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# The RTA Reader

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

### RTA Applauds Hero Bus Driver

An RTA coach operator is being praised for his quick thinking that helped two lost children return to their family. Sergio Valenzuela was parked at the Riverside Downtown Terminal last week, waiting for people to board his Route 13 bus, when he noticed two young girls alone in the crowded transit hub. A few minutes later, with no parent or guardian in sight, Sergio had seen enough. He got out of his bus and walked over the girls and asked them if they were okay. They said they were lost and waiting for their grandmother. After hearing the story, Sergio called police to the scene, who were eventually able to reunite the five- and seven-year-old girls with their family. On Thursday, the RTA Board of Directors honored Sergio with a hero award for his actions.



### Ride RTA for Only 25 Cents on Winter Break

From December 18 through January 8, RTA will offer 25 cent fares aboard any fixed-route bus to students in grades 1-12. Just show your student ID and ride for a quarter to the movies, the mall, the beach --- anywhere we go, anytime we operate!

### Holiday Schedule

On Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day, RTA will provide Sunday service, the Customer Information Center will be open and administrative offices will be closed. On December 23 and 30, RTA will provide regular service and administrative offices will close at noon. On November 25, December 26 and January 2, RTA will provide regular service, the Customer Information Center will be open and administrative offices will be closed.

### Free Rides on New Year's Eve

On New Year's Eve, December 31, RTA will offer free rides to passengers after 2:30 p.m. on all fixed-routes. It's our way of providing a safe transportation alternative during the holiday and saying thank you to our customers for their year-round patronage.

### Service Changes Coming to Downtown Riverside

On January 8, RTA will launch a new way of serving downtown Riverside. The Riverside Downtown Terminal will close and customers will benefit from new and upgraded bus stops at more than 20 central locations. Customers can also look forward to a new bus layover location on Vine Street near the Riverside-Downtown Metrolink Station. In addition, RTA will upgrade several routes systemwide to boost productivity and enhance connections. Details inside on-board brochures, at RiversideTransit.com, and in Ride Guides debuting later this month.

### RTA to Participate in Festival of Lights

RTA is proud to participate once again in the annual Festival of Lights switch-on ceremony on Friday, November 25 in downtown Riverside. The Agency's trolley will be decorated and on display for the annual event. Need a lift to the festival? Beginning next week, RTA will offer a free shuttle that connects the Riverside Downtown Metrolink Station with the Festival of Lights. The shuttle

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will debut on Friday, November 25 and run on Fridays and Saturdays for four weeks, offering afternoon and evening service from the train station to the festival. The shuttle will operate from 3 – 10 p.m. with service every 15 minutes. Look for RTA at other events this holiday season. Beginning December 2, RTA will be participating in holiday parades and events in Beaumont, Hemet, Lake Elsinore, Perris, Temecula, and Yucaipa.

### **Financial Audit Yields Positive Results**

Continuing a tradition of stellar audits, an independent accounting firm that audited RTA's financial activities for Fiscal Year 2016 concluded that the Agency is making efficient use of its funds and following proper accounting procedures. The audit gave RTA an unmodified, or clean, opinion, which essentially is the highest level of assurance an audit can give members of the public that the Agency is making good use of taxpayer dollars. The audit also determined that RTA's farebox ratio of 24 percent not only met but exceeded the state's minimum farebox ratio.

### **Bus Stuffed for Children in Need**

Thanks to the generosity of students, police officers, business owners and community members, the equivalent of two 40-foot RTA buses were stuffed this week with a spectrum of donations for teens in crisis. Thursday's "Stuff the Bus" event produced a record-number of donations of non-perishable food, linens, toiletries and other items to Operation SafeHouse, a non-profit group that helps at-risk and in-crisis youth.