

## Metro Report Archives

### February 2002 Articles

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**[Board Approves](#)** Eastside Light-Rail, Rapid Bus, Metro Rapid, Universal Fares, Freeway Patrol Motions (Feb. 28, 2002)

**[Service Sector Plan](#)** Gets Favorable Hearing from Committees (Feb. 26, 2002) CEO Roger Snoble received a favorable hearing from the Board's Operations and Executive Management committees, last week, when he laid out details of the MTA's new service sector concept and the agency-wide reorganization that will accompany it.

**[Major Environmental Project](#)** Nears Finish at RRC (Feb. 26, 2002) Work on a major project to bring underground storage tanks at the Regional Rebuild Center into compliance with state environmental regulations will be completed in March.

**[Officials Gather for](#)** Opening of 405 Freeway Carpool Lane (Feb. 22, 2002) Gov. Gray Davis, state, local and MTA officials gathered at the Sherman Oaks Galleria, Friday, to mark the official opening of a \$22.7 million San Diego (405) Freeway carpool lane through the Sepulveda Pass.

**[MTA's New 'Wayfinding Kit'](#)** Will Help Sight-Impaired Travel Metro Rail System (Feb. 21, 2002) Navigating the 59.4-mile Metro Rail system can sometimes be challenging for the first-time rider, but imagine the difficulties a sight-impaired passenger might face.

**[High Marks for Metro Blue Line](#)** in APTA Peer Review; Panel Makes Recommendations for Eastside Corridor (Feb. 15, 2002) A four-member panel assembled by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) to review MTA efforts to promote safety and security on the Metro Blue Line and the Eastside light-rail extension has given the agency a big thumbs up.

**[MTA Issues Final EIR](#)** on 14-mile Cross-Valley Busway (Feb. 14, 2002) The MTA has issued the final environmental report for a planned 14-mile Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) "busway," that would speed the daily travel of thousands of commuters between Warner Center and the Metro Red Line subway North Hollywood station.

**[Hispanic Media Quiz](#)** CEO Snoble Over Morning Coffee (Feb. 14, 2002) The federal Consent Decree, safety and the MTA's new service sector concept were among topics of interest, Thursday, to a dozen Hispanic media representatives during a breakfast meeting with CEO Roger Snoble.

**[Board Committees](#)** Can Put 'Pedal to the Metal' on Transit Plans (Feb. 15, 2002) MTA Board committees can put the pedal to the metal on Los Angeles transit, next week, as they consider five separate motions that would advance the Eastside Light-Rail Line, the San Fernando Valley East-West Busway and the expansion of the Metro Rapid bus program.

**[MTA Would Lose Millions -](#)** Congressional Leaders Vow to Fight Highway Funding Cuts (Feb. 13, 2002) Congressional leaders of both parties took action, Tuesday, to fight a proposal by the Bush Administration to slash federal highway spending by 28 percent in the next fiscal year - a move that would severely impact the MTA.

**[WHITTIER GREENWAY TRAIL](#)** Groundbreaking for 5.2-Mile Bike and Pedestrian Path (Feb. 12, 2002) On a sun-drenched morning on an abandoned rail right-of-way in Whittier, last Saturday, MTA Board members and community officials broke ground on a 5.2-mile bike and pedestrian path, then tossed train engineer's caps into the audience.

**[MTA Board Member and Lancaster Mayor Frank Roberts](#)** joined elected officials and Santa Clarita Transit officials, Feb. 8, for the opening of the new McBean Transfer Station.

**[MTA Will Break Ground](#)** on 5.2-Mile Whittier Bike Path (Feb. 6, 2002) The MTA will break ground, Saturday, on the Whittier Greenway Trail, a 5.2-mile bicycle path that is the latest of more than 100 such projects the agency has funded over the past nine years.

**[Metro Art Sponsoring](#)** Experimental Art Works at Rail Stations (Feb. 8, 2002) The MTA's Metro Art Department has initiated a new transit arts program called "MetroLab" that

will feature experimental works by artists who have not previously exhibited significant public art projects.

**[Service Sectors Take Big Step with Naming of 3 General Managers](#)** (Feb. 6, 2002) The MTA took a major step forward, today, in its effort to improve local transit service. During an all-staff update on service sector planning, Deputy CEO John Catoe named the general managers for the first three of five planned service sectors.

**[MTA's Animated Video of Eastside Light-Rail Wins Award](#)** (Feb. 6, 2002) An imaginative video produced by the MTA that features a computer animation of a virtual journey on the proposed Metro Gold Line through East LA has been selected for a prestigious award.

**[Operator Injured by Concrete Chunk Expected Back on Job](#)** (Feb 5, 2002) A South Bay Division 18 bus operator who was injured by a large chunk of concrete thrown off a freeway overpass is expected to be back at work on Wednesday.

**[Division 2 CNG Fuel Station Project is a Milestone for MTA](#)** (Feb. 1, 2002) By the end of February, construction crews will complete installation of four CNG fueling stations at Crossroads Division 2 – an important milestone for the MTA in its conversion to alternative fuel vehicles.

**[MTA Unveils Art Honoring the Past at Cypress Park Event](#)** (Feb. 1, 2002) The MTA unveiled a group of art works in Cypress Park, Thursday, during an event planned to express appreciation for community cooperation in the location of a rail facility at the Taylor Yard.

## Bulletin Board

- [Chatsworth Division 8 Operator Gonzalez Makes Patron's Day](#) January 24 turned out a little different from other workdays, because Chatsworth Division 8 operator Aaron Gonzalez. was faced with what many people would consider a great temptation.
- [MTA Choral Group Lifts Every Voice in Song](#) (Feb. 27, 2002) The rich melodies of Negro Spirituals echoed through the Headquarters atrium at noon, Tuesday, as the MTA Choral Group celebrated Black History Month in song.
- [AAEA to Honor Carolyn Flowers](#) at Black History Event
- [RRC Employees](#) Attend Safety's First Campaign Rollout
- **[Charity. Service a Family Tradition for Div. 18's Louvenia Harris](#)** (Feb 22, 2002) For the Harris family of Watts, charity and community service have been a way of life for more than 35 years, and Metro Bus Operator Louvenia Harris of South Bay Division 18 has been right in the middle of it all.
- **[Board Honors Security Officer Graff for Quick Action in Assault](#)** (Feb. 22, 2002) It was after midnight, Dec. 28, and MTA Security Officer Edward Graff was closing down the Civic Center Metro Rail station when he heard a cry of distress.
- [MTA Bus Operators and Mechanics](#) 'Participate' in Winter Olympics
- [Service Sector Briefing](#) at Cypress Park Division 3
- **[Black History Month Celebration Set Friday at Division 1](#)** (Feb. 20, 2002) It's always the biggest event of Black History Month at the MTA – and this year is no exception. All employees are invited to attend a celebration and barbecue at 10 a.m., Friday, at Division 1.
- **[Metro Rail's Keith Salazar Helps Nab Graffiti Vandal](#)** (Feb. 20, 2002) Keith Salazar, an MTA traction power inspector, probably never expected that he would be instrumental in assisting the LAPD in arresting a graffiti vandal.
- ["Today's Safety Tip"](#) metro.net is launching a new homepage feature.
- **[CFO Invites Division 10 Employees to Put Safety First](#)** (Feb. 19, 2002) What

does a 200-year-old chemical company formed around the manufacturing of gunpowder have in common with the MTA? This was a question posed by an audience member to MTA Chief Financial Officer Dick Brumbaugh, as the MTA's Safety's First campaign was rolled out, Friday, at Gateway Division 10.

- **[LAPD's Transit Group Explorers Are Looking For a Few Good Kids](#)** (Feb 19, 2002) Have your kids always thought it would be cool to be a cop? With the LAPD Explorers, they have a chance to try it out while helping in their community and without experiencing any of the danger that police normally face.
- **[Marking Black History Month](#)** Luther Williams, president of the Los Angeles Inter-Alumni Council, was the featured speaker, last Friday, during a meeting of the MTA's African American Employees Association (AAEA)
- **[Hearts](#)** take over 20th floor!
- **[MTA's Most Senior Operator Still Going Strong After 4 Decades of Service](#)** (Feb 13, 2002) Donald Dube only expected to work at the MTA for six months. Forty-three years later, he's still operating buses and has no plans to retire any time soon.
- **[Bus Operator's Report Led to Arrests in Wave of Car Thefts](#)** (Feb. 12, 2002) Metro Bus operator Larry Aguias recently went above and beyond the call of duty, potentially saving at least one person's car from being stolen from a Metro Blue Line park-n'-ride lot.
- **[With 5 Months to Go, Service Sector Development Moving Quickly, Catoe Reports](#)** (Feb. 7, 2002) With the July 1 opening date for the first two MTA service sectors less than five months off, Deputy CEO John Catoe's presentation during Wednesday's all-staff meeting indicated just how quickly the concept is developing – and how much remains to be done.
- **[On the Job: Deputies Nab Bike Bandit in Area Dragnet](#)** (Feb. 5, 2002) Thirteen-year-old Fabian probably never expected to see his brand-new BMX bicycle again – especially since the man who snatched it away from him one recent evening at a Metro Green Line station said he had a gun.
- **[East San Fernando Valley Division 15 to Get 100 New Buses, Catoe Tells Employees](#)** (Feb. 5, 2002) Over the next five months, East San Fernando Valley Division 15 will receive 100 new CNG buses at a rate of 20 per month, Deputy CEO John Catoe announced during a visit with employees last week.

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SERVICE SECTOR SPECIAL REPORT

CYPRESS PARK DIVISION 3



Deputy CEO John Catoe explains the forthcoming service sector concept to Cypress Park Division 3 bus operators and Transportation Manager Dan Frawley during a Feb. 20 briefing. "The goal of this agency is to be the best transit operation in North America," emphasizes Catoe, noting that the San Gabriel Valley sector opens July 1.

Photo by AMY HOWELL

With the implementation of service sectors, Catoe wants to see increased input from operators, more comfortable seats for operators, emphasis on cleaner buses, new vehicles for Bus Rapid Transit routes and the use of names, rather than badge numbers, for bus operators. Answering questions posed by operators, Catoe also said the MTA will continue to focus on its three major functions: operations, regional planning and construction.

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### **Hearts Attack!**

Teresa Espinoza, Accounts Payable Clerk in Accounting, struggles against an invasion of helium-filled hearts that took over cubicles on the 20th floor.

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**CEO Roger Snoble announces on-site review of 'Safety's First' Program**

- CEO Roger Snoble, Deputy CEO John Catoe and CFO Richard Brumbaugh will go on location to observe implementation of 'Safety's First' program. Observations and feedback are intended to raise awareness of unsafe acts and conditions that occur agency-wide as well as commend good safety performance.

[Schedule of site visits](#)

In a memo issued to all staff, CEO Roger Snoble announced the schedule of a hands-on review of the "Safety's First" program that will include first-hand observations and feedback from CEO Snoble, Deputy CEO John Catoe and CFO Richard Brumbaugh.

The executives will conduct monthly safety observations at all operating locations. The observations and feedback are intended to raise awareness of unsafe acts and conditions that occur agency wide.

"We will observe and talk with employees in the workplace, commending safe behavior and pointing out unsafe acts and conditions," said Snoble. "We will include people from all levels on the observation and feedback tours and encourage as many as practical to participate"

Snoble said the observation and feedback tours will document good safety performance as well as identify areas for improvement. These observations, along with injury performance, accidents and improved reporting of serious incidents (near misses) will contribute heavily to a unit's safety performance rating, he said.

The schedules and locations for this activity over the next six months are as follows:

<b>Roger Snoble</b>	<b>John Catoe</b>	<b>Richard Brumbaugh</b>
<b>April 30:</b> Division 20	<b>April 26:</b> Rail Operations Control Facility	<b>April 30:</b> Division 18
<b>May 30:</b> Division 1	<b>May 30:</b> Division 7	<b>May 30:</b> Vernon Yards
<b>June TBD:</b> Division 2	<b>June TBD:</b> Division 8	<b>June TBD:</b> South Park Shops
<b>July TBD:</b> Division 3	<b>July TBD:</b> Division 10	<b>July TBD:</b> Division 22
<b>August TBD:</b> Gateway Building Floors 20-25	<b>August TBD:</b> Division 15	<b>August TBD:</b> Division 5
<b>September TBD:</b> Regional Rebuild Center	<b>September TBD:</b> Division 6	<b>March TBD:</b> Division 9

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[April is Earthquake Preparedness Month.](#)

[Up and down](#)

[Schedule of on-site observation and feedback tours](#)

## On the Job:

No one reports to work expecting to go home via an ambulance and a detour to the hospital. No matter what your work at MTA entails, keep in mind the following tips as they apply to your work.

### Today's Tip:

Handrails are not decorations! When traveling up or down stairs or escalators, one hand should always be on the handrail.

Watch for and eliminate trip and fall hazards whenever you see them. Trash cans, file drawers, electric cords, boxes etc. can all lead to slips, trips and falls – the second leading cause of workplace fatalities.

Be aware of lifting safety in the office, lifting and moving boxes of files, blank paper or other materials can lead to sprains and strains. Use good lifting practices and never hesitate to split the load and make multiple trips.

Correct posture is good for more than just your back. Maintaining correct posture at your work station benefits all your joints, muscles and all the parts in between.

Make good housekeeping part of your work plan. Have the materials and supplies available before you start so that you can maintain the cleanliness of your work area while you complete the job.

Remember that powered hand tools (air or electric) are the easiest tools to lock out before making adjustments. Just unplug the tool from its source of energy. This is true regardless of whether you're on the job or off.

In the U.S., if a worker is injured by a machine, it usually happens during service and maintenance tasks. If you service, clean, maintain, adjust or otherwise work on a machine, remember to lock and tag out that machine before you start.

Approximately 60% of all U.S. work related amputations involves fingers caught in or compressed by equipment or machines. Never, ever remove or prevent point of operations guards from performing their designed task – keeping you safe and in one piece.

Statistics show the majority of workplace hand injuries in the U.S. result from employees wearing improper or damaged gloves (or none at all). If you are unclear as to when to wear gloves or what gloves to wear, ask your supervisor, safety specialist or review the material safety data sheet for whatever you are handling.

When using any impact tool, remember to wear your eye protection. Every day an estimated 1,000 eye injuries occur in U.S. workplaces.

Don't become another statistic.

Always be alert for moving equipment and materials. We have more than revenue vehicles moving in our yards: there are industrial trucks (fork lifts), non-revenue vehicles, vendor and contractor vehicles and pedestrians. Everyone needs to stay alert to what is going on around them at all times.

A clean workplace is a safer workplace. If a spill or mess of any type occurs, it is your responsibility to clean up after yourself. Don't wait for someone else to clean up an unsafe condition.

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No matter what kind of vehicle you find yourself behind the wheel of, remember the benefits of anticipation. Regularly glance ahead a distance equal to 30-60 seconds of travel at your current speed, looking not only at the road ahead, but also the intersecting streets, driveways, shoulders and or sidewalks as well.

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Prevent distractions when operating a vehicle. That means limit or eliminate cell phone use, radios (both one and two way) and conversations. If you are a passenger, avoid distracting the driver/operator. The heavier the traffic, the more important it is for the driver/operator to keep their full attention on the road.

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Remember that any water on the roadway, be it from a broken sprinkler or water line, a summer shower or any other source, creates a salad dressing (oil, water & grit) for you to drive on. Slow down, increase your following distance and be prepared for the other driver's mistakes.

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When pulling any vehicle away from the curb, remember to check the curb side for pedestrians (or late arriving passengers) before pulling away. This will help you avoid unintended contact between your vehicle and a pedestrian.

## **Up and Down:**

No matter what type of ladder you are using, keep the rungs clean and free of debris, comply with the weight limitations and usage instruction printed on the ladder by the manufacturer and never, ever work at an elevated level alone. Should something go wrong, make sure you have a helper available (a spouse, a friend, a neighbor, a son or daughter) to render and or summon aid when you cannot.

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When using an extension ladder, remember the 4:1 rule: For every four feet up on the vertical surface the contact point of the ladder is, it should be one foot away from the base of the surface. Example: If you place an extension ladder so that the top is ten feet up on the wall of your house to clean the gutters, the base should be 2 ½ feet away from the wall.

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When using an "A" frame ladder make sure all four ladder feet are on the same hard, level, and smooth surface. This reduces the potential of the ladder tipping. Also, if you need to stand on either of the top two rungs, you need a taller ladder. Standing on the either of the top two rungs places your center of gravity too high above the ladder and sets you up for a fall.

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When climbing a ladder, hands are for climbing not carrying. If you must get tools or materials up and down between levels, use a tool belt, have a helper hand tools or materials up or down to you or use a bucket and rope as a hoist. This helps you to follow the Three Point Rule.

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Remember the "3 Point Rule". Always keep three points of contact with the ladder, whether your climbing up, down or working from the ladder. This means you should always have either both feet and one hand or both hands and one foot in contact with the ladder.

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When using ladders, remember the Belly Button Rule: Always keep your belly button inside the rails (or vertical members) of the ladder. This keeps the center of your weight over the ladder and prevents tipping of the ladder.

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## **Around the Home:**

If a fire alarm or smoke alarm sounds at night, roll out of bed and stay below the level of the smoke. Is the next room on fire? Use the back of your hand to feel for heat on the highest point of a connecting door.

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If you must walk/work on your roof, make sure you're wearing clean shoes with stiff soles that can provide good traction. On a sloped roof, avoid working within three feet of the edge.

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Remember that all internal combustion engines (such as gasoline powered generators, movers and vehicles) as well as gas or charcoal barbecues produce the very poisonous gas carbon monoxide. Never operate these devices in an enclosed area that lacks adequate ventilation.

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Never allow children to touch matches or lighters. Teach them to tell you immediately if they find matches or a lighter. Keep your matches where children can't reach them.



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If your appliances continually blow fuses or trip circuit breakers, have your electrical system checked by an electrician.

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Remain inside your vehicle if an overhead power cable should fall on it while you are driving. Never touch a person who has been shocked and is still in contact with the electrical source.

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Flickering lights, shrinking TV images or slow appliances (when more than one is turned on) could mean an electrical problem.

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Most smoking-related home fires start in the living room. Check floors and furniture for dropped cigarettes before you go to bed. If you smoke, use large metal or glass ashtrays and dump them into empty metal containers.

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Have a wood-burning fireplace? The chimney should be cleaned every year. Always cover your fireplace opening with a screen to catch stray sparks that could start a fire.

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Clean or change the filter of your central heating system on a regular basis. Have your furnace checked every year by a heating professional.

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Ensure that all adults of a household know how to change fuses or to reset circuit breakers. If your appliances continually blow fuses or trip circuit breakers, have your electrical system checked by an electrician.

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Conduct a fire drill every six months with all members of your household. Make sure you have a home escape plan to safeguard your home and family against fire.

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Buy a fire extinguisher for your home and learn how to use it. Inspect your fire extinguishers every month to make sure they are full and ready to use.

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Test smoke detector batteries once a month. Replace smoke detector batteries at least once a year. Some people change batteries during Daylight Saving Time in spring and fall.

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Never use water to put out a grease fire. **BETTER IDEA:** Cover the flames with a lid or douse the fire with a kitchen fire extinguisher.

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A worker views a mural depicting Native American history painted on the exterior of the Metrolink maintenance facility at Taylor Yard. PHOTO by Alan Nakagawa.

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## MTA Unveils Art Honoring the Past at Cypress Park Event

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(Feb. 1, 2002) The MTA unveiled a group of art works in Cypress Park, Thursday, during an event planned to express appreciation for community cooperation in the location of a rail facility at the Taylor Yard.

A virtual outdoor museum that showcases the history and culture of the area, the arts complex was funded by the MTA as a way of revitalizing the community and as part of an agreement that allowed the LACTC to build a Metrolink maintenance facility.

"The art work is the MTA's way of saying 'thank you.' This day is proof-positive that public agencies and communities can work hand-in-hand for the better good," said Board Chairman John Fasana, who, along with Board members Hal Bernson and Beatrice Proo, spoke at the event.



Fasana expressed appreciation to the people of Cypress Park for "...graciously allowing a Metrolink maintenance facility to be built in record time when the commuter rail system was desperately needed in our area."

^ Board Chairman John Fasana and Board Member Beatrice Proo, far right, congratulated artist Jacqueline Dreager on her sculpture of a prehistoric whale skull. PHOTO by José Ubaldo.

The outdoor sculptures include an impressive eight-foot tall bronze cast of a prehistoric whale skull by artists Jacqueline and Ron Dreager. The original skull was found in 1931 in Elysian Park.

The whale skull and other sculptures are displayed on land adjacent to property purchased recently by the state for use as parkland. That 30-acre site will be one of the first open spaces developed by the state for recreation in or near downtown Los Angeles.

In addition to the whale sculpture, reporters were treated to views of a dazzling mural the artist team Sindicato Regeneracion painted on the exterior of the Metrolink maintenance building. Wider than a drive-in movie screen, the mural depicts Native American history.

Other works of art on the site include a 150-foot walkway in the form of a serpent whose eyes light up at night, bone beds with replicas of prehistoric mammal and sea life, mammoth femurs and a frog-shaped

bench.

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A crane carefully lowers a CNG fueling station control room and cooling fan into place at Crossroads Division 2. Photo by Jose Hill-Soto.



## **Division 2 CNG Fuel Station Project is a Milestone for MTA**

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(Feb. 1, 2002) By the end of February, construction crews will complete installation of four CNG fueling stations at Crossroads Division 2 – an important milestone for the MTA in its conversion to alternative fuel vehicles.

The Crossroads project is the last of 10 CNG installations the MTA planned at its operating divisions. Only Venice Division 6 – the smallest division – will not convert to CNG.

According to Richard Hunt, deputy executive officer, Bus Maintenance, the newly installed CNG facility at El Monte Division 9 is in final testing. The agency currently is upgrading the fueling stations at Sunland Division 15 and plans to add more CNG fueling capacity at Chatsworth Division 8.

At Crossroads, crews have set in place three small buildings that house compressors capable of providing CNG under pressures up to 4,500 psi. Attached to each is a huge fan that serves as part of the cooling system.

Nearby are six spherical vessels that will contain the CNG. Testing of the system is scheduled in early March. Plans are to install a fifth fueling station at a later date at Crossroads to serve other types of CNG vehicles.

The contractor, A.E. Schmidt of Van Nuys, also built an eight-foot high concrete block wall to conceal the four fueling stations from the adjacent street.

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## **Division 15 to Get 100 New Buses, Catoe Tells Employees**

By RICH MORALLO

(Feb. 5, 2002) Over the next five months, East San Fernando Valley Division 15 will receive 100 new CNG buses at a rate of 20 per month, Deputy CEO John Catoe announced during a visit with employees last week.

During a talk in which he updated employees on service sector progress, Catoe also said a new computerized and automated storage carousel will soon replace the manual pick-up off-the-shelf system now installed at the division.

During his two-hour visit with more than 100 operators, maintainers and supervisors, Catoe explained that the concept of the service sectors is to bring the transit operation closer to the customer and to the communities the MTA serves.

He asked the help of the Division 15 staff to ensure that the reorganization is a success even before the service sectors start operations, July 1, in the San Fernando Valley and the San Gabriel Valley.

### **Sharp, courteous, professional**

"We need to work together and smartly operate our services now," Catoe said as he encouraged the staff to be sharp, courteous, professional and on time.

During his talk, the deputy CEO told the staff that represented employees will maintain their rights, including seniority rights, under the service sector concept. "You will receive an additional right – the right to our respect and to be listened to for what you have to say."

Catoe emphasized that many day-to-day decisions on improving customer service will rest locally with the service sectors. "I'm a non-believer in multi layers of bureaucracy. Today, there may be as many as nine levels between you and the CEO, but with the service sectors you will be able to reach me and the CEO through your supervisor and general manager."

The MTA also is planning to start up service sectors for the Central City and Westside, the Southbay and the Gateway Cities in the southeastern part of Los Angeles county.

By creating smaller MTA units with local management that will have better insights into service areas, the agency intends to be more responsive to customers, and improve both customer satisfaction and the image of the agency.

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## On the Job

### Deputies Nab Bike Bandit in Area Dragnet

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(Feb. 5, 2002) Thirteen-year-old Fabian probably never expected to see his brand-new BMX bicycle again – especially since the man who snatched it away from him one recent evening at a Metro Green Line station said he had a gun.

Such crimes are rare on the east-west rail line, according to the Sheriff's Transit Services Bureau, but deputies frequently conduct sting operations to weed out the bike thieves. This case, however, was no sting.

As his bicycle disappeared into the darkness, Fabian called his mom to give her the bad news. He had just hung up when Deputy Bob Gillis arrived at the station.

Gillis immediately broadcast a description of the suspect and the missing bike to surrounding Sheriff's stations. Then, he coordinated an area-wide dragnet.

Minutes later, Deputy Kiley Hayden spotted the alleged bicycle thief pedaling down a street more than 20 blocks away. Although he was reported to be armed, the suspect was nabbed without injury to anyone.

Asked to prove the recovered bike was his, Fabian didn't hesitate. He took a key from his pocket and a deputy unlocked the chain that was still wrapped around the bicycle seat.

The grateful youngster – and his bicycle – then got a ride home in a Sheriff's patrol car.

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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Sheriff's Lt. Mike Parker provided the information for this story. Mike Parker is stationed in the Sheriff's Transit Services Bureau of the MTA's Rail Operations Center. "On The Job" is an occasional Bulletin Board feature about the little things that make a law enforcement officer's job interesting and rewarding.

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## **Operator Injured by Concrete Chunk Expected Back on Job**

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Bus Operator  
Anthony Henry

By ERIC RAPP  
(Feb 5, 2002) A South Bay Division 18 bus operator who was injured by a large chunk of concrete thrown off a freeway overpass is expected to be back at work on Wednesday.

Operator Anthony Henry, 39, suffered a dislocated shoulder and cuts on his face and shoulder when the rock smashed through the windshield of his bus. Three juveniles have been detained in the incident.

It was just after 7 p.m., Sunday, and Henry was on his way back to Division 18 after completing his Line 60 route.

A 2-year veteran of MTA, Henry was driving his empty bus under the Wardlow Road overpass on the 710 freeway, when what he thought was a large rock suddenly hit the windshield.

The "rock" turned out to be about the size of a bowling ball. It smashed through the windshield and headsign and injured the operator. No passengers were on the bus at the time of the incident.

### **Momentarily disoriented**

Although momentarily disoriented, Henry was able to pull over and secure the bus before calling for assistance. Long Beach Fire Department transported him to Long Beach Memorial Hospital, where he was treated and released in stable condition later that evening.

According to Division 18 Assistant Manager Cindy Karpman, Henry is expected to return to work on transitional duty as early as Wednesday. The bus was towed to Division 18 for repairs to the windshield and the headsign, both of which sustained major damage.

The California Highway Patrol detained three juveniles, ages 9 to 14, in connection with the Sunday night incident. The CHP reported that the boys were observed wiping rock dust off their hands.

The district attorney's office has not yet decided what charges to file against the juveniles. The boys were released to their parents and are scheduled to appear in family court.

CHP patrols in the area had been increased after several complaints of similar incidents, which may have involved the same three children.

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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Eric Rapp is a Transit Operations correspondent intern assigned to write news articles about employee activities at the operating divisions.

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## **MTA's Animated Video of Eastside Light-Rail Wins Award**

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(Feb. 6, 2002) An imaginative video produced by the MTA that features a computer animation of a virtual journey on the proposed Metro Gold Line through East LA has been selected for a prestigious award.

The Eastside Corridor video, "It's Been A Long Time Coming," won the "Crystal Award of Excellence" in the Meeting Opening/Close category. The competition is sponsored by The Communicator Awards, an international organization founded by communications professionals.

The Crystal Award of Excellence is given to those entries whose ability to communicate puts them among the best in the field for projects that exceed industry standards in quality and excellence.

The video was produced to educate the public and community stakeholders about the Eastside Light Rail project. It includes film of trolleys that served the area in the 1940s and '50s and computer-generated views of stations along the proposed six-mile Metro Gold Line route.

"This video illustrates the magnitude and significance of the Eastside light-rail project and the planning vision behind it " says Diego Cardoso, director, Regional Transportation Planning and Development.

### **Members of the team**

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The video was directed and coordinated by the Eastside LRT Planning Team with technical input from Eastside LRT project team and consultants. Members of the team who worked on the video include Cardoso, coordinator Joanna Cucchi, Ruffina Juarez, Jose Ubaldo, Adrian Alvarez, Steve Brye, Henry Gonzalez, Dolores Roybal, Robin Blair, James Rojas and Ray Sosa.

The Eastside LRT project has been in the planning and design stage for almost three years since subway construction was suspended. The video was developed as part of a community outreach program to better explain the project in a regional, as well a local perspective.

"The video has been well received at community meetings and people have a much better idea of what the project is, how it works and its significance as an urban rail line serving specific communities and connecting to a major transportation network," says Cardoso.

The Eastside Light Rail Project will have eight stations, with trains running from Atlantic and Beverly boulevards to Union Station in before continuing to Pasadena. The estimated cost of the project is about \$828 million dollars. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2003.

Copies of "It's Been a Long Time Coming," which runs 15 minutes, 50 seconds, are available in the MTA Library.

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## MTA Will Break Ground on 5.2-Mile Whittier Bike Path

By GARY WOSK

(Feb. 6, 2002) The MTA will break ground, Saturday, on the Whittier Greenway Trail, a 5.2-mile bicycle path that is the latest of more than 100 such projects the agency has funded over the past nine years.

Since 1993, the MTA has provided \$82 million in funding through its Call for Projects program for 108 bikeway projects totaling 200 miles of bike paths and bike lanes in Los Angeles County.

The Whittier Greenway Trail, to be built on an abandoned railroad right-of-way, should be completed within three years. A bicycle and pedestrian path, it will begin in Whittier's northwest corner near the 605 Freeway and follow the right-of-way to Mills Avenue.

The MTA provided \$8.5 million in funding for the \$12.9 million trail, with the balance provided by the City of Whittier and the state.

"Bicycle paths...play an important role in alleviating traffic congestion, improving air quality, and offering an option to people who either do not like driving or do not have access to a car," said Board Chairman John Fasana. "This trail will provide access to many destinations along the way including jobs, hospitals and schools and is a wise use of taxpayers' money."

### Make cycling an alternative

"Our population is expected to grow by more than 25 percent during the next 20 years," Fasana added. "Our goal is to make cycling a viable alternative that is safe and easy."

Another \$10 million in Call for Projects funding has been provided for bike lockers and racks at Metro Rail stations, the bike station in Long Beach, bicycle education programs, and bicycle maps.

The MTA also has allocated \$32 million in funding through the year 2007 for new bikeways. MTA contributes 80 percent of the total project cost while individual cities kick in 20 percent.

Some of the major bike paths to be completed or built in the future are alongside major transit corridors, including the planned San Fernando Valley East-West busway, the Exposition Boulevard light rail project and the San Fernando Road Metrolink right-of-way, as well as the Los Angeles River.

Since 1993, MTA has allocated an average of \$6.5 million each year toward bikeway projects, however, the MTA's Long Range Transportation Plan calls for increasing that amount to at least \$10 million annually.

Bicyclists account for 2.4 percent of all daily trips made in Los Angeles



Riders who must dodge traffic to commute favor the clear roadways of dedicated bike paths.



County, or approximately 720,000 out of 30 million total daily trips. The goal of the LRTP is to increase the total number of bicycle trips in the year 2025 to 2 million, or 5 percent of total trips.

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## SERVICE SECTOR SPECIAL REPORT

>GO TO: [A review of topics](#) discussed during Deputy CEO John Catoe's service sector update presentation.

### Service Sectors Take Big Step with Naming of 3 General Managers

Deputy CEO John Catoe names the general managers for the first three of five planned service sectors at an all-staff meeting.



By ED SCANNELL and BILL HEARD (Feb. 6, 2002) The MTA took a major step forward, today, in its effort to improve local transit service. During an all-staff update on service sector planning, Deputy CEO John Catoe named the general managers for the first three of five planned service sectors.

The three general manager designates are [David Armijo](#), currently director of operations at the Orange County Transportation Authority; [Jack Gabig](#), general manager, Montebello Bus Lines; and [Richard J. Rogers](#), vice president of Transportation Concepts.

Amijo is scheduled to assume his new position at the MTA next week, Catoe said. Gabig will arrive later this month and Rogers is scheduled to arrive in April.

CEO Roger Snoble, who was attending an out-of-town meeting, announced that the new general managers' assignments would be decided following their introduction to MTA Board members and community leaders in each of the sectors.

"Hiring these three outstanding professionals marks a significant step in our plan to localize every aspect of the planning and operation of bus service," said Snoble. "Each general manager will lead a group of transit professionals whose sole focus will be to bring quality service to their assigned sector."

Earlier, the MTA had named Gerald Francis as

#### General Manager Designates

##### David Armijo

For the past six years, David Armijo has served as director of operations for the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) where he managed the agency's bus and paratransit services, Metrolink commuter rail services and the Orange County Taxi Administration Program.

During Armijo's tenure at OCTA, bus ridership increased by 40 percent and commuter rail ridership doubled. He oversaw the start-up of a 232-vehicle liquid natural gas (LNG) bus fleet, as well as the design and implementation of a \$14 million computerized radio dispatch communication system with satellite automated vehicle location.

##### Jack Gabig

Jack Gabig served as general manager of Montebello Bus Lines for the past 12 years, supervising a staff of 200 employees and overseeing a 75-vehicle bus and paratransit service. His prior positions include director of maintenance and director of planning and marketing for Long Beach Transit.

Gabig's major accomplishments at Montebello Bus Lines include the implementation of effective cost controls, a strong maintenance program, and construction of a regional rail station and transit center.

##### Richard Rogers

Richard Rogers currently serves

general manager for Rail Operations. His appointment was effective, Jan. 28. Francis comes to the MTA from Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) where he has served as assistant vice president of Rail Operations.

### Panel interviewed the candidates

To date, 36 applicants – internal candidates and others from as far away as New York and Texas – have applied for positions as general manager. Twenty have been interviewed by a panel that recommended the finalist to Catoe and Snoble.

In an interview last week with *MTA Report*, Catoe said, "All three candidates have worked at multiple agencies. By doing so, they have picked up different management and leadership experiences."

The MTA put a premium on general manager candidates who had worked at more than one transit agency, who participated in their communities and were seen by community leaders as willing to act on recommendations. "We also wanted someone who had a reputation with their employees of demonstrating good leadership, honesty, trust and integrity," Catoe said.

With two general manager positions still open the selection process will continue, but at a slower pace, he said, while Armijo, Gabig and Rogers are getting up to speed with service sector development.

"We want to allow them to participate in the work being done by the Service Sector Task Force," Catoe said. "We'll have formalized teamwork training that will give the general managers a chance to work with their staff members on such issues as style of management, direction and goal-setting. When July 1 comes, they're going to know each other."

### Third sector later in 2002

The San Fernando Valley and San Gabriel Valley service sectors will begin operations July 1. A third sector – either the Gateway or South Bay sector – will begin operations later in the year. Plans are to begin operations in the remaining two sectors, including the Westside/Central sector, before the end of 2003.

The service sector concept has been designed to give communities a direct voice in the delivery of transportation services in their sectors. Community councils will provide recommendations to sector general managers who will evaluate and implements changes and improvements in transit services within the sector.

Working out of offices located in the service sectors, general managers will oversee the operation of a fleet of approximately 400 to 600 buses. In addition to operations and maintenance personnel, each sector will include its own human resources, planning, scheduling, marketing and public affairs staff.

"Giving a sector its own dedicated staff will make the MTA much more responsive to the unique and changing needs of a particular community," said Snoble. "Our customers will know that the men and women who staff their sector will also have a stake in making bus service in their communities the very best that it can be."

as vice president of Transportation Concepts where he manages all transit, shuttle and paratransit contracts. The company provides these services throughout Southern California, including in San Bernardino, Riverside, Corona, Santa Monica, and the South Bay.

Rogers' accomplishments include generating a 400 percent growth in business, enhancement of service quality and improved productivity through the restructuring of transit operations.

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## **With 5 Months to Go, Service Sector Development Moving Quickly, Catoe Reports**

### **SERVICE SECTOR SPECIAL REPORT**

By BILL HEARD, Editor  
(Feb. 7, 2002) With the July 1 opening date for the first two MTA service sectors less than five months off, Deputy CEO John Catoe's presentation during Wednesday's all-staff meeting indicated just how quickly the concept is developing – and how much remains to be done.

>GO TO metro.net Feb. 6 report:  
[Service Sectors Take Big Step with Naming of 3 General Managers](#)

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The announcement that general managers for the first three sectors have been hired, and that two will assume their new jobs this month, underscored the growing reality of the decentralization plan Catoe and CEO Roger Snoble are putting in place. The goal: to improve customer service.

Catoe emphasized that general managers will be given wide latitude to operate their service sectors. This includes working with service sector community councils.

"The intent is to give them a great deal of independence," he said. The measure of a general manager's success would include providing higher quality service, creativity in designing new service, increasing ridership, controlling costs and coordinating with other transit operators.

### **Staff organization chart**

Among the next steps in developing the service sector plan will be finalizing a staff organization chart and preparing next fiscal year's budget to include sector operating costs.

Giving further emphasis to the forward movement was a series of reports by members of the Service Sector Task Force. One by one, they ticked off the progress made in such areas as staff realignment, facilities, finance, schedule and planning and sector governance.

By the middle of this month, Administration chief Carolyn Flowers reported, her Task Force sub-committee will complete a staffing plan for the service sectors and will announce a staff realignment. Each sector will employ between 1,100 and 1,300 staff members, including bus operators and maintenance personnel.

She said Human Resources will identify prospective employees for the sectors and will accept requests for transfer to the sectors in March. The general managers will meet with each employee during April in order to enhance the staff building process.

### **Employee selection process**

The selection process will take into account employees' current jobs, where they live and where they might prefer to work, as well as the rights of represented employees under the MTA's collective bargaining agreements.

Flowers said some jobs might include a combination of responsibilities and that some new positions might be created for the service sectors.

In answer to employee questions, Catoe said, "There is no formal layoff plan," although he acknowledged that some employees already have left the MTA. He said those employees were offered severance

packages, and he indicated that packages could be offered to others since there is a possibility that cutbacks could occur in some areas of the agency.

**On other matters, Catoe said:**

Operations Central Instruction will be "beefed up" to become a state-of-the-art operator and maintenance employee training center. He agreed that the current training facility at El Monte Division 9 is old and the technology dated, but added, "I assure you we will pay a great deal of attention to our training program."

Bus Operations Control responsibilities will be divided among the five service sectors, leaving a smaller BOCC unit at MTA Headquarters. The Gateway building unit will assume systemwide control of buses when the sector control centers shut down overnight.

In addition to permitting local control of sector bus operations, dispersing BOCC operations gives the MTA the option of dispatching all buses from any of six locations in the event of a natural disaster, crisis or terrorist act. "That's a tremendous advantage in a disaster," Catoe said.

Functions remaining at MTA Headquarters will include regional transportation planning, construction and a service planning staff that will concentrate on countywide services. Although some of their functions will be provided in the service sectors, all agency departments will have a centralized presence at MTA Headquarters.

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## Metro Art Sponsoring Experimental Art Works at Rail Stations

(Feb. 8, 2002) The MTA's Metro Art Department has initiated a new transit arts program called "MetroLab" that will feature experimental works by artists who have not previously exhibited significant public art projects.

MetroLab's first efforts will be newly commissioned works that include street theater, light and sound projections, photographic images and digital animations. The works will be on exhibit at various locations throughout the Metro system.

The four projects, says Brent Zerger, MTA public arts officer, are designed to "enhance the transit environment in innovative ways, engage existing transit customers and attract new users."

Two of the four projects, "Return Engagement to Garment City" by artist Jessica Rath and "Plotting Along Parallel Lines" by Daniel Marlos currently are available to the public.

"Return Engagement" features live ensemble performances inspired by International Ladies Garment Workers Union organizing efforts in Los Angeles in the 1930s and '40s. Actors in period costumes perform songs and dialog to choreographed movements.

### Admission is free

Performances of "Return Engagement" are scheduled at 5:30 p.m., Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays throughout February on the west mezzanine of the 7th and Metro Center station. Admission is free; no reservations are required. No seating is available.

With "Plotting Along Parallel Lines," artist Daniel Marlos uses photographic images to illustrate human movement through time and space. The photos, which are

PHOTOS BY GAYLE ANDERSON



projected above the subway platforms, feature the street numbers of buildings that pass overhead as the trains move beneath Vermont Avenue.

"Plotting Along Parallel Lines" is on view at the platform levels of the Vermont/Santa Monica and Vermont/Beverly stations, daily, at 8-9 a.m., 12 noon-1 p.m., 5-6 p.m. and 9-10 p.m.

Two other works sponsored by MetroLab are "Untitled [gel/sound]" by Cindy Bernard in collaboration with sound artist Joseph Hammer, and "Chance Encounters" by George Legrady.

Bernard's work will employ sound and color aboard selected light-rail cars to "activate the eyes and ears of Metro riders, encouraging them to experience their transitions through the city...."

Legrady's "Chance Encounters" uses digital animations to "enliven a Metro Rail transfer station, inviting customers to contemplate the random nature of the many individual and cultural paths that cross at any moment throughout the Metro system." - from Metro Art reports.

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**Ribbon-Cutting** – MTA Board Member and Lancaster Mayor Frank Roberts (second, left) joined elected officials and Santa Clarita Transit officials, Feb. 8, for the opening of the new McBean Transfer Station. Funded partially by the MTA, the transfer station serves some 300 buses and 5,000 passengers each day. “The McBean Transfer Center is a perfect example of the types of transportation improvements that are so important for the region,” Roberts said.

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Photo by JOSÉ UBALDO

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^ Metro Bus Operator Larry Aguin

## Bus Operator's Report Led to Arrests in Wave of Car Thefts

By AMY HOWELL

(Feb. 12, 2002) Metro Bus operator Larry Aguin recently went above and beyond the call of duty, potentially saving at least one person's car from being stolen from a Metro Blue Line park-n'-ride lot.

Aguin also may have been the primary contributor to solving a wave of car thefts from park-n'-ride lots at several Metro Blue and Green Line stations.

As a result of his actions, Aguin was presented with a Letter of Commendation from the MTA's Office of Safety and Security.

The break in the case came just after 11 p.m., Feb. 1, when the El Monte Division 9 operator noticed two male juveniles casing patrons' cars in the Metro Blue Line Artesia station's park-n'-ride lot. Aguin immediately reported the suspicious activity to the Sheriff's Dispatch Center at the Rail Operations Center.

### Something wasn't right

"I wasn't doing anything for notoriety or publicity," said Aguin, who became a bus operator for the SCRTD in 1984. Rather, his actions were based on "human instinct," an innate response to the fact that "something wasn't right."

Although Aguin didn't know who he was helping, he felt obligated to make the report "because I would want the same thing done for me."

Acting on Aguin's report, Sheriff's deputies Larry Ware and Michael Verlich of the Transit Services Bureau noticed the two suspects walking away from several cars in the Artesia station lot. They were detained for possible burglary to motor vehicles.

While they were being held, one of the suspects dropped a filed-down Toyota ignition key. A pat-down search of the other suspect uncovered a filed-down Honda ignition key. Under questioning, the boys allegedly admitted they were going to use the keys to steal a car.

### Linked to burglaries

The suspects may be linked to a chain of automobile burglaries at the Metro Blue Line Wardlow and Willow parking lots, as well as at the Lakewood and Norwalk Metro Green Line stations.

"This is the biggest break yet," said MTA Transit Security Manager Dennis Flowers of Aguin's report and the subsequent arrest of the suspects. "He may have helped us a lot."

Further investigation by Sheriff's deputies revealed that the suspects had used one of the ignition keys to unlock a white Toyota. The Toyota's owner said she had locked her car and hadn't given anyone

permission to enter or drive her car.

Based on the Toyota owner's statement and Aguin's observations, the two suspects were arrested for attempted grand theft of an automobile.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Amy Howell is a Transit Operations correspondent intern assigned to write news articles about employee activities at the operating divisions.

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## Groundbreaking for 5.2-Mile Bike and Pedestrian Path

- The Whittier Greenway Trail is expected to be completed in three years and is primarily funded by MTA.

By GARY WOSK

(Feb. 12, 2002) On a sun-drenched morning on an abandoned rail right-of-way in Whittier, last Saturday, MTA Board members and community officials broke ground on a 5.2-mile bike and pedestrian path, then tossed train engineer's caps into the audience.

With walkers and bicyclists looking on, the ceremony was held in the middle of Palm Park, one of the numerous destinations to be served by the planned \$12.9 million Whittier Greenway Trail. The project is partially funded by an \$8.5 million MTA grant.

"Bike trails play an important role in alleviating traffic congestion, improving air quality and offering an option to people who either do not like driving or do not have access to a vehicle," said MTA Board Chairman John Fasana, who – along with Director Beatrice Proo – were presented with railroad spike plaques.

"Our population is expected to rise by 25 percent in the next 20 years," he said. "We need to be offering people choices such as this Whittier Greenway Trail, in getting to work, in getting to the store, instead of taking our own vehicle."



^ Whittier Councilman Owen Newcomer, Whittier Mayor Allan Zolnekoff, MTA Board Director Beatrice Proo and MTA Board Chairman John Fasana dig into site of the future 5.2 mile Whittier Greenway Trail.



## 200 miles of bike paths

Since 1993, MTA has provided \$82 million in funding – an average of \$6.5 million a year – through its Call for Projects program for 108

bikeway projects totaling 200 miles of bike paths and bike lanes in Los Angeles County.

^ On abandoned rail right of way, bicyclist Bill Moore discusses future city of Whittier bike and pedestrian path with (from left) Whittier Mayor Allan Zolnekoff, MTA Board Director Beatrice Proo and MTA Board Chairman John Fasana. PHOTOS BY GARY WOSK

“The MTA wanted to support this project with \$8.5 million because it becomes a regional form of transportation,” said MTA Board Director Beatrice Proo. “We try to make each dollar go as far as possible and to service as many cities as possible, and this is one example of one that will be doing so.”

The MTA allocated \$32 million in funding through the year 2007 for new bikeways. MTA contributes 80 percent of the total project cost while individual cities kick in 20 percent. Another \$10 million in Call for Projects funding has been provided for bike lockers and racks at Metro Rail stations, the bike station in Long Beach, bicycle education programs, and bicycle maps.

Bicyclists account for 2.4 percent of all daily trips made in Los Angeles County, or approximately 720,000 out of 30 million total daily trips. The MTA wants to increase the total number of bicycle trips in the year 2025 to 2 million, or 5 percent of total trips.

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## Congressional Leaders Vow to Fight Highway Funding Cuts

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- **MTA Would Lose Millions**

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Feb. 13, 2002) Congressional leaders of both parties took action, Tuesday, to fight a proposal by the Bush Administration to slash federal highway spending by 28 percent in the next fiscal year – a move that would severely impact the MTA.

If the proposed \$8.2 billion in cuts are approved, California could lose \$620 million in federal transportation funding. The MTA's potential losses are estimated at \$125 million to \$135 million and would affect several important local transit projects.

On Tuesday, members of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and Senate Banking Committee introduced identical, bi-partisan bills seeking to avoid the proposed cuts in transportation funding.

Senior lawmakers called the proposed cutbacks unwise during a national recession and unthinkable in an election year. Both California and Texas would lose more than \$600 million each, while New York would lose more than \$345 million.

### **Downturn in revenues**

At the heart of the federal transportation program cutbacks is a downturn in revenues from the 18.4-cent per gallon federal gasoline tax. Highway driving and airline flights are both down significantly due to the recession and the effects of the Sept. 11 attacks.

CEO Roger Snoble flew to Washington, D.C., Monday, for two days of meetings with congressional leaders and the area's delegation, as well as FTA Administrator Jenna Dorn. The administration's proposed cutbacks are expected to come up during discussions.

MTA programs that could feel the pinch include expansion of the Metro Rapid bus system, Pasadena Gold Line startup operations, access services for the disabled, signal synchronization and freeway and surface street improvements.

The MTA plans to spend \$22.3 million on the Metro Rapid bus program this year and another \$12.5 million in FY-2003, which begins July 1, 2002. The agency also plans to use \$28 million in federal funds in FY-2005 for the Pasadena Gold Line startup.

### **Loss would be devastating**

Commenting on the possibility of losing as much as \$135 million from the MTA's \$2.7 billion budget, MTA Chairman John Fasana told the Los Angeles *Daily News*, "The loss of that amount of money would be devastating...But we hope to work with Congress to see if there are fundings options to continue those projects and services."

Snoble's trip to the capital comes on the heels of a Feb. 5 letter from Gov. Gray Davis urging the President to "identify options aimed at maintaining or increasing funding...."

Davis' letter noted that California could see a loss of \$620 million from



last year's federal transportation funding, "...a staggering figure that exceeds that of any other state." Such a loss, he wrote, would harm the economy of the United States, as well as that of California.

Also among those that would be hard-hit by federal funding cutbacks is the Bay Area, which could lose \$140 million. That loss would jeopardize completion of a major BART extension and several highway projects.

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## MTA's Most Senior Operator Still Going Strong After 4 Decades of Service

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^ Metro Bus Operator Donald Dube

By ERIC RAPP  
(Feb 13, 2002) Donald Dube only expected to work at the MTA for six months. Forty-three years later, he's still operating buses and has no plans to retire any time soon.

Dube, 66, is originally from Nashua, NH. In 1954, he came to Los Angeles out of curiosity. He'd heard a lot about California and he wanted to see what it was like.

Soon after arriving in Southern California, Dube joined the Army and was stationed in Germany. Except for a few tense moments during unrest in nearby Hungary, he enjoyed his time in Europe and liked the country.

When he came back, Dube went to college with the goal of becoming an aeronautical engineer. Unfortunately, he ran out of money before he could complete his degree.

In November 1958 he applied for a job as an SCR TD operator, expecting that he would return to school in 6 months. He's been here ever since, working first in Arthur Winston Division 5, then in the now-closed Long Beach Division 12, before finally settling in at South Bay Division 18 in Carson.

Dube says driving a bus today hasn't changed much from when he started. "Traffic was just as bad then as it is now," he says. Most of the changes have been for the better.

For instance, when he started, the MTA was only beginning to phase in buses with power brakes and almost no buses had power steering. "You just had to muscle the wheel around," he says.

The best change he's seen was the switch from open fare boxes to the current system, which occurred around 1975. This meant less work for operators, since they no longer had to deal with money and making change for passengers. More importantly to Dube, who was once held up at gunpoint, was that the closed fare boxes removed temptation from would-be robbers.

For Dube, what keeps the job interesting after all this time is the personal contact with bus riders. He says, "I'd be bored driving a truck around all day." He knows his regular customers on his Line 444 route from Palos Verdes to Los Angeles, and he greets every passenger with a friendly smile.

When he's not driving, Dube likes to walk and read. Right now, he's reading about physics and other scientific matters, since he says he prefers to "read about real things."

South Bay Division 18 Manager Dana Coffey says that despite his claim that there's nothing special about him, Donald Dube really does embody the division's motto of "Safety, Service, Courtesy."

"He takes a lot of pride in his work," she says.

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- EDITOR'S NOTE: **Eric Rapp** is a Transit Operations correspondent intern assigned to write news articles about employee activities at the operating divisions.

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The busway would be built in the median of the Burbank/Chandler right-of-way. Typically 100 feet in width, the right-of-way will be fully landscaped with groundcover and other plantings, including more than 4,000 new trees.



### **MTA Issues Final Environmental Report on 14-mile Cross-Valley Busway**

By ED SCANNELL

(Feb. 14, 2002) The MTA has issued the final environmental report for a planned 14-mile Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) "busway," that would speed the daily travel of thousands of commuters between Warner Center and the Metro Red Line subway North Hollywood station.

If the MTA Board votes to certify the report at its Feb. 28 meeting, the MTA would begin final design of the \$329.5 million project. Construction of the busway could begin in spring 2003 and the busway could begin operations in spring 2005.

"When the busway opens, a commuter will be able to make the trip from the future Warner Center Transit Hub to North Hollywood in approximately 35 to 40 minutes, including stops," said Board Chairman John Fasana. "This amounts to a tremendous savings in time when compared to on-street bus service which today takes 55 minutes for the same trip, and which will only lengthen as congestion increases."

The Final Environmental Impact Report for the San Fernando Valley East-West Transit Corridor Project includes a detailed mitigation plan that addresses community concerns about the impact of construction and operation of the busway.

The busway would pass through communities that include North Hollywood, Valley Glen, Van Nuys, Sherman Oaks, Encino, Tarzana and Woodland Hills.

#### **Fully landscaped busway**

The busway would be built in the median of the Burbank/Chandler right-of-way. Typically 100 feet in width, the right-of-way will be fully landscaped with groundcover and other plantings, including more than 4,000 new trees. Bordered with some 29,500 feet of sound walls, the busway will include a number of pedestrian paths with crosswalk signals.

Stations would have amenities typically associated with light-rail transit, such as covered waiting platforms, art elements, security lighting and an appealing design. A passenger information system at each station would inform travelers when the next bus is due.

Thirteen busway stations would be located at major cross streets and trip

destinations, spaced approximately one mile apart along the route. While service frequencies would be adjusted as demand for service grows, initially during peak travel periods, headways would vary between seven and ten minutes in each direction.

The LADOT will employ technology to briefly extend the duration of green signal lights to allow the smooth flow of buses operating on the busway, while not adversely impacting north-south traffic.

Park-'n-ride lots at various locations along the route would accommodate some 3,000 vehicles, augmenting existing parking spaces at the North Hollywood Station and at the LADOT Balboa Boulevard park-'n-ride lot.

The project will include a cross-valley bikeway. The MTA will begin the bikeway design as part of the busway design and is seeking funding so the two projects could be built concurrently.

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## Hispanic Media Quiz CEO Snoble Over Morning Coffee

(Feb. 14, 2002) The federal Consent Decree, safety and the MTA's new service sector concept were among topics of interest, Thursday, to a dozen Hispanic media representatives during a breakfast meeting with CEO Roger Snoble.

Over chilaquiles, pastries and coffee, the reporters quizzed Snoble about the current state of the agency and about the MTA's plans for the future.

The CEO said the MTA is on "two tracks regarding the Consent Decree" with one being the Board's recent decision to appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.

At the same time, the staff is preparing a plan he hopes will persuade the special master that the MTA can meet passenger load standards through proper scheduling and with the addition of the buses it currently has on order.

"Ninety-eight or ninety-nine percent of our bus trips" meet passenger load standards, Snoble said.

### A range of tools

He said transportation in Los Angeles should not be a "bus versus rail argument," explaining that the MTA needed to use a "range of tools" – buses, Bus Rapid Transit and rail – to meet the area's transit needs.

The CEO outlined the MTA's new service sector concept for the reporters. Sector general manager, he said, would work with local advisory councils to shape service to meet local needs.

In addition, they would have responsibility for local bus scheduling and would oversee staffs that would include public affairs, human resources, schedule planning, finance and other functions.

In response to a question about safety, Snoble noted that all new buses come equipped with surveillance cameras that help police identify persons involved in criminal acts. He also explained that all buses have silent alarms operators can use to notify the Bus Control Center in the event of a problem.

As far as the nation's heightened state of alert, Snoble said, "We have not had a credible threat of terrorism since September 11." But, he pointed out that the MTA has an excellent record of response during natural disasters and local crises. He also said the agency has stepped up its security training in recent months.

A dozen members of the Los Angeles-area Hispanic media met for a round-table breakfast discussion, Thursday, with CEO Roger Snoble.



Below, CEO Snoble answers a question posed by Marilu Meza of La Opinion during a breakfast for local Hispanic media. Also shown is Maria Arredondo of La Opinion.



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Following a detailed examination of the Metro Blue Line, a four-member panel assembled by the American Public Transportation Association called MTA's performance in the areas of safety, security design, cultural sensitivity and integration with the community, "exemplary."



### **High Marks for Metro Blue Line in APTA Peer Review; Panel Makes Recommendations for Eastside Corridor**

By ED SCANNELL

(Feb. 15, 2002) A four-member panel assembled by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) to review MTA efforts to promote safety and security on the Metro Blue Line and the Eastside light-rail extension has given the agency a big thumbs up.

The MTA requested the APTA peer review as it nears final design on the six-mile extension of the Metro Gold Line that will run from Union Station to Beverly/Atlantic in East Los Angeles.

Following a detailed examination of the Metro Blue Line, the panel called MTA's performance in the areas of safety, security design, cultural sensitivity and integration with the community, "exemplary."

The panel also praised the MTA for its "high commitment to safety and education," and noted that its public outreach efforts have been excellent and "beyond other properties."

Of particular note, panelists applauded the coordination among safety and security and the other departments within the MTA. They said in their visits and reviews of public transit systems around the country, this type of interdepartmental cooperation and commitment to a mutual task is most often the exception rather than the rule.

#### **Recommendations for the Eastside**

In light of the MTA's performance on the Metro Blue Line, the panel listed a series of recommendations for the agency's consideration as it prepares to enter final design of the Eastside light-rail extension. The recommendations covered topics including pedestrian management, security, alignment, traffic management, train control and traction power.

The panel also made specific recommendations for operation over the First Street Bridge, and suggested the MTA begin now its safety education of Eastside area residents and include its security department in design review.

During the four-day review, the panelists interviewed employees and



consultants, toured the Metro Blue Line, visited Rail Operations Control, toured the proposed alignment of the Eastside light rail extension and reviewed drawings.

Panelists included Bill Grizzard from Sacramento Regional Transit District, Pamela McCombe of Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority, Bill Thompson, manager of operations for Calgary Transit, and Al Fazio, chief of operations for New Jersey's Hudson-Bergen light rail system.

An expanded written report is expected to be completed in late March.

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## Board Committees Can Put 'Pedal to the Metal' on Transit Plans

(Feb. 15, 2002) MTA Board committees can put the pedal to the metal on Los Angeles transit, next week, as they consider five separate motions that would advance the Eastside Light-Rail Line, the San Fernando Valley East-West Busway and the expansion of the Metro Rapid bus program.

In addition, the Operations Committee may vote to award an \$84 million contract for the implementation of a Universal Fare System.

The action begins on Wednesday when the Construction Committee will consider a motion authorizing the CEO to solicit a design-build contract for the aboveground portion of the Metro Gold Line through East LA. The six-mile rail line will have eight stations and will serve one of the city's most heavily populated communities.

The motion also includes a provision for a more traditional design-bid-build contract for a 1.7-mile tunnel that will begin near the 101 Freeway and surface just west of 1st and Lorena. Tunnel construction is planned for mid-2003, with the start of rail line operations planned in mid-2008.

Then, on Thursday, the Planning and Programming Committee will be asked to certify the final environmental report for the Eastside Corridor – a necessary step in the process of approvals before construction of the light-rail line can begin.

### Bus Rapid Transit contract

Also at its Wednesday meeting, the Construction Committee will consider a motion authorizing the CEO to solicit a design-build contract for a \$329.5 million Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project along the Burbank/Chandler corridor. The 14-mile cross-valley busway would link the North Hollywood Metro Rail station with a planned transit hub at Warner Center.

That action is linked to a motion that comes before Planning and Programming, Thursday, to certify the final environmental impact report for the BRT project. The report details an extensive mitigation plan that addresses community concerns about construction and operation of the busway.

Construction of the busway could begin in spring 2003, with operations beginning in spring 2005.

## FEBRUARY AGENDA

### Operations Committee

1 p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 20

**Item 41** Universal Fare System

### Construction Committee

2 p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 20

**Item 13** Eastside Light-Rail Transit Project

**Item 14** San Fernando Valley Bus Rapid Transit Project

### Finance and Budget Committee

9:30 a.m., Thursday, Feb. 21

### Executive Management Committee

11 a.m., Thursday, Feb. 21

### Planning and Programming Committee

1 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 21

**Item 31** Metro Rapid Expansion Program

**Item 32** Eastside Corridor Final Environmental Impact Report

**Item 33** San Fernando Valley East-West Final Environmental Report

**Item 34** San Fernando Valley North-South Transit Corridor Study

Coincidentally with the busway plan, Planning and Programming will consider awarding a nine-month, \$977,299 contract to a Los Angeles firm to study the feasibility of building a north-south bus transit project that would interface with both the Burbank/Chandler busway and with Metro Rapid buses on Ventura Boulevard.

The committee also is expected to boost the already successful Metro Rapid bus program by voting to direct the staff to develop a five-year expansion plan.

### **Three corridors budgeted**

Twenty-three Metro Rapid corridors – located throughout the metropolitan area – are under consideration and three already are budgeted for construction. The South Broadway, Vermont and Van Nuys corridors are expected to be in operation within 12 to 18 months.

The three other Metro Rapid corridors in the proposed first phase of the expansion plan are Pico-Pico-Venice, Florence and Soto. The estimated total cost of implementing all six first-phase corridors is \$24.6 million. Metro Rapid buses on the current Whittier/Wilshire and Ventura Boulevard lines have reduced travel times by about 25 percent and increased ridership almost 35 percent.

All measures considered by the committees must have approval of the full Board. The Board's next meeting is scheduled at 9:30 a.m., Feb. 28.

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## CFO Invites Division 10 Employees to Put Safety First

By AMY HOWELL  
(Feb. 19, 2002) What does a 200-year-old chemical company formed around the manufacturing of gunpowder have in common with the MTA

This was a question posed by an audience member to MTA Chief Financial Officer Dick Brumbaugh, as the MTA's Safety's First campaign was rolled out, Friday, at Gateway Division 10.

Bus Operator Dayman Medearis, microphone in hand, participates in The Safety Game, answering a safety-oriented question before a panel of judges.



"Over the last 200 years, Dupont has been able to instill in their organization a safety culture that is unparalleled to any organization in this country," said Brumbaugh. "Their accident-injury rate is almost zero, and they have 98,000 employees."

Division 10 Manager Evelyn Frizelle, center, makes a point about the Safety's First program during a discussion with Chief Financial Officer Dick Brumbaugh and Division Advisory Committee Coordinator Norma Carrasco.

The Safety's First campaign is the MTA's effort to reduce employee injuries by 50 percent—or more—over the next five years.

During the campaign rollout, Brumbaugh introduced three Dupont employees, who are assisting with the implementation of a safety culture at the MTA. He also cited the safety culture of New York City Transit as one the MTA should strive to emulate.



PHOTOS BY AMY HOWELL

"Safety's first will be our goal; safety's first will be the watchword of this organization," said Brumbaugh. "I hope we can all stand together and make that happen."

### Come on down and spin the wheel

Audience members, comprised of Division 10 employees, were then invited to play The Safety Game. Employees were picked at random to spin a color-coded wheel and answer transportation or maintenance safety-oriented questions for prizes.

Prizes included gift baskets, pairs of movie tickets and MTA hats and key chains. A panel of judges, which included Division 10 mentors and instructors, as well as Acting Division Maintenance Manager Jim Fulkerson, asked the questions.

Although some employees had to be gently prodded by their co-workers to spin the wheel, they answered questions such as "What is the safest position your hands should be placed while steering the bus?" and "When in the yard, when should a reflective vest be worn?"

Employees were also invited to a lunchtime barbeque held outside of the Division's main building.

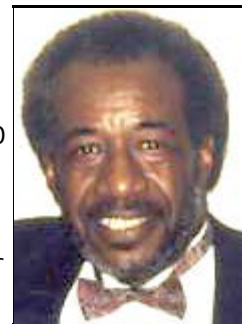
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- Amy Howell is a Transit Operations correspondent intern assigned to write news articles about employee activities at the operating divisions.

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## **Funeral Services Set for Transit Police Sgt. Raymond Thomas**

(Feb. 19, 2003) Funeral Services for retired Transit Police Sgt. Raymond Thomas will be conducted at 10 a.m., Saturday, Feb. 22, at Trinity Baptist Church in Los Angeles.



Raymond Thomas

Thomas, who died Feb. 14 at age 70, was a 28-year veteran of the agency. A native of Texas, he served the first 10 years as a Metro Bus operator and the last 18 in the Transit Police Department. He retired in February 1989 and became a golf pro at Westchester Golf Club.

A viewing will be held from 3 p.m. until 8 p.m., Friday, Feb. 21, at Inglewood Park Mortuary, 3801 Manchester Blvd., Inglewood. Trinity Baptist Church is located at 2046 West Jefferson Blvd., Los Angeles.

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## LAPD's Transit Group Explorers Are Looking For a Few Good Kids

By ERIC RAPP  
(Feb 19, 2002) Have your kids always thought it would be cool to be a cop? With the LAPD Explorers, they have a chance to try it out while helping in their community and without experiencing any of the danger that police normally face.



^ The LAPD's Transit Group Explorers program is recruiting new members. Relatives or dependents of MTA employees are especially encouraged to apply.

The LAPD's Transit Group Explorers program is recruiting new members. Relatives or dependents of MTA employees are especially encouraged to apply.

The Explorer program is intended to educate and involve youths in police operations. The program specifically targets young men and women who are considering a career in law enforcement, but anyone aged 14 to 21 who meets the requirements can join.

Explorers must attend and pass Explorer Academy, a 12-week training course held on Saturdays that teaches many of the same basics new police recruits learn. Explorer training can greatly help prepare a young person for a career in law enforcement.

Currently, there are more than 850 Explorers throughout the LAPD. Explorers are kept away from the hazardous aspects of police work.

### Joined to get experience

"I joined for the law enforcement experience," says Explorer David Bernal. David's mother works at Venice Division 6.

The Transit Group's Explorers undergo the same training as most police Explorers, but work specifically with Transit Group.

The Transit Group Explorer program started in February 2001 with 15 Explorers. Currently there are 31 Explorers in the Transit Group, 21 of whom are dependents or relatives of MTA employees. Youth Service Officer Maury Winet hopes to enlarge the Transit Group to more than 50 Explorers.

Recently, the Transit Group Explorers provided security and traffic control for the MTA Car Show and the Malibu Chili Cook-Off, and will be helping with the Los Angeles Marathon on March 3rd.

Explorers sometimes get to perform community service. Last Christmas they worked at an event sponsored by radio station Arrow 93 and the Make-A-Wish Foundation. The Explorers helped organize lines and took pictures of children with Santa Claus.

### Help with day-to-day tasks

Transit Group Explorers also assist with the day-to-day operation of the Police Department, helping with administrative tasks.

"The goal is for the program to be youth-run, with oversight from myself and my colleague, Officer Connie Guerrero," says Winet. Recently two Transit Explorers were promoted to the rank of sergeant. With the expansion of the program, new ranks, including captain and lieutenant, will be added.

The next Explorer Academy class starts in June 2002. But any MTA dependents or relatives who are interested shouldn't wait until then to get information.

Anyone interested in the program can contact the Youth Service Officers who oversee the Transit Group Explorers. Officer Winet can be reached at 922-3546, or contact Officer Guerrero at 922-3626.

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## Black History Month

Luther Williams, president of the Los Angeles Inter-Alumni Council, was the featured speaker, last Friday, during a meeting of the MTA's African American Employees Association (AAEA). A graduate of Jackson State University in Mississippi and a retired Long Beach math teacher, Williams discussed educational leadership and the importance of supporting the historically black colleges and universities and the United Negro College Fund.



Williams' speech was one of several activities planned by the AAEA to mark Black History Month. Others include "Men of the Cloth at the MTA" on Feb. 21, Breaking the Barriers in Military History with representatives from the Buffalo Soldiers and the 555th Parachute Infantry Division on Feb. 22, the MTA Choral Group Sings Negro Spirituals on Feb. 26, Poets Corner on Feb. 27 and an evening social on Feb. 28. (2/19/02)

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## Black History Month Celebration Set Friday at Division 1

(Feb. 20, 2002) It's always the biggest event of Black History Month at the MTA – and this year is no exception. All employees are invited to attend a celebration and barbecue at 10 a.m., Friday, at Division 1.

The keynote speaker, YWCA Chief Executive Officer Faye Washington, will address the program's theme of "Leadership in Today's World."

Also on hand for the event will be Tom Jones of the World War II 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion and Alfred Stewart of the 8th and 9th Divisions of the Buffalo Soldiers historic re-enactment group. In addition, the MTA Choir and Sandra McGee will provide Negro spirituals and gospel music.

Prior to joining the YWCA, Washington headed a management and governmental affairs consulting firm. Earlier, she was the first African American woman to be appointed assistant general manager and chief administrative officer of the Los Angeles DWP, the nation's largest municipal utility. A graduate of Cal State LA, she earned a master's degree in public administration at UCLA.

Called the "Triple Nickles," the 555th trained in Georgia and was alerted for European duty in late 1944, but the changing tides of the war resulted in a different assignment--jumping over the blazing forests of the American northwest searching for Japanese balloon bombs, a job requiring exact skills and special courage.

### The Buffalo Soldiers

The Buffalo Soldiers were thought to have earned the nickname from the Plains Indians during their service with the U.S. Cavalry on the American frontier where they surveyed, mapped, built forts and roads, guarded rail, stage and telegraph lines. The historical focus of today's organization is to authentically recreate the lives of the men who served between 1867 and 1871.

The Black History Month program will begin at 10 a.m. and should be completed in time for lunch at 11:30

Keynote speaker, YWCA Chief Executive Officer Faye Washington, will address the program's theme of "Leadership in Today's World."



^ A member of the Buffalo Soldiers in traditional uniform.



< Badge for the 555th "Triple Nickles" Parachute Infantry Battalion

a.m., according to coordinator Emily Beckett.

Headquarters employees who plan to attend the event can catch a bus from the Plaza. The bus will depart for Division 1 at 9:45 a.m. The division is located at 1130 East 6th Street at Central and Alameda. Parking will be provided.

This is the fifth year of the Black History Month celebration at Division 1 and the second time the division has collaborated with the MTA's African American Employees Association to sponsor the program.

For more information about the event, contact Emily Beckett at 922-6251.

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## Metro Rail's Keith Salazar Helps Nab Graffiti Vandal



^ Keith Salazar

(Feb. 20, 2002) Keith Salazar, an MTA traction power inspector, probably never expected that he would be instrumental in assisting the LAPD in arresting a graffiti vandal.

But, that's exactly what happened on Sunday, Feb. 17. As Salazar was walking along the platform of the Universal City Metro Red Line station, a commuter pointed to a 17-year-old juvenile inside the train. The juvenile was stuffing an aerosol can into a backpack.

Salazar noticed that the inside of the train had been badly tagged. Graffiti disfigured the windows, entry door and passenger seats.

He immediately notified the Rail Operations Center, which alerted the LAPD, then held the train until officers arrived.

According to a police report, the juvenile had eight spray paint cans in the backpack. While talking to the juvenile, the officers noticed paint on both his hands. He was arrested for felony vandalism and placed in Sylmar Juvenile Hall. The train sustained an estimated \$3,000 in damages.

The LAPD commended Salazar Keith for his quick actions and assistance in battling crime on the Metro Red Line.

According to the LAPD, the graffiti problem continues to plague the Metro Red Line and is by far the biggest crime problem in the system. The LAPD relies heavily on the assistance of MTA employees in combating vandalism.

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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** LAPD Lt. Steven J. Flores provided the information for this story. Flores is assigned to the LAPD Transit Rail Division, which is responsible for providing law enforcement services on the Metro Red Line.

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### **metro.net Launching 'Safety Tip of the Day'**

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(Feb. 20, 2002) metro.net is launching a new homepage feature called "Today's Safety Tip." Click on the link in the upper right-hand corner for a tip that could prevent an injury or even save your life – or the lives of your co-workers or family members.

The safety tips for February and March will focus on safety in the home. In future months, the tips will concern safety in the workplace and other locations. "Today's Safety Tip" is sponsored by the "Safety's First" program.

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## MTA Bus Operators and Mechanics 'Participate' in Winter Olympics

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By AMY HOWELL

(Feb. 21, 2002) Seventy-two MTA employees are currently "vacationing" in Salt Lake City, Utah.



But they're not sipping hot chocolate by a fire or skiing down any snow-covered slopes. They're helping to keep people -- and buses -- moving during the winter Olympics. [GO TO> List of participants.](#)

Sixty-three Metro bus operators, including five Transportation Operations Supervisors (TOSs) who are also serving as operators, as well as nine mechanics, requested to take vacations during this time, in order to be in Salt Lake City while the Winter Olympics are taking place.

Most of them left on February 3, before the opening ceremonies were held, in order to receive training, provided by the Salt Lake Organizing Committee (SLOC), and familiarize themselves with the routes they would be driving.

### SLOC contacted bus agencies

"The Organizing Committee contacted bus agencies around the United States," said James Falicki, Transportation Systems and Support supervisor, who acted as a facilitator when the effort began just over two years ago. The SLOC also contacted bus agencies in Canada and Europe.

Flyers were posted to encourage participation. Approximately 185 Metro bus operators and mechanics (who were able to take vacations during this time) volunteered, Falicki said.

Although 45 bus operators and nine mechanics were originally selected, the SLOC eventually needed more operators. These operators were selected to participate only a week before Feb. 3.

"It was last minute," said Falicki, but, "they were given the time off to go—they were excited about it."

### A paid 'vacation'

The operators and mechanics are receiving an hourly wage, in addition to a per diem for meals and other expenses. The SLOC also provided transportation to Salt Lake City, as well as accommodations.

The operators and mechanics were provided traditional uniforms and cold weather gear, as well as pins and other Olympic-related memorabilia. Most are expected to return home Feb. 23.



Bus operators and mechanics currently in Salt Lake City.  
Names in red denote TOSs serving as operators:

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**Bus Operators**

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**Mechanics**

- Alarcon, Lourdes
- Alarcon, Ramon L
- Alvarez, Ramon
- Alvarez-Mitchell, Socorro G
- Andrews, Derald L
- Aranda, Mike M
- Augspurger, Juan A
- Beymer Thomas, Tammy A
- Bowen, Jerome P
- Brawner, Ace L
- Castillo, Gustavo
- Coleman, Terrence C
- Coutts, Reynaldo
- Del Cid, Lucio H
- Diaz, Eric
- Dieguez, Jose E
- **Dryden, Daniel**
- **Esquivel, Brenda**
- Ethridge, Ben R
- Franklin, Earl
- Freeman, Peter A
- Fresnedo, Rosa M
- Garcia, Jose R
- Garcia, Julio C
- Gardner, Patricia
- Gomez, Nellie
- Henry, Billy C
- Hill-Soto, Jose
- Hinojos, Alberto
- Horvitz, Tony
- Hubler, Betty
- Hubler, Loren
- Lampton, Rochetta E
- Lindsey, William E
- Madison, Warren J
- Malone, Will A
- Miller, Ernest H
- Mitchell, Patrick D
- Mota, Ramiro E
- **Mulgado, Enrique**
- Munoz, Gabriel
- Nembhard, Robert H
- Newman, Kathleen M
- **Ouellette, Richard**
- Owens, Fredrick H
- **Perez, Helen**
- Pobol, Eugene
- Ramirez, Roberto
- Ramos, Arturo
- Rause, Ed
- Reyes, Rosendo
- Richardson, Darryl L
- Rodriguez, Robert
- Romo, Juan
- Arrendondo, George
- Brennan, Pat
- Dupré, Lawrence
- Enriquez, Miguel
- Grazziani, Edger
- McWaters, Paul
- Rubio, Yezid
- Semadeni, Albert
- Swedenhjel, Lenora

- Sarabia, Roberto
- Schouten, Harry D
- Sims, Cordell
- Singer, David I
- Stokes, Phillip R
- Tinsley, Michael J
- Wilson, Jessie L
- Zamora, Rigoberto
- Zisner, Benjamin S.

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## MTA's New 'Wayfinding Kit' Will Help Sight-Impaired Travel Metro Rail System

By BILL HEARD, Editor  
(Feb. 21, 2002) Navigating the 59.4-mile Metro Rail system can sometimes be challenging for the first-time rider, but imagine the difficulties a sight-impaired passenger might face.



The MTA not only has imagined that possibility, but now has developed a Metro Rail Wayfinding Kit – a set of audio, tactile and visual “tools” to acquaint the sight-impaired with Metro Rail and to help them in using the system.

^ The Wayfinding Kit includes audiotapes describing the Metro Rail system, large print and Braille pocket guides and a map of the rail system.

The MTA has produced 4,500 Wayfinder Kits in English and 500 in Spanish. The kits, which will be announced to the public in March, will be distributed free to agencies that provide services to the sight-impaired.

“The Wayfinding Kit wasn’t required by the ADA,” says project coordinator Barbara Burns of MTA Marketing. “This is something the MTA decided on its own to do for our sight-impaired passengers. It’s been extremely well-received by the agencies that provide services to the sight-impaired.”

The idea for the Wayfinding Kit arose from a series of surveys and open house meetings in 2000. Sight-impaired participants expressed a need for easy-to-use information about the Metro Rail system, Burns said.



### Developed by MTA Marketing

The kit was developed by MTA Marketing over the past year with help from a committee representing the sight-impaired community, a mobility consultant and an expert on the Americans with Disabilities Act. The MTA’s ADA compliance officer, Lynda Bybee, and Ellen Blackman, the agency’s liaison with the Access Advisory Committee, also were involved with the project.

^ Project coordinator Barbara Burns show the elements of the Wayfinding Kit to Ellen

Blackman, left, and Lynda Bybee, who also were involved in development of the kit.

Enclosed in the black vinyl Wayfinding Kit are two audiotapes.

One gives an overview of the entire Metro Rail system with the names and order of stations, how to buy a ticket, sounds to listen to and other helpful information. The other is specific to the Metro Red Line, describing exact paths of travel through each of the subway stations.

The kit contains handy large-print, pocket-sized guides in English, Spanish and Braille that a passenger can carry as a reminder of the recommended path of travel. The guides detail each Metro Red Line station and provide the station sequences for the Metro Blue and Green lines. A sturdy map of the rail system, with large print and Braille type,

also is included.

An earlier element of the project included tactile, large print and Braille signs that tell the sight-impaired which side of the platforms trains will depart from. Located near stairs and elevators closest to the exits, the signs were installed last July.

In the mid-1990s, the MTA developed a large print, Braille "flash card" booklet that is helpful to the sight-impaired in riding Metro Buses.

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## **Officials Gather for Opening of 405 Freeway Carpool Lane**

(Feb. 22, 2002) Gov. Gray Davis, state, local and MTA officials gathered at the Sherman Oaks Galleria, Friday, to mark the official opening of a \$22.7 million San Diego (405) Freeway carpool lane through the Sepulveda Pass.

Board members Zev Yaroslavsky, Frank Roberts, Alison Yoh and Pam O'Connor were joined by CEO Roger Snoble and Chief of Staff Maria Guerra to represent the MTA.

Opened to the public Jan. 8, the carpool lane saves drivers about 15 minutes a trip on one of the slowest stretches of area freeways. During morning and afternoon commutes, traffic averages between 30 mph and 50 mph between the Ventura Freeway interchange and Waterford Street near Westwood.

About 90 percent of the carpool lane's funding comes from local sales taxes and is provided through the MTA. Plans are to add another 352 miles of high-occupancy vehicle lanes to the existing 396 miles already in operation.

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## Board Honors Security Officer Graff for Quick Action in Assault



Security Officer  
Edward Graff

(Feb. 22, 2002) It was after midnight, Dec. 28, and MTA Security Officer Edward Graff was closing down the Civic Center Metro Rail station when he heard a cry of distress.

Probing with his flashlight into the darkness at the bottom of a stairwell, Graff saw a man assaulting and raping an elderly woman. He immediately apprehended the suspect, radioed for LAPD and medical assistance, and held the man until officers arrived.

The victim was checked by paramedics at the scene and transported to a nearby hospital.

Graff was recognized by the Executive Management Committee, Thursday, for his "quick and professional work which prevented further injury to the woman and apprehended a major felony suspect."

Graff, 28, joined the Security Department in February, 2000. He has been assigned to the Metro Red Line Security Team since February, 2001, and is responsible for inspecting, clearing and closing down the subway system each night.

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## Charity, Service a Family Tradition for Div. 18's Louvenia Harris

By ERIC RAPP  
(Feb 22, 2002) For the Harris family of Watts, charity and community service have been a way of life for more than 35 years, and Metro Bus Operator Louvenia Harris of South Bay Division 18 has been right in the middle of it all.

The family's tradition of service started in the early 1960s, when Harris' mother, Alice, was 16, homeless, and trying to care for two infant children. With nowhere to go and nothing to eat, she could only beg for work in exchange for food and shelter.

She suffered rejection after rejection until, finally, one kind woman went against the wishes of her family and gave Alice work as a housekeeper and shelter in her garage. As repayment, the woman asked only that Alice promise to help someone else in the future.

Alice agreed, promising that she, her children, and her children's children would help others in need.

### A Chance To Help

The 1965 Watts riots left many people desperate for assistance. Alice, who had since married and had two more children, found her chance to keep her word to the woman who had helped her. Nearly 40 years later, that promise is still being kept.

Today, "Sweet" Alice Harris, her husband Allen, and their daughters Louvenia, Alvenia, Twonda, Linda, and Aubrey operate Parents of Watts which sponsors separate shelters for homeless men, women and couples, a foster family agency, a child daycare and school, a youth center with a computer lab, a 24-hour crisis center, a teen pregnancy home, a male parolee halfway house, and a construction business.

Each member of the family also somehow found time to earn at least one college degree. Louvenia Harris earned two.

As if that weren't enough, each daughter and her family contribute \$400 a month for community activities that include a Martin Luther King Day celebration, 4th of July fireworks, a Thanksgiving Dinner Pass Out, and a Christmas party for 15 inner-city schools.

### A family tradition of giving

Harris, a four-year MTA veteran, especially enjoys the Christmas party.

**A Caring Family** > Metro Bus Operator Louvenia Harris is surrounded by her family with (clockwise from lower right) charities founder "Sweet" Alice Harris and her husband, Allen; sister Alvenia Hatten, brother-in-law Egerton Forster and Louvenia's sister, Linda Forster, and sister Aubrey Watson.



Photo by ERIC RAPP

She says it grew from a family tradition in which each daughter would receive Christmas gifts, but would pick one gift to give to another child who was not as fortunate.

Now, that tradition has grown into a giant party for third and fourth graders from 15 schools in Watts. The children are bused to a location where the streets have been blocked off, and as Harris says, "On these premises we don't know the word 'no.' Can you jump in the jumping house? Yes. Can you get your face painted? Yes. Can you ride the ponies? Yes."

Not only do the children get to play to their hearts' content, some of the neediest receive gifts, all purchased from the contributions of the Harris daughters.

Last Christmas, Santa Claus (played by former Los Angeles Mayoral Candidate Steve Soboroff) gave away bicycles and bicycle helmets, skateboards and pads, and games to children who were identified by their school teachers as needing a gift the most.

Harris says the bicycles were bought on sale from Target, but no store would sell 30 bikes to one person. So all five daughters and their families had to race to Target stores throughout the Los Angeles area to purchase enough bicycles for the Christmas party.

All the trouble was worth it, says Harris, "to see the joy on those kids' faces."

### **Helping those in need**

At Thanksgiving, the Harrises distribute gift certificates redeemable at local grocery stores. "You can eat well for \$30 if you budget properly," she says. They used to serve entire cooked meals, but that soon became overwhelming, even for this energetic family.

Harris and her family sometimes secretly adopt families in need, giving them groceries and small necessities without letting the family know where the help is coming from.

It's done anonymously, says Harris, "because if you know that it's me, you would treat me differently. But if you don't know who it is, then you have to be nice to everybody, because somebody was nice to you."

For the future, Louvenia Harris has no intention of breaking "Sweet" Alice's long-ago promise. Her children Jonnessa, Johnallen, and Johnathan all help with charity events, and soon her granddaughter Kamerrin will get into the act too.

"Our family has been so blessed," says Harris. "We're able to help other people, and that is what it's all about."

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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** The Harris family organization, Parents of Watts, is located at 10828 Lou Dillon Ave., Los Angeles, 90059. Eric Rapp is a Transit Operations correspondent intern assigned to write news articles about employee activities at the operating divisions.

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Jerri McGlothern received Purchasing's "Buyer of the Quarter" award in a recent ceremony. From left, Purchasing Contract Manager Al Mitchell, Jerri McGlothern, and Director of Purchasing Ron Dupuis.



### **Jerri McGlothern is Purchasing's 'Buyer of the Quarter'**

By RON DUPUIS

(February 22, 2002) Jerri McGlothern has been named Materiel Department's Purchasing "Buyer of the Quarter" for her commitment and dedication to providing outstanding service to her clients. Jerri is responsible for purchasing NABI bus parts, bus passenger side windows, bus window guards and bus passenger seats.

Jerri continuously uses her experience in the planning and execution of her daily work activities, as well as, execution of complex procurements.

Jerri is assigned to the Zero Tolerance Program. She is responsible for developing acquisition plans to support the project. Jerri was instrumental in awarding contracts to meet the time schedule for the Zero Tolerance campaign implemented in October 2001. These purchases will save the MTA \$40,000 over the cost of previous procurements.

Jerri approaches all of her assignments with a positive and professional attitude. Her communication style and friendly personality has worked effectively in dealing with all of her internal clients and suppliers. The quality of her work is outstanding and exemplary.

Jerri is always willing to take on new assignments and to help other staff members. Jerri has distinguished herself as being dependable, highly motivated and a true asset to the Purchasing Section, Procurement Department, and the MTA.

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## **AAEA to Honor Carolyn Flowers at Black History Event**



Carolyn Flowers

(Feb. 26, 2002) Carolyn Flowers, the MTA's executive officer for Administration, will be honored, Feb. 28, during the African American Employees Association's Black History Month reception.

Flowers will be recognized for exemplary professional development and advancement in her career. As the MTA's highest ranking African American woman, the AAEA will note the significance of her contributions to the agency and to the community.

The AAEA reception is scheduled from 6 – 8 p.m. at the Lucy Florence Café, 4305 Degnan Ave., in the Leimert Park area of Los Angeles.

Flowers is a veteran of 24 years in financial management positions in industry and government who previously served as the MTA's deputy executive officer, Finance, in the Office of Management and Budget.

Flower joined the MTA in January 1993 as an administrative analyst, but took time away from the agency during 1998 and most of 1999, to head the budget department of the City of Beverly Hills.

A graduate of UCLA, she earned an MBA from that university's Anderson School of Business. She is a member of the National Forum of Black Public Administrators and the Women's Transportation Conference. A native of Los Angeles, she still makes her home in the city.

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## RRC Employees Attend 'Safety's First' Rollout



Electrician Helper Glenn Gatewood participates in The Safety Game, Monday at the RRC, answering a safety-oriented question asked by Powerplant Manager Cary Stevens. Behind Stevens, other judges, including RRC Director Mike Singer, took turns asking questions. "I think it went great," said Singer, of the campaign rollout. "A lot of people turned out—three or four hundred."

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Facilities, Procurement and Regional Rebuild Center employees help fill a long line of co-workers' plates with food. Those in attendance at the Safety's First campaign roll out were treated to a barbeque after listening to Deputy CEO John Catoe describe the program and answer questions about the MTA's safety-oriented goals.



Feb. 26, 2002

PHOTOS BY AMY HOWELL

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Photos by AMY HOWELL

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## Major Environmental Project Nears Finish at RRC

(Feb. 26, 2002) Work on a major project to bring underground storage tanks at the Regional Rebuild Center into compliance with state environmental regulations will be completed in March.

Since construction work began last November, crews have removed seven underground storage tanks ranging up to 10,000 gallons capacity and have retrofitted eight other underground tanks to bring them up to code. The tanks were used to store fuel, oil and chemicals.

Three new aboveground tanks have been set in place to store diesel fuel, anti-freeze and motor oil.

"The underground tanks had been poorly installed back during the 1980s. They didn't comply with the 1998 environmental codes and wouldn't have complied with the new 2003 codes," says Tim Lindholm, environmental specialist and engineering project manager. "They had to be corrected."

During the retrofitting, crews tested the integrity of the double-walled storage tanks and added new monitoring systems to guard against leaks. They also installed new double-walled piping and mounted larger access "collars" around the pipes to permit inspections, maintenance and continuous monitoring.

Dave Compton, Metro Construction resident engineer, is managing construction of the \$1.75 million project. MTA Environmental Services sponsored the project and Lindholm led the design and contracting portion of the project starting in December 2000.

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^ Workmen put the final touches on an aboveground diesel fuel storage tank at the RRC.



^ A crew excavates contaminated soil around a waste oil and chemical storage tank.



^ A worker stands next to the "collar" of an underground waste oil tank. Photo shows that retrofitting of the tank is almost complete.



## **Service Sector Plan Gets Favorable Hearing from Committees**

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Feb. 26, 2002) CEO Roger Snoble received a favorable hearing from the Board's Operations and Executive Management committees, last week, when he laid out details of the MTA's new service sector concept and the agency-wide reorganization that will accompany it.

Stressing that the primary objective of the plan is to improve bus service and "be more responsive to our bus customers," Snoble also described a pared-down Headquarters staff, but illustrated how employees, funds and other resources would be shifted to the service sectors – a move he said would "flatten" the organization.

The CEO also indicated that the Board will play a key role by determining how much authority to give to local "councils" that will advise the sector general managers. The list of alternatives he mentioned included conducting public hearings, establishing bus service standards and approving some service changes, among others.

Snoble said he and Deputy CEO John Catoe plan to implement service sectors in the San Fernando and San Gabriel valleys, July 1. He asked that the Board reach a decision on the sector councils in May, or at least no later than June. The MTA also will seek advice on sector issues from elected officials and community leaders.

Los Angeles City Councilman Hal Bernson, Operations Committee chairman, and Board Chairman John Fasana, who heads the Executive Management Committee, expressed strong support for some elements of the concept. Supervisor Yvonne Burke, among other members, questioned how funding and other resources would be fairly allocated among the five sectors.

### **Opportunity for input**

After hearing Snoble's presentation to the Operations Committee, Bernson said, "If we do this and do it properly, it gives people an opportunity to have input and to be a part of the picture."

During the Executive Management Committee meeting, Fasana expressed doubt about the feasibility of a transit zone in the San Gabriel Valley, but found much to admire in the MTA's proposed service sector plan.

He said accountability would be "closer to services being delivered," and that sectors could develop "quicker decision-making and responsiveness." He liked those aspects of the plan that would give sectors more authority and the ability to "produce a better product."

During the Executive Management Committee meeting, Burke noted differences in the tentative budget figures for some of the sectors. She questioned why one sector – Gateway Cities – with more annual boardings than two others would have a smaller operating budget.

Snoble explained that budgets had been tentatively allocated to the sectors by how much money currently is spent in each area. Such factors as operating and personnel costs, speed along the routes and per-passenger subsidies often dictate the amount of operating funds required.

### **Adequate sector resources**

Earlier, at the Operations Committee meeting, Snoble said, "We're trying to make sure that every sector has adequate resources to provide the

services they're providing now. The better they do that, the more money they'll have for expanding services...."

Snoble told Burke he plans no changes in the capital improvement budget and bus procurement budgets. He said funds from other parts of the budget might be used to improve operating facilities. "Our facilities really need some attention and we have to get serious about that."

The CEO said that, although some staff functions would be moved to the service sectors, many will remain at Headquarters. Among those, he listed jobs in Countywide Planning, Metro Construction, administrative services, finance, ITS, management audit, customer information, marketing, government relations, county counsel, procurement and others.

Snoble said that, although the MTA is heavily involved in improving the county's transportation system, "If we don't do the bus part right, that takes away from our other responsibilities...all can be jeopardized if we aren't (operating) our bus service very well."

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## MTA Choral Group Lifts Every Voice in Song



PHOTO by Bill Heard

(Feb. 27, 2002) The rich melodies of Negro Spirituals echoed through the Headquarters atrium at noon, Tuesday, as the MTA Choral Group celebrated Black History Month in song.

Many in the audience hummed along to such old favorites as "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot," "Just a Closer Walk With Thee" and "Go, Tell It On The Mountain."

Arlette Nunley conducted the choir with accompaniment by Corey Hirsch on keyboard and Robert Vasquez on trumpet. M.C. Wanda Davis provided background about the tradition of Negro Spirituals.

Soloists were Don Costa Seawell, Frank Sahlem, Robin Blair, Claudette Moody, Renee Willis and Cathy Hudson-Taylor. Other choir members were George Parks, Pat Clark, Letty Lawenko and Carmelita Romero.

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Surrounded by Division 5 bus operators, 96-year-old Arthur Winston displays a giant birthday card festooned with 96 dollar bills given by his co-workers.



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### Arthur Winston Division 5 Celebrates Namesake's 96th Birthday

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Arthur Winston at "Best of the Best" awards banquet in January.

By ERIC RAPP

(March 28, 2002) Arthur Winston, the MTA's oldest employee, turned 96 on Tuesday. And Division 5 went all out to honor him.

Bus operators pitched in to buy him a giant birthday card, then decorated it with 96 one dollar bills. The maintenance division had a cake and ice cream party.

Winston, a service attendant, has been with MTA for 72 years. He says he still feels good and has no plans to retire any time soon.

When he does decide to retire, he says he'll just "tell them I'm done and go on home."

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Winston attributes his long life and good health to not drinking alcohol or smoking, and to "eating right and getting a lot of rest, and not letting stress get to me."

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A large crowd attended the Board meeting to support or protest motions regarding the Eastside light-rail extension and the San Fernando Valley east-west busway.



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## Board Approves Eastside Light-Rail, Rapid Bus, Metro Rapid, Universal Fares, Freeway Patrol Motions

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### Eastside Light-Rail Line

The MTA Board voted to certify the final environmental report on a planned six-mile light-rail extension of the Metro Gold Line through East Los Angeles.

As a result of the Board action, the proposed project will be sent to the federal government as a step toward initiating final design and completion of a Full Funding Grant Agreement.



Eastside light-rail extension supporters, outfitted in blue T-shirts, listen intently to the debate.

Approval of the final environmental report includes a detailed mitigation plan, which addresses community concerns regarding impacts during construction and operation of the light rail project.

Construction of the 1.7-mile tunnel portion of the project could begin in mid-2003, construction of the at-grade portion in late 2004/early 2005. The extension could begin operations in mid-2008.

### San Fernando Valley East-West Busway

The MTA Board voted to certify the final environmental report for a planned 14-mile Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system between the future Warner Center Transit Hub in the west San Fernando Valley and the Metro Red Line North Hollywood station. The action paves the way for the project's final design



phase.

The environmental report includes a detailed mitigation plan addressing community concerns regarding impacts during construction and operation of the busway project. Construction of the busway could begin in Spring 2003 and the busway could begin operations in Spring 2005.

The eastern terminus of the busway will be the Metro Red Line North Hollywood Station. The western terminus of the busway will be the Warner Center Transit Hub, which is expected to be completed by LADOT in late 2003.

Operating as an exclusive roadway for buses, the busway would provide a constant travel time across the San Fernando Valley, regardless of traffic congestion on parallel east-west routes.

### **Metro Rapid Expansion Program**

The MTA Board has approved the implementation of the Metro Rapid Expansion Program with the development of six additional Metro Rapid Bus Lines that could begin service within 12 to 18 months.

A total of 23 corridors have been identified and prioritized into four implementation phases. Each phase of the program could take three years to implement between five and six Metro Rapid bus lines.

Phase one of the program targets six transit corridors, encompassing 92.6 miles with Metro Rapid bus lines on South Broadway, Vermont and Van Nuys. The lines should be operational within 12 to 18 months.

The remainder of the phase one lines should be completed within three years. Estimated cost for implementation of six Metro Rapid Bus lines in the first phase is \$24.6 million.

### **Universal Fare System**

The MTA Board awarded an \$84 million contract to Cubic Transportation System, Inc., for automated fare collection equipment needed for implementation of a Universal Fare System.

With the wave of a plastic, wallet-sized Smart Card imbedded with computer chips, passengers will be able to board all Metro buses and trains and transfer to services offered by municipal operators, paratransit and Metrolink without worrying about purchasing new fare or carrying change.

The move to Smart Cards, expected to take place within three years, should vastly improve customer service and increase ridership.

## **Freeway Service Patrol**

The MTA Board approved 12 contracts worth \$15.8 million to keep the Metro Freeway Service Patrol in operation to assist stranded motorists along Southland freeways.

Under the program, 145 tow trucks patrol 40 different designated freeway segments or "beats" covering more than 400 miles of congested freeways. The trucks are in operation during weekday peak hours and on selected freeway segments during the mid-day and weekends.

The program is provided free of charge to motorists needing assistance. Eighteen different private contractors perform this service for the Metro Freeway Service Patrol program.

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## Chatsworth Division 8 Operator Gonzalez Makes a Patron's Day

By AMY HOWELL

(Feb. 28, 2002) It started out just like any other workday for Chatsworth Division 8 operator Aaron Gonzalez.

But, January 24 turned out a little different from other workdays, because Gonzalez was faced with what many people would consider a great temptation.



Chatsworth Division 8 Operator Aaron Gonzalez, who found \$741 in cash on his bus, turned the money in to his division's lost and found. PHOTO by AMY HOWELL

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At the end of Line 161, while stopped at the Owens Mouth and Vanowen layover area, Gonzalez began a routine inspection of his bus.

He walked down the aisle, looking from row to row for patrons' belongings. At one point, something caught his eye. Picking it up, Gonzalez realized it was a paycheck stub wrapped around a wad of money -- \$741 in cash!

### Doing the honorable thing

Gonzalez held on to the money while he was working, assuming that the owner would eventually return looking for it. However, the owner did not come back. At the end of his shift, Gonzalez turned the money in to Division 8's lost and found.

"From the beginning, it was not my money," said Gonzalez. "If we find it, you'll get it back," he said, of the operators' routine inspections.

The owner eventually claimed the money at Division 8's lost and found, providing an ID, a paycheck stub and information about the bus line, location, date and time the money was lost.

"Operator Gonzalez has very high standards. In his two and one half years as an operator for the MTA, he has maintained an exemplary record," said Division 8 Transportation Manager Grant Meyers. "I would expect no less from him. Operator Gonzalez is a credit to Division 8 and the MTA."

Gonzalez is due to receive a commendation for his actions from Division 8 as well.

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