

Speak Out Now at BART (December 4, 2023)

Walking the Tracks

The recent incident in the Transbay Tube drew attention to an all-too common problem – people on the trackway. Unfortunately, it can go beyond delayed trains. It can lead to loss of life or a severe injury.

This is a part of BART's operations that the media doesn't cover. It's not just the loss of one life, sometimes purposeful, sometimes not. It can have a huge impact on a lot of people – those who are nearby, but especially the TO. And then there are those who are working in the station. They have to assist passengers on the platform, move them out of the area, prevent others from entering the station, and a multitude of other tasks.

There is no way a station can be over-staffed in that kind of situation. But it's usually the opposite – one person alone, sometimes assisted by a System Service Worker, and eventually BART or local police.

After this kind of event, there should never be a question of whether those involved should be contacted immediately and followed up on regarding the trauma they have experienced. It shouldn't be left to workers to have to self-diagnose and apply for trauma leave. Who wants to go through all that?

A Lot of Crazy S__#!

The holidays are upon us and the show is beginning to start. Some people are wearing their holiday gear and big smiles and trying to spread their version of the holiday spirit.

For others, this time of year brings out the ghosts of their past and their loneliness and past abuse they have suffered can push them in unfortunate directions.

And of course, that all gets mixed on the trains and in the stations. Sometimes it's a good mix, other times not so pleasant. It's a time of year when we all need to give each other a little break – and Management and those critics on the Board should remember that.

Happy Holidays!

With the holidays ahead, those of us who circulate this newsletter might not see you for a while, especially if you are on a new bid. Keep in touch. The year ahead will bring its challenges and we will need to stand together.

Next year should be our year!

People Are Quiet When...

People are quiet when things in the system are running smoothly as they should. But when some passengers run into a problem of any sort, it's like all their problems erupt. Those are the calls that BART HQ gets and may feel needs to be investigated.

Maybe they should take a breath before they decide to make a mountain out of a mole hill. Check the fare gate count, add another 15 to 20% to get an accurate rider count and think about how many riders actually used the system without an incident.

The Sparkle Is Gone

People who live and work in downtown San Francisco have noticed a change in the city in the last weeks. After Biden, Xi, the other politicians and CEOs left town, the old city is showing itself again. The sidewalks aren't power washed at night, the streets aren't as clean – the sparkle is gone.

Maybe they'll bring it back to try to attract shoppers to the few remaining stores. Everyone knows that it is just a show and there is no real concern for the people who live and work in the city.

\$100 Million For What?

BART is officially buying an office building from Kaiser in Downtown Oakland for \$26 million dollars to house the new BART Police Headquarters.

Here's the catch though: after acquiring the building, BART will need to pay for an additional "\$74 to \$96 million" in seismic retrofits and other renovations to make the building usable.

BART has not given a good explanation about why this amount of money needs to be spent on a new HQ when they already have a perfectly good one near Lake Merritt station. Is this the best use of resources to increase ridership? Will this make BART more affordable, cleaner, or safer in the meantime? Why is this needed? What's the real story?

Spend the money on the BART rail system?

No way! Build more BART buildings!

