004. This level of funding will enable CTA to maintain current service levels and continue developing service improvements to build ridership. This will include the addition of weekend service on the Cermak (Douglas) branch of the Blue Line and may include other enhancements. In addition, select fees and fares will increase to help maintain critical aspects of the system. These include the University Pass (U-Pass), parking fees and paratransit fares. Increases will help offset the cost of providing these services. The CTA will also reduce the non-service delivery workforce by 200 positions because of improved efficiency of operations.

The Gridlock version of the budget reflects the limited funding that will be available to CTA if the General Assembly takes no action. In that scenario, the RTA will only provide public funding of \$441.6 million to CTA in 2005, the same level of public funding CTA received in 2002, resulting in an operating budget of \$912 million. This funding level is 2.68 percent less than CTA received in 2003; considering inflation, it amounts to a funding decrease of \$35.7 million in real terms.

To achieve a balanced budget, more than one-fifth of existing CTA bus and rail service will be eliminated in January 2005. Of the current 152 bus routes in operation, 30 will be eliminated completely including weekdays, Saturdays and Sundays. An additional 21 routes will have weekend service eliminated and nine others will have a segment of the route eliminated. Virtually all bus and rail routes will face some service reductions. In addition to eliminating 250 jobs that are not directly involved in the delivery of bus or rail service, another 1,000 jobs will be eliminated as a direct result of service cuts. (www.transitchicago.com)

The Chicago Transit Board on November 8 approved the purchase of 265 new CTA buses designed to replace older buses in CTA's fleet that have reached the end of their useful life. The 40-foot, low-floor, accessible, air-conditioned buses will help to improve service reliability and the overall transit experience for many CTA bus

customers. The purchase includes 20 environmentally friendly diesel hybrid buses that are powered by both diesel engines and electric motors to help reduce emissions. The new buses will replace 5300-series Flexible buses purchased by the CTA in 1991.

The \$94.9 million investment in the CTA's bus fleet is funded with federal formula funds from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Illinois FIRST bonds from the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA).

Equipped with low emission engines, the new buses will have the same amenities that are part of CTA's existing bus fleet including surveillance cameras, bike racks, the automated announcement system and automatic passenger counters that provide CTA with route usage information to assist in developing schedules.

By including 20 hybrid buses as part of the purchase, CTA will be able to evaluate the performance of the environmentally friendly vehicles in Chicago's extreme weather conditions. Performance results will help determine if hybrid buses are suitable as future additions to CTA's fleet.

The competitively bid contract approved by the board provides options for the purchase of up to 1,050 buses through New Flyer of America, Inc. as capital funding becomes available.

See pages 3 and 4 for more information on the New Flyer E40LF Diesel Electric Hybrid 40' Low Floor Coach.

(www.transitchicago.com)

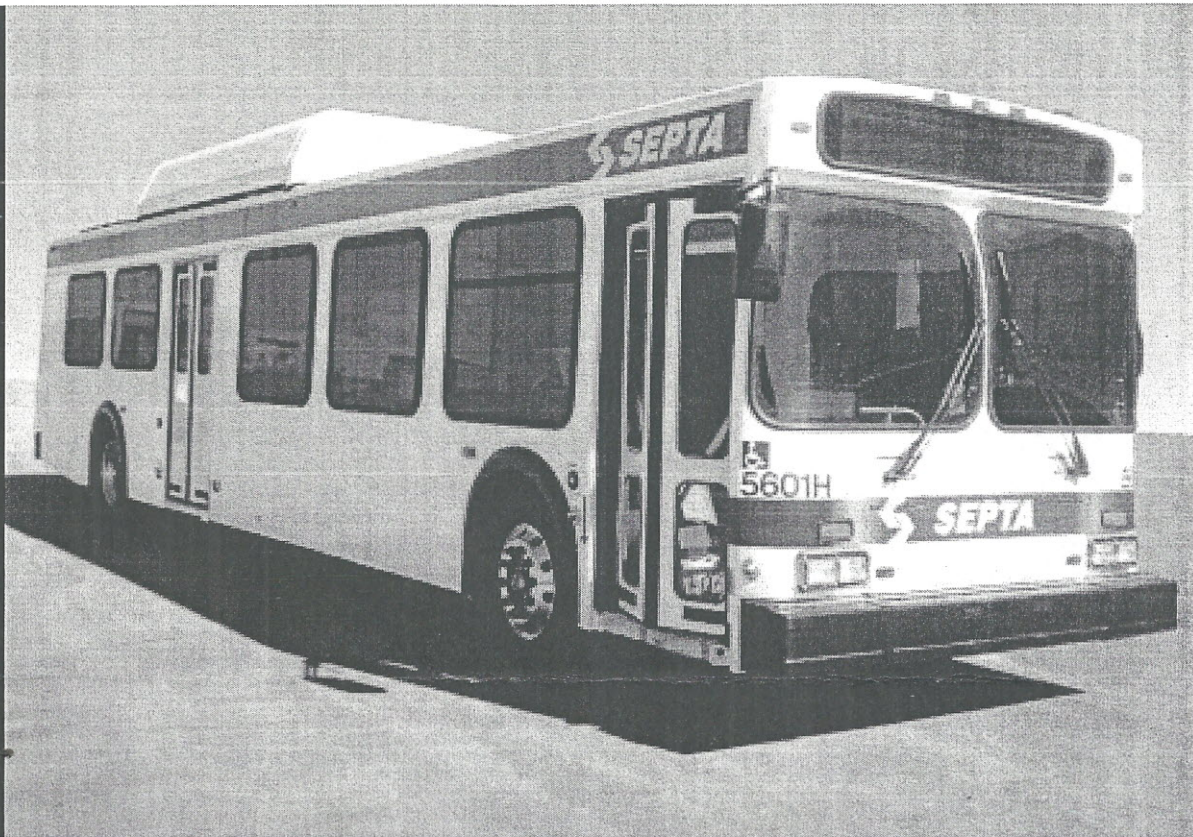
• PACE PATTERN

Pace is continuing its effort to improve and maximize the use of bus routes in the Fox Valley/Southwest DuPage area as part of the agency's Vision 2020 plan. As the next step, Pace invites riders and residents to participate in public forums that will gather opinions from communities on Pace's comprehensive service restructuring in Aurora, Bolingbrook, Lisle, Naperville, Warrenville and surrounding towns.

The three forums were held on Tuesday, November 9, at the Aurora Community Center, 501 College Avenue in Aurora; Tuesday, November 16, at Century Memorial Chapel at Naper Settlement, 523 S. Webster Street in Naperville; and Thursday, November 18, at Bolingbrook Municipal Center, 375 W. Briarcliff Road in Bolingbrook. (Cont on page 5)



DE40LF



The New Flyer DE40LF diesel electric hybrid transit bus offers the benefits of an ultra-low emission, fuel-efficient vehicle without the investment of a supplemental natural gas fueling infrastructure.

Operating Principles

The DE40LF is equipped with a Dual Mode Compound Split Parallel Electric Hybrid system. Driven by a heavy-duty transit rated diesel power-plant equipped with a catalytic converter, the drive system combines the benefits of a mechanical transmission with a set of concentric motors.

Blending engine power and electric power over the entire vehicle operating range, the drive system optimizes the engine's emissions and its fuel economy. The DE40LF offers a minimum of 20% better mileage than its diesel only counterpart. Its Particulate Matter (PM) and Nitrous Oxides (NOx) emissions are lower than either comparable diesel or natural gas buses.

Electric storage units are conveniently mounted on the roof in a gull-wing type enclosure. The atmosphere around the electric storage units is temperature controlled by a dedicated air conditioning system for optimum efficiency.

Electrical charge is maintained by regenerating braking energy that would otherwise be dissipated. Charge and discharge of the storage units is managed by a dual path inverter module (DPIM) located on the roof.

Comfort Features

Just like the D40LF, the New Flyer DE40LF offers the same easy access and ergonomic design. Seating up to 39 passengers, the DE40LF's flip-out ramp enables the quickest and easiest access to the widest array of passengers.

Maintenance and Componentry

The vehicle's electrical system (VCOM™) brings together the latest in automotive electronics and electrical networking for a fast, easy to maintain vehicle electrical system. It opens the door to maintenance labor savings, less downtime and easy upgradeability.

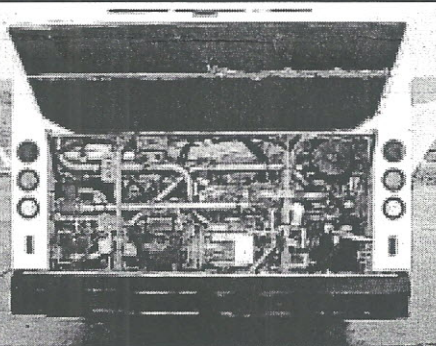
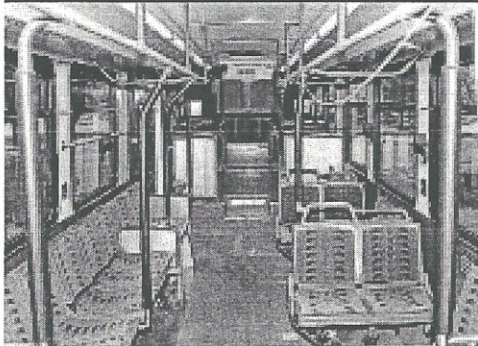
New Flyer uses reliable North American components specifically designed for the transit bus industry. Exterior and interior access panels, combined with a simplified design allow crews quick access for scheduled maintenance. Management will enjoy reduced operating costs due to commonality of parts among different models.

DE40LF

SPECIFICATIONS

Length	40.85 ft. over bumpers 40 ft. over body
Width	102 in. over body
Height	132 in.
Floor Height – Front Door	16.08 in. w/305 tires, 11.5 in. kneeled
Interior Height – Floor to Ceiling	94 in. above front axle 77 in. above rear axle
Tire Size	305/70R22.5
Aisle Width	24 in. minimum
Weight	CW 30,800 lb. estimated depending on options GVWR 40,600 lb.
Approach Angle	9.01° w/305 tires
Departure Angle	9.70° w/305 tires
Breakover Angle	9.38° w/305 tires
Turning Radius	45.15 ft.
Wheelbase	293 in.
Number of Doors	2
Wheelchair Accessibility	600 lb. capacity (30.5 in. W x 44 in. L) flip-out ramp at front door
Wheelchair locations	2 – front section
Seats	Up to 39
Fuel Tank	107 useable US gallons, single tank
Electrical System	VCOM™ using DeviceNet open standard
Cooling System	Young Touchtone: tested and certified to meet engine manufacturer's requirements
Engine with Electronic Control (upon emission availability)	Cummins ISL – 280 hp.
HVAC	Thermo King T11 rear mounted Thermo King auxiliary roof mounted air conditioning for energy storage temperature control
Axles	Meritor
Hybrid Drive System	Allison E ⁴ 40 Drive™
System Controller	2 – Allison 1000 Series™
Dual Power Inverter Module Manufacturer	General Motors
Energy Storage Supplier	Allison

Information subject to change without notice.



WINGS AND DESIGN are registered trademarks of New Flyer Industries Limited.
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We build transit solutions.

(Cont from page 2)

PACE

ch forum ran from 3:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. and covered the same material, so residents could choose the meeting that was the most convenient for them. Presentations were repeated frequently, so attendees could arrive and depart at any time.

The Fox valley/Southwest DuPage Initiative involves 45 bus routes. Paramount to the success of the project is input and direction from Pace bus riders and communities at large. Pace has formed a community advisory group and Technical Advisory Committee to provide input into the planning process. Public meetings and employer forums will add insight throughout the process. Pace is also collecting data through passenger counts, surveys, focus groups and discussions with officials from each community.

The 45 Pace routes being analyzed in the Fox Valley/Southwest DuPage Initiative are Routes 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 532, 533, 534, 673, 675, 676, 677, 678, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 689, 713, 781, 783, 784, 787/788, 802, 820, 821, 822, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 834 and 855.

proposed restructuring plan is expected to come before Pace's Board of Directors in March, and improvements could begin to be implemented in the Fox Valley/Southwest DuPage area in late spring.
(www.pacebus.com)

A bus route in danger of being eliminated will continue to operate because of a partnership Pace has created with the Foundations of East Chicago, the philanthropic arm of Harrah's Casino in East Chicago, Indiana.

Each weekday, Route 892 brings work commuters from East Chicago to the UPS facility in southwest suburban Hodgkins. Due to funding being pulled by the East Chicago Housing Authority and the Empowerment Zone, a public hearing was held in July for the proposed discontinuance of service.

However, the Foundations of East Chicago recognized the importance of Route 892 in providing career and educational opportunities for members of the community. The route will be reduced to a one bus operation, and the annual operating cost of \$61,000 will be paid by the Foundations of East Chicago.

(www.pacebus.com)

Adam Kerman has reported that Pace moved from the Regional Bus Terminal (level 1, parking garage, across from the O'Hare Hilton) to the Kiss 'n' Fly, Parking Lot E Airport Transit System (People Mover) terminal on November 11, 2004.

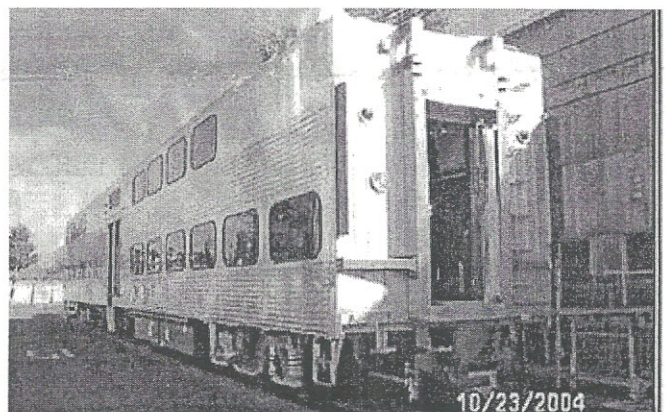
• METRA MATTERS

Stephen M. Scalzo has reported in the Chicagoland Traction Yahoo discussion group the following information on the two new prototype Metra Electric Highliners that are being built by Nippon Sahryo at their Toyokawa plant in Japan.

The following photographs of the prototype cars, 1201 and 1202, are courtesy of the Metra Mechanical Department – the electronic activity weekly reports from Japan by the resident inspectors.



Cab "A" end view

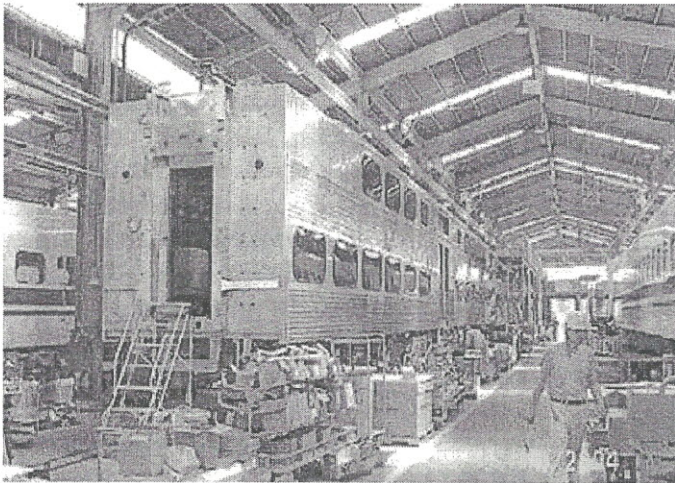


"B" end view.

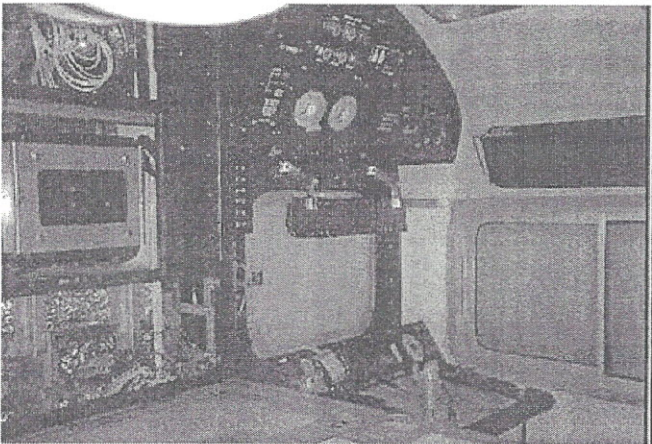
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METRA



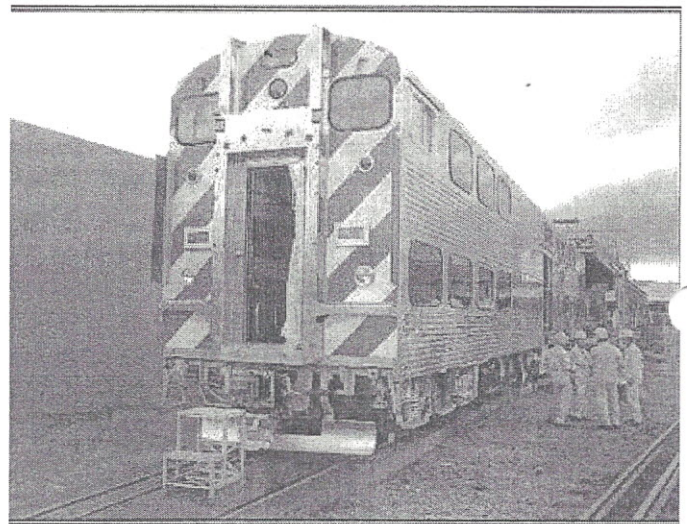
Another view of "B" end under construction.



Motorman's controls.

Here is some additional information that should prove to be of interest.

Metra has, as of September 30, 2004 received 178 (out of 300 ordered) of its new stainless steel diesel operate push-pull double deck gallery cars from Nippon Sharyo (114 coaches and 63 cab cars) which are being assembled in Milwaukee. The final 24 new stainless steel double-deck gallery Metra Electric Highliners also will be assembled in Milwaukee probably starting in late 2005/early 2006 after the diesel coaches are finished. Both orders will be similar in appearance; except that the Highliners will be ac electrically operated with a pantograph at one end to draw dc power from the catenary (an on-board transformer will convert the dc to ac power). (Stephen M Scalzo via ChicagolandTraction Yahoo discussion group)



Cab "A" end

- CALENDAR OF EVENTS -

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

Dec. 10. Chicago Chapter-R&LHS meeting. 7:00pm. The Chicago Temple (77 W. Washington – Pierce Hall (lower level auditorium). Admission: Free. Program – *"To be announced,"*

Dec. 17. Railroad Club of Chicago meeting. 7:30 pm. The Chicago Temple (77 W. Washington – Pierce Hall (lower level auditorium) Donation: \$3.00 requested. Program – *"A slide program by Harold Edmonson."*

Dec. 24. Central Electric Railfans' Association meeting. **No meeting, Christmas Eve.**

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