

INSIDE *M* *o* *v* *e* *s*

Issue No. 3 March 1993



Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation Authority



Then



Now

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Thank You, Neil Peterson

You'll be a tough act to follow, Neil. You've been leading our way for the past four years and we're going to miss your smiling face and endless energy. Your spirit invaded the troops from the gate, and we know we couldn't have come this far without you. LACTC accomplished a lot during your time at the helm, and the staff wants to take this moment to thank you.

We noticed when you championed our efforts to the world. You reminded people that it was *teamwork* that returned rail to Los Angeles when the Blue Line opened, that it was *teamwork* that got the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe right-of-ways for Metrolink, and that it was *teamwork* that opened the Red Line six months ahead of schedule. You not only had pride in *your* work, you ingrained it in us too.

We know, too, you haven't had much sleep since you've been here. How could you? In addition to a full workday, you made yourself available mornings and evenings to speak at community meetings, municipal and corporate functions.



Yes, it was expected of you. But you never got tired of it. You eagerly showed up whenever you could to carry our message — that the LACTC was determined to improve mobility throughout our county and the surrounding Southern California area.

And improve it we have. When you got here in 1989, there was no Blue Line to Long Beach, or a Metrolink line to San Bernardino, Santa Clarita and Moorpark, or a subway under the streets of downtown Los Angeles. There was no 30-Year Plan for an integrated transportation system.

These are big accomplishments, for sure. But there was plenty of groundwork, not to mention the headaches, hectic schedules,

cost accounting, and utmost planning that precipitated every decision.

We have an exciting era ahead as we join with the SCRDT to become the MTA. There's a lot of work left to do as new transportation options continue to bring more dramatic changes to Los Angeles County. All of us are proud of the major precedents we've set. We'll do our best, Neil, to keep the ball rolling. ♦



As a regular feature, this column will address a few questions each month. In addition to questions directed to this column, questions will be pulled from the suggestion boxes. The questions printed will be of broad general interest and those asking the questions will not be identified.

Q: What are Franklin White's immediate plans for the organization, and how will they be accomplished?

A: Mr. White met with both Neil Peterson and Alan Pegg late last month and asked them to put together a transition plan for the agency. His first priority is to consolidate those divisions and departments where duplication of effort may occur.

Q: When will such a consolidation occur?

A: The physical merger of vital units is expected to occur as early as April or May. Mr. White has asked that staff from both agencies look at the existing available square footage to determine the best way to consolidate departments within the present space limitations. Once Mr. White reviews this information, staff will be informed of the next step.

Q: What's the status of the compensation and classification study?

A: From the completed Job Content Questionnaires, new job specifications and classifications are being prepared by the consultant, William F. Mercer Company. A salary survey has been conducted to assist in the recommendations of appropriate salary ranges for the MTA's classification list.

A technical advisory group, consisting of employees from both LACTC and SCRDT has met to review the initial parts of the consultant's recommendations. The consultant's final report is due in May.

Q: What pension and health benefits will we have under the MTA?

A: This project, which was conducted by consultant Foster & Higgins, is still in the analytical stage. Its recommendations are due at

Please see *What's on Your Mind* on page 6

Franklin White Named as MTA Chief Executive Officer

New York State Transportation Commissioner Franklin White was named chief executive officer (CEO) of the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority on Feb. 4. Prior to his



acceptance of the position as our CEO, White served as the commissioner for New York since 1985. He has also served as state Secretary of Transportation and Public Safety in Virginia. He is expected to assume his new post on April 1.

"This is an exciting opportunity," White told the MTA Board following his selection. "I am honored that you have expressed confidence in me. In return, I pledge to give Los Angeles County my best effort in bringing it the highest quality public transportation. A city this great deserves nothing less," he said.

For answers to several questions from employees about White's immediate plans for the organization, refer to the *What's On Your Mind?* column to the right. ♦

INSIDE MOVES

A monthly newsletter for and about METRO employees, including the LACTC, RCC and Metrolink staffs of the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, as well as all of our consultants, contractors and contract employees.

Produced by the MTA's Management Services Department

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Goodbye Jacki, Ray, Judy and Jimmy ~ We'll Miss You!

Four of our most faithful, concerned and dedicated public servants will take leave of their official duties as LACTC commissioners on April 1.

The LACTC staff wants to express good wishes and gratitude for their many years of devoted service. Many thanks to Jacki, Ray, Judy and Jimmy! We asked each of them to share some of their thoughts and words of wisdom about their LACTC experiences.



Jacki Bacharach

Jacki Bacharach joined the commission the same week that Prop. A took effect in April, 1982. "There were only about 20 employees when I walked in the door, so I've been around long enough to see a lot happen," she said.

Jacki came to us via her post as a councilwoman for the City of Rancho Palos Verdes (elected in 1980) where she was the mayor for three separate terms.

"When people keep their eyes on a goal," said Jacki, "they can get it done."

"I'm proud of the diversity of the commission's programs," said Jacki. "We've created alternatives for how we move around Southern California. We set our sights high, and we've accomplished a lot."

At the commission, she chaired the Planning and Mobility Improvement Committee for most of her tenure. When a five-county agency (including the LACTC) was developed to bring commuter rail to Southern California, Jacki was involved from the start. This group later became the Southern California Regional Rail Authority in 1991, and Jacki was named its first chairwoman.

Metrolink is only the latest in a long string of transportation projects she's championed but one that she's especially proud and excited about. "When people keep their eyes on a goal," said Jacki, "they can get it done."

Jacki was LACTC's chairwoman in 1985, and she also chaired the Rail Construction Corporation before it became a citizen committee. She chaired the Blue Line Committee, before L.A.'s first rail line even had a name.

"We made rail a reality in Los Angeles," she said. "There's been an incredible amount of commitment from both the staff and commissioners all along. It's been a lot of fun to work with staff, and I hope they can keep the commitment going."

Ray Grabinski

Ray Grabinski has represented Long Beach as an LACTC commissioner since he became a councilman for that city in 1986. He



served first as an alternate commissioner, and became full commissioner in 1988; he was chairman of the commission in 1991. Naturally, he's particularly proud that the return of rail to Los Angeles connected Long Beach with downtown Los Angeles.

"In the late 1970s," said Ray, "L.A. County Supervisor Kenny Hahn and others recalled the 'great days' of L.A.'s old Red Car era. They stated, 'If we rebuild it, they will come.' With Proposition A money, we built the Metro Blue Line, and sure enough, they have come — 35,000 a day, and still climbing. Kenny Hahn had faith."

Ray believes that as LACTC joins with the SCRTD to become the MTA, we can maintain that faith. "We must not let the faith of the visionaries die — it must be passed along to future generations," said Ray. "As long as you remember the people you transport and the people you serve, I'm certain the new MTA is capable of managing success."

Last December, Ray wrote a holiday letter to the LACTC staff that stated, in part:

"I'd like to tell the people I've worked with, my transportation teachers, how much I appreciate both their dedication and their sacrifices for our organization. Your patience and professionalism have allowed us to deliver our grand promise of increased mobility to all county residents. All of you should be very proud.

"Yes, we cut the ribbons. Yes, we took the credit. But *you* did the work. Thank you."

"We must not let the faith of the visionaries die — it must be passed along to future generations," said Ray.

James L. Tolbert

"If you really care, you want to do it right." Jimmy Tolbert has always taken his responsibility as an LACTC commissioner seriously — sometimes playing devils' advocate when difficult decisions had to be made. Mayor Tom Bradley



appointed him in 1989 as LACTC's citizen representative for the City of Los Angeles. Jimmy, cannot, however, be termed an *ordinary* citizen.

First of all, he's an entertainer who's often heard singing in the commission halls. Born into a family of entertainers, he's done it all: from playing the trumpet to singing, acting and dancing.

Secondly, he's had a variety of careers during his many years in Los Angeles. Long before he became a practicing attorney — who incidentally specializes in entertainment law — he was a cab driver, a bank teller, a playground director, a deputy probation officer and a publisher. Now, during the years most

"If you really care, you want to do it right."

people might consider retirement, Jimmy has been very busy as an LACTC commissioner. "It was a whole new world for me," he said.

"We are responsible for massive amounts of money (to fund transportation projects), and here I come along with what my daughter calls a 'depression mentality.' She has to remind me that bread no longer costs a nickel a loaf.

"But it's the commission's job to be fiscally responsible and fair," said Jimmy, "and we've worked hard to do just that."

Judy Hathaway-Francis



Judy joined the commission by virtue of her councilwoman status in the City of La Habra Heights. She was elected by the mayors of the 86 cities in Los Angeles County. She has personally represented LACTC at American Passenger Transport Association, and has lobbied in our behalf for Federal Surface Transportation Act Funds. Judy has moderated panels on federal and state air quality mandates, and she's often asked to address the Association of Local Transit Agencies and other organizations affected by the commission's policies and programs. She's also chairwoman for the Mobile Source Air Pollution Reduction Review Committee.

Judy has been a dedicated commissioner, who has helped to set many transportation policies and funding for mobility solutions in Los Angeles County. She was instrumental in the proposal and planning stages of the new MTA, and has worked hard for its legislative implementation.

"It's been a fabulous experience," said Judy Hathaway-Francis of her two years on the LACTC. ♦

We've Come a Long Way from Prop. A

By Seth Walsh

Looking Back: *It's instinctive to look back when things are about to change. As the new organization begins to take shape, it's a perfect time to reflect on the commission's early days.*

Kathy Torigoe
Executive Secretary to the Commission

Whenever I hear her name, someone will say, "She been here longer than anyone." When Kathy was the first commission employee hired in 1977, the office consisted of only two rooms. She was both the commission's executive secretary and secretary to the first interim executive director, Robert Anderson.



"When I first started, the executive director used to help me collate the agenda for commission meetings," Kathy went on.

"We all had to run even the most simple of

errands — from buying supplies to picking up our pay checks, the commission's rent check and expense money at the Hall of Administration. I personally had to set up PERS and our medical coverage. There simply was no one else to do it," she said.

Kathy is responsible for commission agendas and attends every commission meeting. "When we first started, the agenda packets were only about a quarter-inch thick. Now they can be three inches or more. The minutes alone can be 27 pages long," she explained.

"I've worked for five executive directors, including the interim director. I may retire in another five or six years, but for now, things promise to be very interesting, and I don't want to miss it," she said. "The new board will be larger and I'm looking forward to whatever my job holds. One thing for sure, it's never been boring around here, and I don't expect *that* to change!"

Larry Gallagher
Graphic Artist

True to his calling as a commission employee, Larry Gallagher likes to take the bus to work, and he doesn't have a driver's license. "It's a lot less stressful," he said.



Larry likes to be calm when he arrives for work in the Graphics Department where he must come up with good, creative ideas. One such idea came to Larry not too long after he started working here, nearly 12 years ago.

"Erica Goebel and I were working on a poster for the first new rail line, which at that time had not yet been named; in fact, the final

Blue, being my favorite color, I said, off the top of my head, 'Let's call it the Blue Line.' Everyone seemed to like it, and the name just stuck. It's a good thing I didn't say the pink line!"

of my head, 'Let's call it the Blue Line.' Everyone seemed to like it, and the name just stuck. It's a good thing I didn't say the pink line!"

"I'm very close to the Blue Line," Larry added. "That's my baby. I get a great deal of pride out of watching that thing go. I've ridden it many times."

On moving forward to become the MTA, Larry had this to say: "I hope we'll be able to keep the team spirit and the communication lines open. You can never get back the past, but we can all continue to pull in the same direction."

Geri Brodie
Lead Receptionist

Geri Brodie has been here since 1978. There were only 13 employees when she was hired. As the gregarious and outspoken Miz Brodie herself will testify, "Everybody knows Geri Brodie!"



"When I started at the agency, we were located in the heart of downtown, surrounded by the Garment District. Jerry Brown was Governor, Jimmy Carter was President and Amy Carter was in public school."

Geri began as secretary to Linda Bohlinger in the Highways and Freeways Department. She's seen many changes since then. "Change is inevitable," said Geri, pragmatically. "I look forward to the MTA and working for one of the largest transit agencies — and the largest public works project, — in the country. It will be a challenge."

With a look of confidence, she adds, "In yet another transformation in the life of the commission, we can take comfort in knowing that some things will never change." (Miz Brodie, we think, was referring to herself.)

As you can see, some of our staff have been around long enough to experience many changes. Their stories have added the perspective — change is a natural and positive experience.

SHAPING UP WITH BENEFITS

by David Miller

Tax-Deferred Compensation

It's always a good time to plan for your future retirement. At the LACTC, you can direct a portion of your pre-tax, gross wages into a tax-deferred account until you are ready to retire. This is commonly referred to as tax-deferred compensation.

These amounts are an approved IRS method for deferring federal and state taxes on savings until retirement. The commission allows all probationary, regular, and acting employees to participate.

Amount Allowed

The guidelines established by the IRS allows us to defer a maximum of \$7,500 or 25% of pay, whichever is less. Payroll deduction makes it convenient. Even at \$10 per pay period, by the end of the year you have deferred \$260 plus any interest earned. Don't forget that these are pre-tax dollars and affect your total paycheck less than their face value.

You Control Investments

You can elect the percentage of your deferrals to be allocated between seven different investment funds provided by the ICMA Retirement Corporation. Each fund has a different level of risk and investment return. Changes can be made every three months in your allocation of future contributions or transfer existing balances among the seven funds. Benefits Administration has several publications describing each fund and its history of investment returns.

Borrowing and Taxes

There are severe restrictions on withdrawals. Only in the event of unforeseen emergencies and as a last resort are certain withdrawals allowed. Taxes must be paid on the savings and earnings whenever the funds are withdrawn.

Call for Forms or Questions

You can start deferring as soon as you complete and return an enrollment form to Benefits Administration. If you have questions regarding our deferred compensation program, please contact David Miller, Extension 6888 or Sue Napolitano, Extension 6545. ICMA Retirement Corporation also provides client assistance through its toll free number, (800) 669-7400.

■ **PEACE Fund Helps Educate Kids**

To help build a better city, a group of employees have formed a branch of Rebuild L.A. Calling themselves the Public Employees Acting for Community Enrichment (PEACE) Fund, the group's initial plan is to establish a scholarship program for economically disadvantaged students.

"We want to encourage Los Angeles area youth to enter into transportation and transportation-related fields of study," said Keica Washington, vice chair of the organization. "These fields include engineering, planning, public affairs, or computer science. Scholarships are not limited to colleges, but can be used for vocational studies too," she added.

Employees can join the group simply by contributing to the scholarship fund, either directly or through a payroll deduction. About 60 people have donated so far, and as of this writing over \$500 had been received; another \$500 has been pledged by employees in the form of payroll deductions. By-Laws have been written and the following officers have been elected.



*l to r
PEACE Chairman,
Carlos Rodriguez, Vice Chair, Keica
Washington, Treasurer, Sudhir Agrawal, and
Secretary-Treasurer Khymberl Apaloo.*



"We have 30 years to build the Metro System," said Peace Fund Chairman Carlos Rodriguez.

"Now is the time to cultivate the future workforce to help us complete the plan."

For more information, contact Kecia Washington at Extension 6752.

■ **Black History Month**

A new employee group called the African-American Employees Association has been recently formed. The group held weekly celebrations during February, which was Black History Month. If you want



African Drummers & Dancers at one of the Black History Month events. Note the drummer to the far right — none other than employee Tony Martin of Contract Compliance!

to get involved, call either Claudette Moody at Extension 6525, or Carol Martin at Extension 6728.

■ **Take Heart:** February was American Heart Month. If the results of the latest cholesterol and blood pressure screening can be used as a gauge for LACTC, we're in GREAT health! Of the 150 employees who participated in the Wellness Program screening in February, 75% exceeded the category for "desired risk" based on age and gender for both blood pressure and cholesterol tests. ❖



by Linda Riemer

The EIP Steering Committee met in January to review and vote on the best of 1992's implemented suggestions. The following employees are commended for their outstanding suggestions:

Jane Matsumoto for her van escort idea that reinforces the premise that people are our greatest resource. At least 12 people use this service on a daily basis ensuring safety from the workplace to their parking lots or bus or transit stops.

Rich Underwood for helping to reduce LACTC's monthly parking expense. Rich provided Bob Lewis and Joe Jones with quality research that was used to negotiate lower parking rates with our landlord.

Josee Larochelle encouraged use of the poster printer machine which saves approximately \$90 per poster made. Josee marketed and held training classes for staff. This has reduced costs up to \$45,000 per year.

Marylou Williams needed formal documentation of approved agenda items before her work could be processed. Now, following a board meeting, an agenda is posted showing the action taken. The agendas are distributed to those requesting them, and they are also on file in binders on the fifth, sixth, and 11th floors. The new system reduces the cost of staff time in searching for agenda actions after board meetings.

Also honored are **Al Griesbach, Roger Dames, Cindy Kondo-Lowe** and **Tamiko Hirano** for their individual suggestions to issue organizational information (working titles, area of responsibility, emergency numbers) in a user friendly format. The new format will be used for a new internal telephone directory.

Congratulations to all winners! Call Linda Riemer at Extension 7180 for an EIP form or an update on your suggestions.



Personal Best

◆ **Desiree Portillo-Rabinov** is a project manager for the San Fernando Valley Area Team by day, but after hours she's actively involved in a not-for-profit, grass-roots organization — the National Commission on Mexican Women, or Comision Femenil Mexicana Nacional — which is dedicated to improving the life of Latinas (Mexican women). In fact, she's the national president of the organization, which has 25 chapters.

"We don't try to isolate Mexican or Latin women, but we try instead to help women in general, any age," said Desiree.

The organization helps women by petitioning governmental bodies for legislative change, by organizing and promoting women to assume leadership roles in the private sector, and by providing health care, child-development and employment

information. Local branches respond to specific community needs, such as job training, scholarships for education, mentor programs, and housing for teens at risk and adult single mothers.

If you'd like to find out more about this organization, or if you'd like a membership application, you can contact Desiree Portillo-Rabinov at Extension 6448. The CFMN (Comision Femenil Mexicana Nacional) can also be reached at (213) 484-1515 or (818) 401-1737.



◆ **Phyllis Meng** in the Facilities Department made a presentation at the annual conference of California Public Purchasing Officers (CAPPO) last month in Sacramento. Her remarks on

Please see Personal Best on page 6

◆ A.P.P.L.A.U.S.E. ◆

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARDS

The following employees have recently been recognized for their outstanding work:



JANUARY'S EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH
THE FACILITIES SUPPORT GROUP.

The Facilities Support Group. From left: Art Holiday, Oscar Anguino, Von Barnes, Gilbert Longino, Vince Moreno, Steve Ford, Brian Adams, Rene Robles, and Raynard Price. Executive director, Neil Peterson, stands at the crew's right, and Bob Lewis, director of administrative services, proudly displays the group's award. Robert "Metro Man" Ramos was not available for the photo.

Nominated by their coordinator, Raynard Price, the Facilities

Support Group has the type of "can do" spirit that we're familiar with. The group is dependable and has an amiable customer-service approach that goes beyond the call of duty.

The list of their support activities is impressive. On any given day they: set up or maintain about 58 conference rooms; run the daily shipping and receiving operations; process more than 1,500 pieces of mail, including labeling and stuffing mass mailing projects, and make late evening runs to the main post office. On holidays, they're the last to leave the building and are called in to work on weekends to handle building-related issues. They're also instrumental in the success of the new shuttle service, they make sure the fleet of vehicles is always clean and ready to go — and much, much more!

Never in the limelight, but always there, the Facilities Support Group is indeed the backbone of the commission. Its members are model employees who exemplify the meaning of teamwork. Well done!

FEBRUARY EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

PAT MCLAUGHLIN

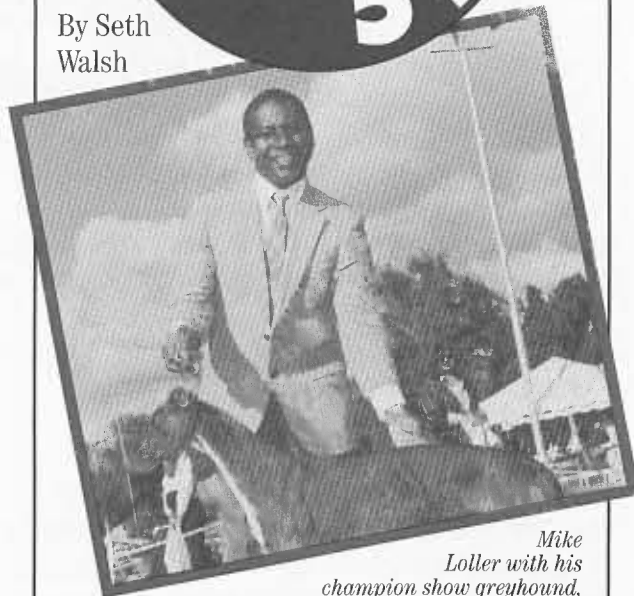
Pat McLaughlin, Director of the San Fernando Valley Area Team, was named as the recipient of February's Employee of the Month.

The Awards Committee selected Pat for her outstanding contributions during her 12 years with the commission. In addition to her regular work, Pat has played an integral role in helping the agency through its organizational transition. Pat currently serves on the MTA merger staff committee, along with other volunteer staff, making recommendations to the MTA steering committee.

Bob Minahan, SCRRA Project Manager, submitted Pat's nomination. "Pat is an excellent example of a dedicated public servant with attributes that we all could emulate," said Bob.



By Seth Walsh



Mike Loller with his champion show greyhound, Clipsy, short for Eclipse of the Heart.

Mike Loller

RCC, Third Party Coordination/Route Facilities

Mike Loller's life goes to the dogs after 5 every day. His after-work passion is breeding champion show dogs. "In the show dog world, we call ourselves 'show bugs,'" said Mike. "Once the bug bites you and you show your first dog, before you know it, you own three, four, five dogs. Right now I own seven dogs, and I co-own another 15." Mike has been breeding dogs for about 10 years, inheriting the enthusiasm from his parents. He breeds his own dogs in the hope of getting future champions. "I show bull mastiffs, which were first bred about a 100 years ago and are a cross between a bulldog and a mastiff.

Originally they were used to guard English estates, and they're still fairly rare in this country. I also breed champion show greyhounds — not the racing greyhounds you're familiar with." Far removed from the greyhound family, Mike also breeds French bulldogs, which are also very rare, and Irish terriers. "Mike's hobby requires slightly more time, money, enthusiasm and care than simply taking Fido for a walk. Show-entry fees are expensive, and a professional handler is usually hired. "My kennel has air-conditioning and heating. The dogs are on a special diet of food that can only be bought at a pet or a feed store. I buy 150 pounds of dog food a month. Grooming expenses can get expensive, too," he said. "Mike usually spends three or four hours a day with his dogs, plus half a day on weekends. "I generally leave a couple loose in the yard so they have some freedom. I don't let them all run at the same time, unless I'm home. It's no problem. The dogs know my schedule."

For more information on training dogs, Mike suggests these books: *The Art of Training Your Dog*, by Matthew Margolis and *Understanding Your Dog, The Right Dog for You*, by D.F. Morton, Ph.D.

What's on Your Mind

continued from page 2

the same time as the Mercer classification and compensation study. In the meantime, there are no changes in LACTC's health and pension programs.

Q: Where will Franklin White's office be?

A: For the time being, he plans to maintain an office at both LACTC and SCRTRD.

Personal Best

continued from page 5

"Privatizing Copy Services or Reprographics Facilities Management" was based on LACTC's contract with Pitney Bowes for reprographics, copiers and related services. Due to popular demand following her presentation, she was asked to present it a second time. All in all, she spoke before about a 100.

As if that wasn't enough, Phyllis also wrote an article called "What is an Emergency Plan? Why Do We Need One?" that was published in the January/February issue of *Facility Management Journal*. The magazine is a glossy, international publication directed to members of the International Facility Management Association, with a circulation of 12,000. Phyllis will also have an article in their next issue about out sourcing reprographic services. Phyllis is certainly representing LACTC in the facilities management world!

◆ **Jerry Kiper**, RCC contract administrator and PERC team coordinator for the RCC Contracts Department recently spoke to the Western Council of Construction Engineering. He detailed the PERC Program and explained how it can foster continuous improvement in an engineering environment. ■

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