



FRINGE BENEFITS — As part of the new bus system now on trial in the City of Flint, Bus Bunnies are on hand to serve coffee and donuts to the passengers on their way to work. It is called Maxi-Cab service and the Playboy Club tinge is expected to help boost trade.



SOMETHING NEW — This is the type of modern bus that is being used in the new Maxi-Cab service that is part of a pilot program in the City of Flint that may revolutionize transportation for the city workers. Under this program the Maxi-Cab picks you at your home and delivers you to your place of employment.

Revolution In Transit Systems Flint Tries New 'Maxi-Cabs'

By W. W. EDGAR

The City of Flint that several years ago pioneered an entirely new approach to education in its public schools, now is at it again.

This time it is conducting a pilot program that may revolutionize transportation in the metropolitan areas and eventually bring about a new system of mass transportation.

Under this program, being financed by the City of Flint, the Mott Foundation, the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the American Academy of Transportation during a 3 1/2 year study, a portal to portal system is being established whereby the passenger is met at his own door and dispatched to a destination at a time when suitable to him or her.

For the past two years the plan, under the title of a Maxi Cab, has been in operation for the men in the factories and the downtown business centers. And while the reception

has not been quite up to expectations it has been successful enough to move into the portal to portal phase for shoppers.

The plan is one of the most novel of any transportation system offered thus far. It eliminates the old haphazard scheme of charting a bus route and gambling on the number of passengers to be served.

The Maxi Cab service for the workers -- both plant and office -- has been organized into what amounts to clubs with a monthly fee that runs between \$9 and \$16, depending upon the distance that must be covered from home to work.

Then, at regular intervals in the morning the Maxi-Cab arrives at the home of the member as the result of another novel system. Each member's home is equipped with a small radio device that sounds an alarm at a given time and also lights a light on the porch to signal the bus driver the exact location of his rider.

Over the past two years there

has been a 16 per cent impact on the public that rides to work in the factories and downtown offices. This amounts to 3,000 a week or 150,000 annually.

Now, as a companion of the Maxi-Cab, the pilot program is to include the shoppers and occasional riders and will be known as "Dial-A-Bus."

BRIEFLY, here is how the proposed plan is to work.

Mrs. X, places a telephone call to the dispatchers office and announces her desire to go downtown and gives her address. The dispatcher immediately dials a computer which is based in Ann Arbor and within seconds gets the bus route and time that Mrs. X will be picked up at her door. This in turn is made available to the bus driver on a small receiving set in his bus.

Nothing like this ever has been attempted, but it is designed to take up the present drop-in patronage from the peak hours in mid-morning and mid-afternoon.

This new version of city transportation was explained at a press conference at the Detroit Press Club this week, with more than a dozen midwestern cities represented.

The plan was revealed by Herbert Norder, president of the American Academy of Transportation, which is headquartered in Ann Arbor. Utilizing the abilities of Dr. Frank Westervelt, the University of Michigan computer expert, and the University's famed talking computer, "Cynthia," he outlined how the proposed new plan will work in Flint and other large urban centers.

It is based upon providing three sets of conditions and considerations, according to Norder, who stated that it makes public transportation available for all who need it, provides the most economical system, and improves the quality of service.

The pilot program is scheduled for the next six months, but the experts claimed an answer may be forthcoming by fall.

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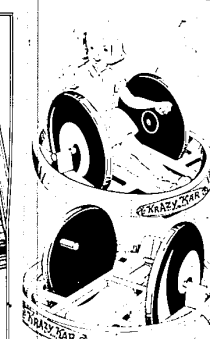
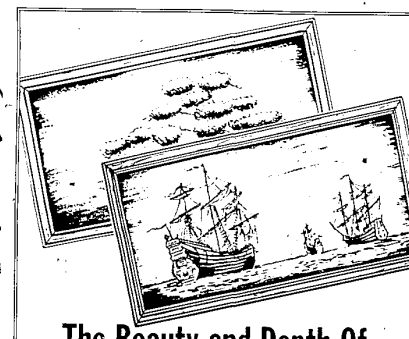
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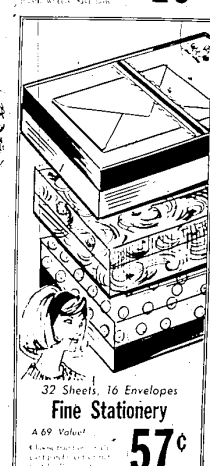
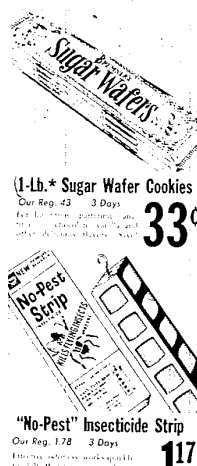
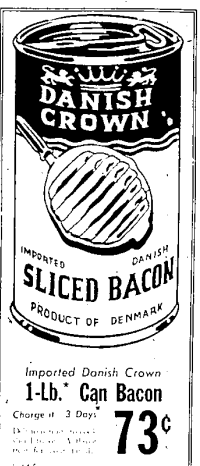
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