



In this issue:

Abilities Expo Experience	2
Scratch & Win Update	2
LA Marathon	3
CALIF Open House	3
Kaiser Wellness Fair	4
Scratch & Win (cont.)	4
Rider Comments	4

Behind the Scenes

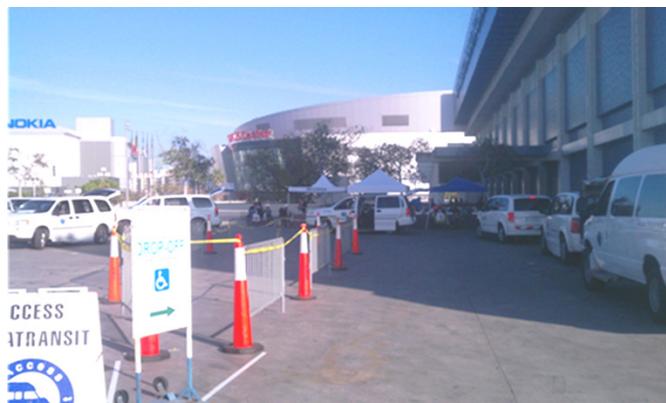
Executive Report

While the next Behind the Scenes issue will go into much more detail, I would like to thank all those who were able to attend the 18th Annual Access Services' Membership Meeting that was held on Wednesday March 27, 2013. There were over 100 attendees comprised of Access Board of Directors, member agencies' staff, contractors, and the public.

I especially would like to recognize the hard work Access staff put in to making this event a success. Many hours of planning and last minute adjustments exemplified the attention to detail and pride all of Access takes in putting on an event of this size.

Shelly Verrinder
Executive Director

Abilities Expo



The Access Staging area at the Expo

The 2013 Los Angeles Abilities Expo was held between March 15th and March 17th at the LA Convention Center. Access transported over 233 customers from all over the county to this fun and educational event. For our customers' convenience, Access worked with the convention center staff and set up special staging area near the convention center entrance for easy unloading and loading of customers. To say the least, Access customers and their families had a wonderful time at the Expo and they really appreciated Access for being there to coordinate their transportation home. Ms. Patricia Mitsuuchi, Access customer and Expo attendee, expressed her sincere appreciation to Access for a job well done at the Expo.

She complimented Access by saying "Access is the best!"

Access wants to thank all the service providers: California Transit Inc., San Gabriel Transit, Inc., MV Transportation (Division 45), Global Paratransit Inc., and CARE Evaluators for their active

participation at the 2013 Abilities Expo and making this event a success.

After the Los Angeles event, the Abilities Expo will move on to New York in May.

Faustino Salvador
Operations Supervisor



Patricia Mitsuuchi and Faustino Salvador

Abilities Expo - The Experience

The annual Abilities Expo arrived at the Los Angeles Convention Center with high anticipation for thousands of people living with disabilities, their families, caregivers, healthcare professionals, seniors and returning veterans. For well over thirty years, 'The Expo' has created an informative and often entertaining milieu that highlights the latest and the best in high powered technology thereby narrowing the gap between ability and disability. For three days, Expo 2013 presented a series of educational workshops addressing disability issues with a dedicated focus on emergency preparedness, finances in a changing economy, keeping physically and emotionally fit and parental classes providing life lessons in thriving as a parent of a unique child. All seminars were offered free-of-charge to all attendees.

Over the course of the three day event, Marking & Tethering Supervisor Edward Quintana and the CARE Marking/Tethering staff provided services to Access patrons, completing a total of

sixty-one mobility devices. Unity was also in abundance this year, as record breaking Access staff volunteered their time with their families to meet and greet our customers. For many staffers and customers this was a rare opportunity for face to face meetings.

Volunteering has become an intrinsic part of the disability community. Often our time and concerns are not always recognized and it is with these thoughts still fresh in mind that Andre Colaiace, Matthew Avancena and Stephen Wrenn offer their sincere gratitude to the Access staff who gave up their weekends to meet our customers. Essential to any front line are Eric Haack, Norma DeAlba, Steve Montes, Kim Hogarth-Hindi, Nicole Leiva, Raquel Rivera, Christina Enriquez, Shanetta Patterson and Allison Hughes of R&D Transportation. The Access Operation Supervisors Gina Breceda, Christina Blanco, Philip Rice and Hamilton Franco under the guidance of Faustino Salvador provided successful round trips for our clients.

Kurt and Yael Hagen volunteered to greet our clients as a couple to share their experience – "I had seen a number of young people in attendance at the Abilities Expo this year. I was very proud to see that. My wife and I, for instance, take our job as educators of our daughter very seriously. We recognize our position in the disability community as being one that people may not see out in the community as much as they should. Therefore, when you see two parents with significant disabilities who have a child without disabilities out and about in the community, people tend to take notice. Our daughter, Sara, has grown up among people who use wheelchairs, canes, hearing aids, sign language, etc. in their everyday lives. And while this is not the common existence for Sara's peers, Sara is able to educate her friends - based on her own experience - about the lives of people with disabilities. Put quite simply, the youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow."

*Erik Washington
Mobility Management Counselor*

Scratch & Win Update



Nancy Delgado & Galen Hale

Access' Scratch and Win incentive Program has distributed more than 560 tickets with 15% - 20% resulting in instant winners, in addition to conducting 9 raffles which have produced 18 Scratch and Win raffle winners. The raffle offers a second-chance opportunity for a non-winning ticket holder to win a \$100 gift card.

The Scratch and Win raffle took its 1st road trip to MV Transit's Appreciation Day; MV Transit's staff was treated to In-N-Out sponsored by Access for a job well done. Nancy Delgado, an MV Transit Reservationist, and Angel Perez, an MV Transit Mechanic, were both raffle winners on this day.

Continued on Pg. 4

LA Marathon



Racers ready & waiting for pick up and (below) one of the elite racing chairs



The 2013 Los Angeles Marathon was a huge success on many fronts. With the assistance of Access' West Central region service provider California Transit Inc. (CTI) and Los Angeles World Airport (LAX), Access Services successfully transported 27 Elite Wheelchair Racers to and from Los Angeles International Airport and to the race starting line at Dodger Stadium. Wheelchair Racers came from all over the world i.e. Australia, Costa Rica, and many parts of the United States. It was such a pleasure to get to meet some of the Elite Wheelchair Racers during the pre-race reception event.

The racers as well as Access staff were up early Sunday morning to begin the preparations. Access staff arrived at the Sheraton Hotel at 3am in the morning to ensure a smooth transport of all elite

racers, while California Transit staff arrived shortly thereafter. All racers were picked up shortly after 4am. Although there were more Elite Wheelchair Racers participating this year than last year, CTI was able to get the racers to the LA Marathon event on-time.

As for the race results, ..."In the wheelchair divisions, Mr. Krige Schabort of the U.S. overcame a tire coming off his rim by the second mile to produce a record time (1:30:50), his fourth consecutive L.A. Marathon victory, and Susannah Scaroni won the women's race." lance.pugmire@latimes.com

Congratulations to all the marathon participants and special thanks to California Transit Inc. and LA World Airport for a job well done!

*Geoffrey Okamoto
Project Administrator*

CALIF Open House



Rycharde Martindale and I were invited to CALIF (Communities Actively Living Independent and Free) Saint Patrick's Day open house. CALIF's is downtown's only Independent Living Center which was founded by long time disability advocate Lillibeth Navarro. This agency provides vital services for disabled residents within the Central Los Angeles and neighboring Cities area. They also provide counseling for housing, employment services, benefits, personal assistance, advocacy, independent living skills and peer

support as well as a host of other services. This facility is in great demand due to the cut backs in government and public funding, which they rely on to maintain their services. Many of those in attendance have had some connection to Access, either as an Access Customer or initiating contact with Access to assist a customer.

*Louis Burns
Customer Support Administrator*

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Rider Comments

"Access has made a very positive difference in my life.

We all start going downhill as we grow older and one important problem is that we must give up driving our cars. So we have to live within the confines of our home. This is where Access improves the quality of my life. Access transports me to my beloved card games where I can also meet and associate with lifelong friends.

Importantly, Access enables me to keep my numerous medical appointments, do shopping, etc.

Access greatly improves the quality of my life. Thank you!"

Anne, Panorama City
 Rider since 2005

access

Kaiser Permanente Wellness Fair



On March 21st, Stephen Wrenn, Erik Washington and I attended the Kaiser Permanente Family Wellness Fair at the West Los Angeles Medical Center. The fair helped raise awareness for Kaiser members and employees about Family Violence Prevention: Child, Elder and Dependent Abuse/Neglect and Intimate Partner Violence.

Access' Mobility Management Department participated by providing information on paratransit transportation services. Access was the only transportation service represented throughout the many tables. Many patients stopped by the table inquiring as to what Access was and how the service could potentially work for them. Physicians and medical staff came by the Access table and commended Access for its wonderful job and how it has helped so many of their patients. In addition Kaiser Permanente staff let us know that they promote Access to their patients and those they feel could benefit from it.

Lora Verarde
 Planning Intern

Scratch & Win (cont.)

Here are the winners of the monthly Scratch and Win Raffle:

January

Lara Beatrice, MV Transit
 Carlos Lierena, San Gabriel Transit

February

Kristine Joyner, Diversified
 Israel Guerra, GPI

March

Dora Castel De Oro, CTI
 Martin Masunaka, San Gabriel Transit



Angel Perez & Galen Hale

Galen Hale
 Administrative Assistant