



NEWS

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MTA TEAMS UP WITH HOLLYWOOD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE TO MARK RETURN OF WALK OF FAME STARS AT SPECIAL CEREMONY

Actress Connie Stevens will participate in a special ceremony March 16 commemorating the return of hundreds of Hollywood Walk of Fame stars, including her own, removed between Vine and Gower streets during the construction of the Metro Red Line subway.

The rededication of this portion of the Hollywood Walk of Fame will be emceed by Johnny Grant, chair of the Hollywood Walk of Fame, and is scheduled to begin at 5 p.m. in front of the Pantages Theatre, the site of Stevens' star.

"This is an excellent example of how the MTA works with and makes good on promises made to a community, and is a clear sign that the opening of the subway is not that far away," said MTA CEO Julian Burke. "The people of Hollywood entrusted us with preserving the dignity of the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Not only were the panels safely tucked away at the same secret warehouse as Getty Center treasures, but we've also gone the extra mile by restoring the Walk to its former glory."

The MTA began carefully relocating a total of 320 star panels in April 1994 prior to construction of Metro Red Line subway stations on Hollywood Boulevard at Vine Street and Highland Avenue. The reinstallation of the first 222 terrazzo stars, an extremely complex process that has involved artisan-like expertise, began in early January.

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It is estimated that when Hollywood segment of the Metro Red Line opens in around late February of 1999, an additional 700,000 visitors will be drawn to Hollywood annually.

More people visiting Hollywood is only one reason why the honorary mayor of Hollywood is enthused.

"We're extremely encouraged by the ever-increasing number of developers we see making commitments and inquiring about the revitalized Hollywood," said Grant. "Obviously the subway has a lot to do with that. Studies have shown that wherever these systems are built economic resurgence follows."

The extension of the subway to Hollywood, expected to result in a 100 percent increase in Metro Red Line system ridership, will include stations on Vermont Boulevard at Beverly, Santa Monica and Sunset boulevards, and on Hollywood Boulevard at Western Avenue and Vine Street.

In approximately 1-1/2 years, dozens of the 34-by-36 inch panels removed next to the Metro Red Line station on Hollywood Boulevard at Highland Avenue, which will open in May 2000 when the subway begins running to North Hollywood, also will be reinstalled.

editors note: All media planning to cover the event are asked to RSVP Ana Martinez-Holler, Press Relations, Hollywood Chamber of Commerce at (213) 468-1376.

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