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The

RTAReader

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A newsletter of developments, events and announcements from the Riverside Transit Agency.

Ridership Continues Upward Climb

New information shows ridership on Riverside Transit Agency buses continuing to increase. Board members received a report showing 733,685 boardings in March, a 13.5 percent increase compared to March of last year. Ridership on CommuterLink express routes was up 12 percent from a year ago and Dial-A-Ride boardings climbed 23 percent.

New Express Routes Offer Service to Riverside, Escondido

In June, RTA will introduce two new CommuterLink routes with limited stop service linking Hemet/San Jacinto to Riverside and Escondido. On June 29, the Route 212 will begin service with stops in San Jacinto, Hemet, Perris, UC Riverside, Marketplace Metrolink Station and the Riverside Downtown Terminal. The Route 217 will offer service between San Jacinto, Hemet, Temecula's Promenade Mall, Escondido Transit Center and Escondido City Hall. General fares are \$3, day passes are \$7 and monthly passes are \$75. Federal Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom Program grant money along with Measure A funds provided by the Riverside County Transportation Commission will subsidize the cost of operating the routes.

Free Trolley Service Ready to Roll in Temecula

RTA is proud to introduce a new way to get around Temecula. And best of all, it's free. The Temecula Trolley will debut on June 29 with service on two routes serving the Harveston development, Promenade Mall and Old Town. The Green Line will circulate around Harveston and the mall. The Red Line will circulate around the mall and Old Town. The service, financed entirely by the homebuilder Lennar Homes through an agreement with the City of Temecula, is designed to attract visitors and local residents, particularly within the development of Harveston, to utilize public transit as a means to travel to schools, retail and commercial centers and connections to other RTA fixed-routes. Final design for the routing is underway.

Driver Lauded for Superior Performance

During their April 23 meeting, Board members commended Dial-A-Ride driver Greta Dotson for her admirable service to RTA on March 28. On that day, Greta was carrying two passengers in her Dial-A-Ride minivan on a rural road in southern Riverside. As she approached a sharp curve in the road, Greta suddenly spotted an out-of-control pickup truck barreling toward her in her lane. With quick thinking and a cool head, Greta maneuvered her minivan around the oncoming vehicle and avoided what could have been a disaster. Greta has only been a Dial-A-Ride operator for a little more than a year, but on that day, she showed a great deal of professionalism, talent and dedication to the Agency and her customers. Her event also underlines the types of challenges professional operators face every day.

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RTA Supports Legislation to Finance Student Ride Program

RTA Board Members are supporting new legislation that could establish an ongoing, student-funded free ride program at the Riverside Community College District. The bill, AB 774, introduced by Assemblymen Paul Cook (R-65th District) and Bill Emmerson (R-63rd District), would enable RCCD to charge all full-time students an equal fee for the program. Currently, the program is paid for by the cities of Corona, Moreno Valley, Norco, Perris and Riverside and the County of Riverside. Since its inception last August, the successful program has boosted RCCD student ridership on RTA buses from 2 percent to 10 percent. In March, RTA buses handled more than 100,000 RCCD student boardings.

Low Ridership Prompts Cancellation of Route 52

Following a public hearing period, the Agency's Board of Directors has voted to discontinue Route 52, or Green Line trolley. Despite RTA's efforts to attract riders, the two-year-old downtown Riverside trolley service continues to fail six of eight performance indicators. RTA will continue to operate the Red Line trolley, or the Jury Trolley, and plans to provide alternate service by making adjustments to CommuterLink routes 208 and 210 for customers affected by the trolley cancellation.