

Cut in Fare Asked for Elderly Riders

A request by senior citizens for a reduction in fares for elderly riders with limited incomes has been taken under study by the district's Projects Development Committee.

The plea for lower fares was made to the board of directors this month by Mrs. Alexander Van Frank of Berkeley, president of the Coordinating Council of East Bay Senior Citizen Groups. The council, which represents 41 groups in the area served by the district, stressed that a fare reduction would mean release from a restricted life to thousands of elderly persons living on low incomes.

No specific fare was suggested by the council, but Mrs. Van Frank pointed out that the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit Authority and the Detroit Railway Co. have adopted lower fares during non-peak hours for men 65 and over and women 62 and over, with limited incomes.

In Los Angeles, fares have been reduced from the normal 25 cents to 15

cents during off-peak hours for senior citizens in the low income category. The reduction, set-up on a four months trial basis, will mean a saving for approximately 150,000 people.

The lower rates apply to elderly people who earn no more than \$1200 a year. Processing of applications and issuance of cards to qualified citizens was handled by the Los Angeles Senior Citizens Service Center and other volunteer groups, without cost to MTA. The special rates are in effect for certain hours only.

Bill Holds Answer To School Bus Costs

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Under present interpretation of the State Education Code, the schools must pay all the costs of school bus service if they pay any part of it.

The Oakland board already has given notice it will end special school bus contracts the end of this school year. Parents, fearing their children may be stranded in hill areas, have announced they are willing to pay a fair share of the costs.

AC Transit directors maintain the district cannot provide the special service at a loss.

According to William J. Bettencourt, board president, it would be unfair for transit taxpayers in Alameda or San Leandro, for example, to have to subsidize special school service in Oakland.

"No other school district within the transit district is asking this," he said.

The legislation, which provides a sharing solution and removes the taxpayer from paying the entire bill, has the approval of the American Federation of Teachers and the California School Boards Association.

Iron Horses of Bus Transportation Sold to Oakland Dealer for \$60,000

Sale of 189 gasoline-powered buses for \$60,000 has been approved by the board of directors, the final coup de grace for the pungent old iron horses of bus transportation.

The motor coaches, retired from service by AC Transit as new equipment arrived, were sold to the Sam Clar Co. and Associates, of Oakland, auctioneers and liquidators.

The gas buses have been in retirement pasture at the East Oakland and Richmond division yards since the board declared them surplus earlier this year.

Once the pride and joy of the Key System in the lush and lucrative days of World War II travel, the coaches—many of them pre-war—were the work horses of Bay area transit—even if they did leave a trail of gasoline fumes to mark their passing.

They are expected to roll again, in smaller communities and under different

uses, but still hardy and dependable. The retired fleet includes the last 23 of the pre-war 800 series, along with 95 of the 900 series and 75 of the 1000's, the end of the White line, with a "pancake" engine under the floorboards and a gasoline consumption that made them a high cost compared to diesel models.

With most of the old buses out of service, the district now is primarily diesel-propelled, with new equipment handling basic service on most of the local lines, on transbay runs and on new express routes.

When the first of the Whites went into service in 1941, they were considered very plush and especially reliable. And the fumes were taken for granted.

During the war years, the buses hauled full load of passengers, but gradually they lost a financial race to the more inexpensively operated diesel coaches.

"NOT IN SERVICE"—Veterans of East Bay bus transportation, the "old Whites" share retirement pasture at East Oakland division yards before rolling again into new transit careers.



IN MEMORIAM

Louis E. Reid, 55, of 22223 Queen St., Hayward, an instructor at Division 2, died May 5 of leukemia, after a short illness.

Mr. Reid came to work for Key System as a driver in 1944 and later became a dispatcher and receiver, working at the different divisions. He was appointed an instructor in December, 1951.

A "green thumb" gardener, Mr. Reid also was interested in fishing and in traveling. He is survived by his wife, Evelyn; two daughters, Mrs. Patricia Mary Smith of Pleasant Hill and Mrs. Marilynne Mendonca of Castro Valley; and five grandchildren.