



\*\*\* FEBRUARY MEETING \*\*\*

The February meeting of the Omnibus Society of America was presented by John Dowdall who showed the members in attendance a varied slide program of bus, rapid rail and heavy rail scenes from his collection. The program lasted longer than normal but everyone present thought it was well worth it.

\*\*\* MARCH ON TAP \*\*\*

The March meeting of the Omnibus Society of America will be held in Parlor "E" of the Bismarck Hotel in downtown Chicago on March 1st. The program will be presented by Ray DeGroot and feature slides from his trip to China and possibly slides of the trolley buses operating in Guadalajara and Mexico City.

It promises to be an enjoyable evening. Be there !!!

\*\*\* DUES REMINDER \*\*\*

Dues for 1985 are now being accepted by the treasurer Bruce Moffat. Dues for 1985 are: \$16.00 for ages 12-65; \$8.00 Seniors, Clergy and military on active duty. Send them to Bruce Moffat 6727 N. Loron Chicago, Il. 60646, or give them to Bruce at any meeting.

\*\*\* CALENDAR OF EVENTS \*\*\*

- March 1 OSA Meeting - Bismarck Hotel - Parlor E
- March 8 R&LHS Meeting - Midland Hotel - 2nd Floor
- March 15 Railroad Club of Chicago - Union Station
- March 22 CERA - Civic Opera Building

All meetings commence at 7:30pm.

\*\*\* BUS BASH 10 \*\*\*

Bus Bash, the twice yearly gathering of coaches, coach operators and anyone else interested in bus transportation will be held May 25-26 in Green Bay, Wisconsin. Bus Bash #10 is being jointly sponsored by Bus Bash, Inc., and the Green Bay Area Visitor and Convention Bureau. More details will be printed in a future GPS.

\*\*\* CTA ANNOUNCES LAY-OFFS AND SERVICE CUTS DUE TO LABOR DISAGREEMENT \*\*\*

On February 6th, new proposals presented by officers of the Amalgamated Transit Union Locals 241 and 308 calling for up-front money and renewed 20% payments to the pension fund were found to be unacceptable by CTA.

As a result, the CTA was forced to invoke the arbitration clause which is in the union contract. CTA indicated that during the arbitration procedures there would be no lay-offs, and need be no service reduction. In exchange, the union would agree to a temporary suspension on pension contributions. The CTA suggested the suspension on the pension fund since the investment performance of the CTA pension fund ranks in the highest 2 per cent of public pension funds in the country and ranks in the top 15 per cent when corporate pension funds are included.

The union refused even to discuss the temporary pension suspension, as a result, lay-offs will have to begin.

"We regret that these lay-offs and service cuts must occur. However, they will be necessary in order for the CTA to contribute what has been demanded by the unions - 13 per cent - into the already healthy pension fund. Each and every employee will now lose 7% of take-home pay, which will also have to be contributed to the fund," said CTA Chairman Michael A. Cardilli. (CTA Press Release)

\*\*\* MBS UPDATE \*\*\*

The Motor Bus Society will hold its spring convention on May 4-5, 1985, in San Diego, California. The host hotel is the Mission Valley Inn, located about 2 miles from downtown. Contact the Motor Bus Society at P.O. Box 7058, West Trenton, N.J. 08628 for details if you are not a member. MBS members should be getting further details in the near future.

\*\*\* SOUTH SHORE ADDS CARS \*\*\*

The Chicago, South Shore & South Bend Railroad has been loaned an RTA diesel locomotive and six bi-level coaches to replace equipment damaged in the recent wreck at Gary as well as several other units that are out of service for various reasons.

In what has to be a first, the Burlington-Northern has consented to use an RTA locomotive and six coaches to relieve overcrowding on its Chicago-Aurora service. The RTA equipment will apparently not be mixed with BN rolling stock because of electrical compatability problems. Until now, the BN has refused to run RTA equipment.

\*\*\* ST. JOSEPH TRANSIT GOES PUBLIC \*\*\*

The St. Joseph Express began transit operations recently following the public takeover of transit service from the St. Joseph Light & Power Company after over 100 years of private operation.

The Express, which is managed by National Transit Services for the city of St. Joseph, provides streamlined routes, schedules, and fares for transit riders.

Inaugural ceremonies were held to mark the first day of service for the new St. Joseph Express. Speeches by federal, state and city leaders were capped by a "Pony Express" horse and rider delivering the scissors used to cut the ceremonial ribbon.

A fleet of 16 buses on nine coordinated routes services the city's 80,000 residents with 30-minute peak period and 60-minute midday service.

Following a 1981 Missouri Public Service Commission ruling to end a transit surcharge on electric rates by December 20, 1984, the St. Joseph Light & Power Company announced it could no longer provide bus service after that date. The city of St. Joseph first commissioned several transit feasibility studies and then placed a tax measure to fund transit on a February 1984 ballot. The city's citizens voted overwhelmingly - by a 77% margin - to institute a dedicated 1% tax on utility consumption and commence a city-owned transit service. Dedicated tax revenues of over \$500,000 per year are anticipated to fund transit needs. (Passenger Transport)

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\*\*\* RIDERS SHUN LOWERED FARES \*\*\*  
ON BUSES

\*\*\* PIERCE MODERNIZES WITH GILLIG \*\*\*

Pierce Transit's (Tacoma, Wa) Board of Commissioners approved a contract January 21 for the purchase of 35 new buses. The contract was awarded to the Gillig Corporation in the amount of \$126,685 per bus, for a total of \$4.43 million.

The purchase of new buses is the latest step in Pierce Transit's plan to modernize its fleet. The 40-foot buses will have wheelchair lifts and kneeling capabilities to meet the agency's commitment to accessible service. The new buses will allow Pierce Transit to retire an older segment of its fleet.

The buses will have flip seating in the front of the bus to accommodate wheelchairs. The buses will seat 41 passengers and two in wheelchairs, or up to 47 passengers if no passengers using wheelchairs are on board. (Passenger Transport)

\*\*\* BLOOMINGTON GOES RADIAL \*\*\*

Bloomington Transit recently inaugurated a new radial pulse system for the city of Bloomington, Indiana. This new system, consisting of six new routes, will improve transit service to the Bloomington area. BT is managed by National Transit Services, Inc., of Chicago, Ill., under a fixed-price management contract.

The service changes have been planned for over six months. An origin-destination study was conducted in June 1984 to gather preliminary ridership data. An attitudinal study was conducted of non-riders to assess community attitudes towards public transit.

BT has been providing public transportation to Bloomington for 10 years. Service has been provided at varied levels over the years, reflecting funding availability during the past decade.

The first full week of service was free to all riders to offer them a chance to become familiar with the new schedules and routes. Free rides were also offered during the week of January 7 through 12, to allow returning Indiana University students to try the system and to help Bloomington "Catch the New BT Spirit!"

Preliminary results indicate that the service changes were well received by residents, since ridership has increased over 10% when compared to the same days of operation one year ago. While this increase includes two weeks of free service with 24% and 22% increases, the full fare weeks also had 5%, 26%, 23%, and 2% increases. The marketing program to educate the public about the changes proved successful in maintaining and even increasing ridership.

\*\*\* IT'S A M.A.N. \*\*\*

The Chicago Transit Board on February 6th approved the purchase of 362 standard-size buses at a cost of \$46,858,366. The contract also calls for an additional \$444,545 for spare parts.

The M.A.N. Truck and Bus Company of Charlotte, NC, was the lowest of the manufacturers who submitted bids. The other bidders were: NEOPLAN, of Lamare, CO; The Flxible Corp., of Delaware, OH and General Motors Corp., of Pontiac, MI.

The buses, costing \$129,443 each, will be 40-feet long and will have seating for 46 passengers. They will not be air conditioned, but will have sliding sash windows and standee windows that open.

Other features will include digital, electronic destination signs and tinted windows.

Delivery is to start 12 weeks after the contract is signed and will be completed within an additional 29 weeks.

This contract for buses replaces a previous order with Flyer Industries, of Winnipeg, Canada. Due to problems that developed on Flyer buses furnished on a prior order, The Chicago Transit Board reduced the current Flyer order from 363 to 25 buses. The remaining 25 buses will be furnished with design changes that will receive extensive testing by Flyer and require CTA approval prior to fabrication.

To increase ridership on the eight lines run by its Transit Management of Oak Lawn company, Suburban Bus last November lowered its fare to 60 cents from 90 cents for local rides for a three month trial.

Instead of increasing ridership, the number of passengers in November and December dropped by about 33,000, or 8.8 percent, compared with the previous two months. As a result, the reduced fare will come to an end.

Suburban Bus officials are not quite sure what to make of the failed experiment. The failure wasn't for lack of marketing - the Suburban Bus Division spent about \$3,000 on advertising, direct mail, brochures and notices, and even ran radio spots.

The bus company's marketing department is doing a survey to find out what kept the riders away. The bad news did little to dim the 1984 ridership figures for the Suburban Bus Division, though. The number of passengers on the division's bus system jumped nearly 16 percent in 1984, to 35.3 million from 30.5 million in 1983.

A vintage advertisement;

# Can you make a profit with a bus seat that costs \$1,000<sup>00</sup>?

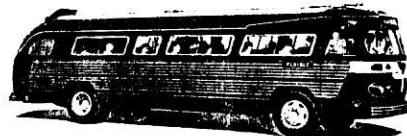
If a 29 passenger Flxible averages \$12,000.00 less than the price of a 41 passenger coach, *then* those 12 extra seats cost \$1,000.00 each.

There is no salvage in an empty seat. *Is your chance for profit small with seats that cost \$1,000.00 each?*

Because of this one fact, and many others, the wise move may well be to replace larger and more costly equipment with Flxible. The Visicoach brings to its owners the benefits of:

- 1 Lower initial cost, with modest depreciation.
- 2 Cheaper parts, quicker replacement without high inventory and excessive shop equipment.
- 3 Reduced operating costs which result from high fuel economy and low maintenance charges.
- 4 A bus that drivers like to drive.
- 5 Quality equipment, accepted as such by the entire industry.
- 6 Charter group preference that attracts extra income.
- 7 Seating tailored to fit your requirements.

Flxible offers a choice of gasoline or diesel power, with passenger capacities of from 25 to 33 Intercity, 33 to 37 Suburban. Write today for information about the handsome and smooth riding 1952 Visicoach . . . the bus that is high in passenger appeal and low in first cost.



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