



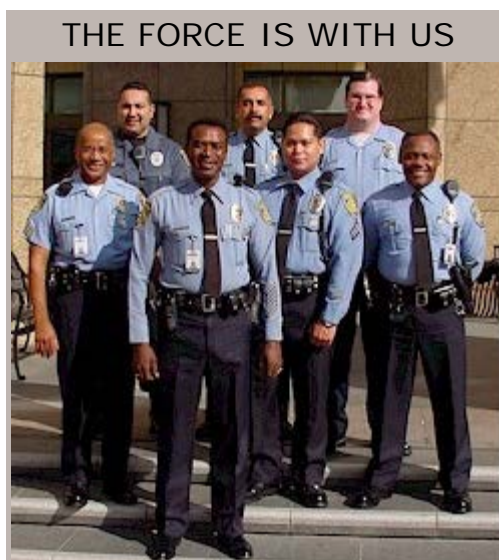
Transit Security Lt. James Henry at entrance where incident involving injured picketer began.

MTA Board to Commend Transit Security Officer's Pursuit of Justice

By GAYLE ANDERSON, Associate Editor

(Oct. 25) Despite the 12-hour days that stretched into a full month, strike duty for MTA Transit Security Lt. James Henry had become almost routine until the day a motorist lost her cool and lurched into a picket line at Gateway Plaza, taking a strike captain for a short ride atop the hood of her careening vehicle. ([See metro.net report Oct. 16](#))

The MTA Board of Directors will officially commend Lt. Henry Thursday for actions that led to the arrest of the irate motorist on Oct. 16, but the veteran security officer says his kudos go directly to the entire security force. "I just happened to be in the right place at the right time and I was lucky to a part of that team."



TEAM ONE - Lt. James Henry, foreground, is flanked by Transit Security Officers, clockwise from left, Sgt. Herbert Vaughn, Rene

The incident report reads like a play-by-play account of a championship basketball game. Sr. Security Officer Luis Medrano was at the Vignes gate used for employee entrance to Gateway Headquarters when the motorist, already exhibiting signs of impatience with the picketers, first entered the building. Next up was Sr. Security Officer Rene Lopez at the scene of the exit, when the motorist jolted her car towards the picket line despite the warnings of Officer Lopez.

When the car crossed the picket line and headed for the freeway, Lt. Henry, who had been observing the scene from the sidelines in the Vignes turn

Lopez, Luis Medrano, Marv Jenkins, J French, and Rodel Pareja.



ON SITE-Sr. Security Officers Rene Lopez and Luis Medrano at the gate, above, and security officers Marv Jenkins, Rodel Pareja and J French at the controls.



lane, followed the motorist onto the freeway and proceeded to radio location and vehicle identification back to security officers Rodel Pareja, Marv Jenkins and J French in the Control Center. Information passed through the radio manned by Pareja to French to Jenkins, who relayed Henry's location to LAPD by telephone: "Lincoln 10 (Lt. Henry) is southbound on the 110."

The three dispatchers shot information from EOC and LAPD back to Lt. Henry on the freeway. French, a secondary dispatcher who had alerted EOC and transit staff, monitored the information making sure no details turned up missing later. "We're a lifeline to the officer that's on the road – we have to make sure that he's taken care of, follow him along his route and make sure we're continuing with his location and get LAPD there to back him," explained French.

Lt. Henry maintained the location of the vehicle through two short freeway rides and heavy traffic all the way to the finish line on a side street, where the motorist pulled over and awaited arrest by an LAPD motorcycle officer.

"Lt. Henry is a first-rate officer, and a prime representative of an incredible group," said Paul Lennon, safety and security chief. "We're very proud of our MTA security team."

The year 2000 has been a very busy, working year for the 108-member MTA security force, said Lt. Henry, who lists Y2K, Segment 3, the Democratic National Convention and the work stoppage among the challenges that converged to make the year 2000 the most action-packed era of his 30-year career.

The next challenge for Lt. Henry, at least in the immediate future, is likely to be a vacation on the slopes instead of a dogged pursuit on the freeway. It looks like things in Security may have calmed down just in time for ski season.

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