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## Annual Bus Decorating Contest Brings No Snow But Plenty of Christmas Spirit To MTA

**By Gary Wosk**

(Dec. 17) The spirit of Christmas roared into MTA headquarters today as a procession of Metro Buses colorfully adorned by MTA operating divisions and students arrived at the Patsaouras Transit Plaza to compete in the annual Christmas bus decorating contest.



Onlookers, including MTA staff, their children and the public admired the kaleidoscopic landscape, but looking a bit more serious were the judges who remained at the ready with clipboards and pens in hand to critique each bus and declare winners in three categories: elementary, middle and high school.

**Parents, not reindeer, arranged transportation for Division 6 Elves.**

First place honors in the high school category went to the "Christmas Bus," decorated by students from Chatsworth High School with an assist from Canoga Park Elementary School and personnel from Division 8. Arts Institute of Santa Monica, assisted by Division 6, took top honors in the middle school category. First place in the elementary school category went to Pio Pico Elementary School of Los Angeles which was assisted by Division 5.

"The decorated buses are a symbol of the dedication of MTA staff and our connection with the people we transport," said Tom Conner, executive officer for operations. "This is our way of passing the spirit of the holiday season throughout the communities we serve."

A total of 11 divisions and 10 schools participated in the bus

decorating contest. Following the contest, the Christmas decorated buses went back into regular service accompanied by cheerful staff dressed in festive holiday outfits and supplied with an ample supply of candy to pass out to boarding passengers.

"The bottom line is that it's fun, healthy competition," said MTA Community Relations Project Manager Bill Gay, coordinator of the Christmas and Halloween bus decorating contests. "It gives our employees a chance to share their talents. It's great to see all of our employees in a festive mood. This is a positive atmosphere for them."

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