

Metro Report Archives

MAY 2001

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MTA Report

MTA-Funded [Carpool Lane](#) to Open, May 2, Along I-605

Freeway (May 2, 2001) The MTA, in partnership with Caltrans, will open a new southbound carpool lane along the San Gabriel River Freeway (I-605), today, between South Street and the Los Angeles County/Orange County line.

[Operator Gutierrez](#) in Fair Condition Following Hijacking; 3

Passengers Injured; Dead Woman Identified (May 3, 2001) Emma Gutierrez, the Division 3 operator whose bus was hijacked in the Westlake District, Wednesday, was reported in fair condition, today, at County-USC Hospital.

MTA to Receive [Governor's Certificate](#) for Employer Excellence

(May 7, 2001) The MTA's special efforts to hire military veterans have placed the agency among a select few employers this year that will receive the Governor's Certificate for Employer Excellence.

[MTA Engineering](#) Completes First CNG Public/Private

Partnership Project at Three Bus Divisions (May 8, 2001) The MTA recently completed the third of three CNG bus-fueling facilities as part of a \$35 million first-of-a-kind public/private partnership with Trillium USA, Inc.

[An Ordinary Day](#), Until Cops Busted Them for Picking Pockets

(May 8, 2001) After a leisurely breakfast at Clifton's Cafeteria, April 27, three women and their male companion set off for work. They boarded a Metro Bus on Spring Street. It was just another day on the job – picking pockets.

MTA Submits [Petition to CPUC](#) Seeking Power Outage

Exemption (May 9, 2001) Metro Rail lines should be exempt from rotating power outages, the MTA has told the California Public Utilities Commission in a formal petition signed by CEO Julian Burke.

[New Signs](#), Cameras Reducing Accidents, Illegal Crossings on

Metro Blue Line (May 9, 2001) Between July 1990 and December 2000, Metro Blue Line trains were involved in 157 accidents at 19 intersections in Los Angeles – about 15 accidents a year.

MTA Highly Productive in [Third Quarter](#), Lipsky Reports

(May 10, 2001) In the January to March period, the MTA "accomplished as much as this agency has ever accomplished in a quarter," Chief Operating Officer Allan Lipsky said, Tuesday, following the third quarter review of agency achievements and challenges.

MTA to Guarantee 20-Day Delivery of [Student ID Cards](#)

(May 11, 2001) Beginning June 1, the MTA will guarantee delivery of Metro System identification cards within 20 days to kindergarten through 12th grade students.

[Overpass Construction](#) to Close Southbound I-101 Traffic at

Universal City (May 11, 2001) The southbound lanes of the Hollywood

Freeway (I-101) will be closed for about eight hours early Sunday, May 13, while construction crews erect steel girders to support a new overpass adjacent to the Metro Red Line's Universal City station.

[MTA FY 02 Budget](#) Holds the Line, Despite Higher Fuel, Other Costs (May 14, 2001) The MTA will fund a record amount of bus service in Los Angeles County under a proposed \$2.724 billion budget for the fiscal year that starts July 1, 2001.

[MTA's Project Management Software Proves its Value](#) (May 15, 2001) In 1991, MTA analysts developed a unique computer program to help manage the progress and control the cost of Metro Rail construction projects. The agency recently closed a \$225,000 deal to sell the source code marketing rights for the now upgraded system to an East Coast construction management firm.

[MTA Releases Draft Environmental Report On Proposed San Fernando Valley East-West Busway](#) (May 15, 2001) The MTA has released a draft environmental study of a proposed 14-mile Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) busway that would speed the travel of thousands of commuters between the Warner Center Transit Hub in the west San Fernando Valley and the Metro Red Line subway station in North Hollywood.

[Subway Ridership Marks Record as Gas Prices Spiral](#) (May 16, 2001) Spiraling gas prices helped boost ridership on Metro Buses and Metro Rail in April. Ridership on the Metro Red Line subway is at an all-time high and the subway is carrying nearly twice as many riders as it did a year ago.

MTA's New [Purchasing Card](#) Will Make Buying Small Items Easier, Quicker (May 17, 2001) Need a dozen ballpoint pens? A 3/16th-inch box wrench or a fluorescent light tube? But, you really don't want to requisition such a small item?

UPDATE [FY 2002 Budget](#), Eastside Light Rail, Wilshire/Western Development on May Committee Agendas (May 15, 2001) The MTA's budget for Fiscal Year 2002, the Eastside Light-Rail Transit Project and a proposed development at the Metro Red Line's Wilshire/Western station are among items on Board committee agendas for May.

UPDATE [Polanco Bill](#) Would Strip MTA of Control over Ad Displays (May 17, 2001) The MTA could be stripped of the right to control billboards and other advertising displays placed on its buildings and property under a bill now pending before the California Senate's Appropriations Committee.

Mexican Official Dedicates [Decorative Benches](#) for Mariachi Plaza (May 18, 2001) A top Mexican official today dedicated 17 decorative wrought-iron benches donated by the State of Jalisco during a ceremony hosted by the MTA at Mariachi Plaza in East Los Angeles.

[EDITOR'S NOTE:](#) (May 22, 2001) A story in the Los Angeles *Times*, Tuesday, claims that the MTA has asked the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals to "set aside a consent decree requiring them to improve bus service...." The MTA released a Consent Decree Statement on Monday, May 21.

MTA to Expand [Rideshare Incentive](#) Programs in LA County (May 23, 2001) Two successful MTA rideshare programs – Rideshare Rewards and Club Metro – will now be offered in all areas of Los Angeles County.

MTA [FY 02 Budget](#) Holds the Line, Despite Higher Fuel, Other

Costs (May 24, 2001) The MTA will fund a record amount of bus service in Los Angeles County as part of the \$2.724 billion budget adopted by the Board, Thursday, for the fiscal year that starts July 1, 2001.

[Board Elects John Fasana](#) 1st Vice Chair, Approves L RTP, Metro Rapid System (May 24, 2001) The MTA Board elected John Fasana of Duarte as its new 1st Vice Chair, Thursday, a vote that anticipates his election as Board chair in the next fiscal year. The Board also voted to change the chair's term back to one year from the current two years.

MTA Board Gives [Green Light](#) to Eastside Light-Rail Project (May 24, 2001) The MTA Board adopted a 6-mile, \$760-million light-rail project, Thursday, as the "locally preferred alternative" for LA's Eastside.

MTA '[Family Photo Album](#)' Shows Face of Public Transit (May 30, 2001) Everyone likes to look at photo albums. And now, the MTA is offering its "Family Photo Album" on the new Internet "Stakeholders" page at www.mta.net.

[MTA Introduces](#) New Metro Bus Line 340; Minor Route, Schedule Changes Set June 3 (May 31, 2001) The MTA will introduce Metro Bus Line 340 (Hawthorne Boulevard Limited) and extend Line 107 (54th Street-Fairview Boulevard-Santa Ana Street) as well as make other minor route and schedule changes effective Sunday, June 3.

Bulletin Board

- **[Annual Rail Rodeo: Who Will Represent MTA at Boston Finals?](#)** (May 2, 2001) Twenty Metro Rail operators will go head-to-head in the 5th annual MTA Rail Rodeo at Division 20, this Saturday, to determine who will represent the agency at the national finals in Boston, June 6-11.
- **Goodie Bags! [Register](#) for Bike to Work Day.**
- **[Human Resources Cautions: Keep Your TOWP Account Growing](#)** (May 3, 2001) If you're a non-contract or AFSCME employee, you'd better get with it between now and July 1, Human Resources cautions, or you'll stop accruing TOWP hours.
- **[Air National Guard](#) Thanks MTA for Supporting Garavito's Participation**
- **[How You Doin'?](#) Top Shops Claim Quarterly Awards**
- **[Redesign of Log-In Page](#) Will Make Intranet Home Access Easier** (May 21, 2001) Accessing the MTA Intranet from home or any remote location is going to be quicker and easier, thanks to a new log-in procedure that goes into effect Thursday, May 24.
- **MTA Mosaic [On Tour with Public Affairs](#)**
- Despite Cold Weather, [650 Applicants](#) Attend MTA Job Fair
- Senior Communications Officer Helen Ortiz and TOS Jorge Galvan were awarded [Certificates of Appreciation](#) from the Mayor's office.
- **[60 Employees](#) Pedal in on 'Bike to Work Day'** (May 17, 2001) From Pasadena they came. From Santa Monica, the Westside and

the Valley. Pedaling their way to MTA Headquarters or the operating divisions on "Bike to Work Day."

- **Richard Bonino has been named the Procurement Department's ["Buyer of the Quarter"](#)** for his commitment and dedication to providing outstanding service to his customers.
- **Division 9 was selected as the outstanding ["Storeroom of the Quarter."](#)** In addition to maintaining a 99 percent service rate during this period, this location has made great improvements to the overall organization of the storeroom.
- **U.S. Department Of Transportation Recognizes TCAP As A [National Model](#)** (May 11, 2001) The MTA's Transportation Careers Academy Program (TCAP) has once again been cited as a national model for preparing future workers for the transportation industry's fast-emerging careers.
- **[Transit Ops' Poster](#) Offers Traffic Tips During Rolling Blackouts** (May 8, 2001) Monday's rolling blackout was an effective reminder that the months ahead will be trying ones for homeowners – and for motorists who may have to navigate city streets without the aid of traffic signals.
- **[MTA's Phan, Rodriguez](#) to Compete in Rail Rodeo's Boston Finals** (May 7, 2001) The MTA will field its most experienced team in years, June 6-11, at the Rail Rodeo national finals in Boston. Two Metro Red Line operators – veterans of previous national events – emerged the clear victors at the MTA's Rail Rodeo on Saturday.
- **TICKETS ON SALE: [UTU Dinner Dance](#) and Show Set for Saturday, June 2**
- Human Resources Work/Life Education Program Offers [Sessions with Personal Trainer](#)
- **['How You Doin'?](#)** Program Division 1, Division 6, Metro Red Line Take April Honors.
- Funeral Services for [Sal Gatdula](#) Set Saturday in Downey
- Friends Ask [TOWP Donations](#) for Dotti Kesinger during Cancer Treatment
- **[Glamour and Romance](#)** Roll into LA Aboard the American Orient Express (May 29, 2001) The glamour and romance of a bygone era of rail travel arrived in Los Angeles, Friday, when the American Orient Express – featuring historic cars from the 1940s and '50s – rolled into Union Station.

Storeroom of the Quarter



Pictured are,
from left,
Stock Clerks
David Arellano,
Rudy
Melendrez,
Materiel
Supervisor
Angel Noriega,
Stock Clerk
Tom
Machinski, and
Storekeeper
Ernie de la
Rosa .

Division 9 was selected as the outstanding Storeroom of the Quarter, January-March. In addition to maintaining a 99 percent service rate during this period, this location has made great improvements to the overall organization of the storeroom. Led by Storekeeper **Ernie de la Rosa**, Division 9 storeroom was the most improved organized location during this period. Supported by a combined 40 years experience of Stock Clerks **David Arellano, Tom Machinski** and **Rudy Melendez**, each person contributed to the success and improvement of the storeroom. Although the storeroom at Division 9 is one of the smaller storerooms in the system, they manage to support a fleet of eight different bus types. Division 9 Maintenance Manager John McBryan said the storeroom is doing a fantastic job!

-- Submitted by Jim Montoya.

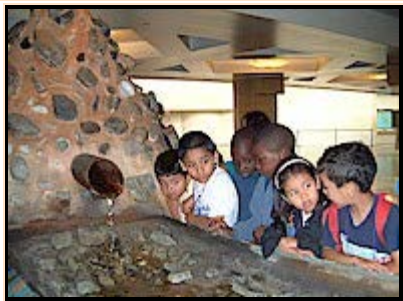
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MTA Mosaic



- **Public Affairs Events, Tours Combine Fun and Safety**

More than 3000 residents and participants, including this young visitor, at right, visited the MTA train safety booth during the **Children's Hospital Street Festival** at the intersection of Vermont Avenue and Sunset Boulevard, last Saturday and Sunday, May 19 and 20.



- TEXT AND PHOTOS BY RICH MORALLO

Students from **Grant Elementary School**, above, and **Carpenter Elementary School**, right, visited the Metro Red Line subway recently to learn about Metro Art, and the safety and security features of Metro Rail.



Los Angeles Unified School District staff members, left, including the planning teams assigned to construct new school buildings for the district, visited the North Hollywood Station on Thursday, May 17.

Day care visitors to the annual health and safety fair at the **Pueblo del Rio Housing Development**, located near the Slauson Metro Blue Line Station, visited the MTA booth on Wednesday, May 16, and

learned about the "Look, Listen and Live" train safety slogan.



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It was a cloudy, cold day, but hundreds of applicants attended a recent Job Fair at the MTA's Regional Rebuild Facility. PHOTO BY JIM PACHAN

Despite Cold Weather, 650 Applicants Attend MTA Job Fair

By EDWARD FENTON

(May 18, 2001) More than 650 people visited the MTA's most recent Job Fair, April 28, to inquire about positions as bus operator, service attendant and mechanic "c" positions.

Even though it was a very cold and cloudy day, a line of prospective applicants was waiting outside the Regional Rebuild Center even before the event began.

Members of the Human Resources Employment Section, along with Maintenance and Operations personnel, offered assistance to the candidates by giving instructions on how to properly fill out employment applications.

Facilities Maintenance employees helped set up tents in the RRC parking lot to accommodate the event. Transit Security also assisted with crowd control.

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Shown following presentation of awards are (from left) Elizabeth Bennett, MSgt. Richard Maxted, Norman Ward, Manuel Garavito, Capt. Robert Garcia and Joe Giba.
PHOTO BY BILL HEARD

Air National Guard Thanks MTA for Supporting Garavito's Participation

(May 1, 2001) Whenever Manuel Garavito, an MTA communications technician and a sergeant in the Air National Guard, goes on a lengthy deployment, someone has to fill in for him at work.

In the past three years, Tech. Sgt. Garavito has spent a total of 105 days in Saudi Arabia providing radio communications for American forces stationed there. A 17-year veteran, he is a member of the 261st Combat Communications Squadron, based in Van Nuys.

His colleagues in the ITS communications shop at the Regional Rebuild Center – and especially his supervisor, Norman Ward – understand the importance of Garavito's military duty and they've covered shifts during his absence.

Last Wednesday, it was Garavito's turn to say "thank you." He arranged for the presentation of an "Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve" award by representatives of the Air National Guard.

Certificate and commemorative coin

Garavito's squadron commander, Capt. Robert Garcia, presented a certificate and special commemorative coin to Ward in appreciation for his support of Garavito's Air National Guard participation. Certificates and coins also were presented to Ward's supervisor, Systems Maintenance Manager Joe Giba and to Chief Information Officer Elizabeth Bennett.

"We understand that our members have civilian careers and cannot continue without their employer's support," Garcia told members of Garavito's department. "What they contribute to units like ours is the best of both worlds. They bring all their experience and skills from their civilian jobs to the military."

As it happens, Norman Ward is a former technical sergeant in the Air National Guard. He served from 1977 to 1984 in a job similar to Garavito's.

"I understand the importance of what Manuel does for the Air National Guard and how difficult it is to schedule that and have a full-time job," said Ward. "We do what we have to do to get our mission done here at the MTA. In this day and

time, without the draft, we need the Air National Guard and the Reserves even more than when I was in the military."

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- **SAVE THE DATE:**

UTU Dinner Dance and Show Set for Saturday, June 2

(May 1, 2001) The United Transportation Union has scheduled a dinner dance and show, Saturday, June 2, at the Millennium Biltmore Hotel in downtown LA.

The black tie event is priced at \$55 per person, \$100 per couple. Tickets may be purchased through MTA Employee Activities. No tickets will be sold at the door.

For more information about the dinner dance, you may contact:

- **Charles Square** at 626-962-9980,
- **Vic Robertson** at 562-988-5861,
- **Tim Del Cambre** at 626-793-4363,
- **Eddie Lopez** at 323-550-8220,
- **Arleen Mills** at 626-442-9313 or
- **Lorne Curry** at 323-756-7201.

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Annual Rail Roadeo

Who Will Represent MTA at Boston Finals?

(May 2, 2001) Twenty Metro Rail operators will go head-to-head in the 5th annual MTA Rail Roadeo at Division 20, this Saturday, to determine who will represent the agency at the national finals in Boston, June 6-11.

Beginning at just before sunrise and continuing throughout most of the day, Saturday, the operators will perform a 20-minute series of maneuvers that includes precision stopping and coupling and uncoupling. They'll also have a uniform inspection, perform a pre-departure inspection and take a test on rules and procedures.

Among the 20 contestants will be six light-rail operators who have been training to operate heavy-rail cars similar to those that will be used in the national event.

The first- and second-place operators will be the team that will represent the MTA in Boston. The winner of the MTA Rail Roadeo will receive a \$500 cash prize; second place will receive \$300 and third place, \$200.

Employees who want to watch the Rail Roadeo should stop at the guardhouse at the entrance to the Division 20 yard on Santa Fe Avenue near 3rd Street and ask for an escort to Yard Control.

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MTA Funded Carpool Lane To Open Along 605 Freeway May 2

By RICK JAGER

(May 2, 2001) The MTA, in partnership with Caltrans, will open a new southbound carpool lane along the San Gabriel River Freeway (I-605), today, between South Street and the Los Angeles County/Orange County line. [See Illustrative Map](#)

"The addition of the southbound carpool lane along this busy stretch of the 605 freeway will be welcome relief to commuters and will serve as even further encouragement for ride-sharing," said Supervisor Don Knabe, a member of the MTA Board.

The 3.3-mile addition, completely funded by the MTA, will provide congestion relief to the Gateway Cities and improve the air quality of the adjacent neighborhoods. The northbound segment of the carpool lanes opened April 20.

With the opening of the new segment, both the north- and south-bound I-605 carpool lanes will be operational between the Artesia (91) and the Garden Grove (22) freeways.

The project is part of the MTA's 400-mile High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) integrated system. It is designed to meet the needs of the local residents and improve the movement of goods throughout the region.

Approximately 3,000 vehicles per hour use carpool lanes during peak periods. It is one of the most efficient solutions to mitigate air pollution, avoid travel delays and alleviate traffic congestion. _

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MTA to Receive Governor's Certificate for Employer Excellence

(May 3, 2001) The MTA's special efforts to hire military veterans have placed the agency among a select few employers this year that will receive the Governor's Certificate for Employer Excellence.

During the past year, the MTA has conducted an aggressive veterans' outreach program that included extensive contacts with a number of veterans' organizations and community groups. The agency also participated in or co-hosted some 30 job fairs attended by veterans.

The certificate will be presented, May 16, at the annual Employer of the Year Awards and Recognition Breakfast at the Sheraton Universal Hotel in Universal City.

The MTA was nominated for the award by the El Monte Employment Development Department (EDD) office, which has worked closely with the agency in its effort to hire veterans for bus operator positions.

Attended veterans' events

Richard Percival, Human Resources analyst and project manager for bus operator recruitment, attended a number of veterans events and EDD job fairs, and made presentations before veterans organizations.

"Through our partnership with the EDD, they felt the MTA was going above and beyond what most companies do for veterans," said Percival. "Veterans are an excellent pool of talent because they have the training, teamwork and many of the traits that make good employees."

Veterans, male and female, are represented in all ranks of the MTA, from CEO to bus operator and maintenance employee. Human Resources conservatively estimates that almost 800 MTA employees are veterans. In 2000, the agency hired more than 73 veterans. At least nine more had been hired by March 12, 2001.

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PHOTO BY LUIS INZUNZA

The Division 3 Metro Bus was heavily damaged, but maintenance officials believe it can be repaired. On Thursday morning, the bus was still designated as an LAPD crime scene and was off-limits to MTA personnel.

Operator Gutierrez in Fair Condition Following Hijacking; 3 Passengers Injured; Dead Woman Identified

(May 3, 2001) Emma Gutierrez, the Division 3 operator whose bus was hijacked in the Westlake District, Wednesday, was reported in fair condition, today, at County-USC Hospital.

Gutierrez, 48, suffered a cut on her nose and other facial cuts and bruises during the incident, but a hospital spokesperson said she had no broken bones as had been reported. A 15-year veteran, Gutierrez joined the MTA in December 1985.

When MTA and UTU officials visited Gutierrez in her hospital room, Wednesday night, she was sedated and in pain, and was being comforted by family members.

Among her visitors were John Roberts, deputy executive officer, Bus Operations, Division 3 Manager Dan Frawley and UTU official Rick Ortega. Pam Engelke, manager of Occupation Health and Safety, and Dr. Arthur Henry, the MTA grief counselor, also visited.

'Want to see her healed'

"We told her not to worry and that we want to see her healed," said Roberts. "All the pieces were in place and everyone did a super job in attempting to minimize the impact of this tragedy on the family of Operator Gutierrez."

The Los Angeles Coroner's Office has identified the woman killed in the incident as Guadalupe Arevalos, 34, of Norwalk. Of the five passengers aboard the bus, a 51-year-old woman and a 27-year-old mother and her 4-year-old child were transported to area hospitals.

Police said the hijacking occurred at 4:15 p.m. on Olympic Boulevard as the eastbound Line 28 bus arrived at Witmer Street. Police said Carlos Garcia, 33, had just been involved in a shooting and attempted to escape by boarding the bus.

Holding a gun to the operator's head, the gunman forced her to drive east at high speeds. At some point, Garcia pulled Gutierrez from the driver's seat and took the wheel, himself, police said. He continued to hold the operator at gunpoint.

The bus turned north on San Pedro Street and, at the 4th Street intersection, collided with a minivan. It then struck a UPS truck and crashed into a row of cars in a parking lot. In all, 13 vehicles were damaged.

Garcia jumped out of the stopped bus and tried to hijack a car on nearby Boyd Street, but he was caught by pursuing officers and arrested. The suspect was booked for murder, kidnapping, assault with a deadly weapon and other charges at the Jail Ward of County-USC Hospital.

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Human Resources Cautions: Keep Your TOWP Account Growing

(May 3, 2001) You say 10 months have gone by and you haven't taken a vacation this fiscal year? You haven't used your 80 TOWP hours or your 64 holiday hours?

If you're a non-contract or AFSCME employee, you'd better get with it between now and July 1, Human Resources cautions, or you'll stop accruing TOWP hours.

TOWP hours are used for scheduled or unexpected time from work for vacation, illness, injuries, medical/dental appointments, religious holidays, personal business and emergencies.

Click to read: [MTA Policy HR 7-2](#) Check your most recent pay stub to see how many hours you've taken this year. MTA Policy HR 7-2 explains the mandatory use of TOWP hours, how they are accrued and how many days of TOWP employees accumulate each year.

Questions about accrual of TOWP hours may be directed to Bill Hesser of Payroll at 922-6844. For questions concerning the TOWP policy, call Aida Lagrimas at 922-7150.

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RAIL CHAMPS - MTA Rail Rodeo winners Tu Phan, left, and Robert Rodriguez, center, with RTOS Chris Medina, right, coach and instructor. In photos below, Bill Smiley, at right, performs a pre-departure inspection before operating the train. Jesse Valdez, center photo, checks to see how close he got to the target with his 10 mph precision stop. At left, Robert Rodriguez activates the switches during the car uncoupling event. PHOTOS BY BILL HEARD



See complete scores: [Rankings](#)

MTA's Phan, Rodriguez to Compete in Rail Roadeo's Boston Finals

(May 7, 2001) The MTA will field its most experienced team in years, June 6-11, at the Rail Roadeo national finals in Boston. Two Metro Red Line operators – veterans of previous national events – emerged the clear victors at the MTA's Rail Roadeo on Saturday.

Both Tu Phan, who scored 881 out of a possible 1,000 points, and Robert Rodriguez, a very close second with 872 points, have previously represented the agency at the national finals. Ramon Alvarez placed third with a score of 783.

For his first place showing, Phan won \$500; Rodriguez took home \$300 and Alvarez, \$200.

Phan, 37, who joined the MTA in 1986, won the local Rail Roadeo in 2000 and went to the national event in St. Louis.

Teams very professional

"At the national finals, the teams are very meticulous, very professional," says

Phan. "We'll have to work closely with each other to have any chance at all."

Rodriguez, 36, a 12-year veteran, won the local event in 1997 and 1999 and competed in the finals in San Diego and Washington, D.C.

"The national finals are very competitive," says Rodriguez. "The other properties send their best."

Rail TOS Chris Medina, 50, will accompany Phan and Rodriguez to Boston as coach and instructor.

"This is an excellent team with all the qualities a team needs," says Medina. "They work together well. They're technically proficient and extremely focused. Their intent is to win!"

15 competed Saturday

Fifteen Metro Rail operators participated in Saturday's local Rail Rodeo at the Metro Red Line yard. Each competitor was required to conduct a pre-departure inspection to spot hidden defects placed by event judges.

They also performed a coupling/uncoupling routine and piloted a train through a difficult yard course and then on a run to Union Station and back. In both events, operators had to bring the moving trains to a precision stop within inches of a saucer-sized target or lose valuable points.

Although he finished out of the money, Operator Bill Smiley found it worthwhile to enter the Rail Rodeo. A second-time competitor, he believes it is a valuable experience for any operator.

"You become aware of how to operate your train more smoothly and of the importance of the pre-departure inspection," he says. "I never operate a train – even an empty one – without a passenger in it, at least in my mind."

MTA Rail Rodeo Rankings May 5, 2001	
1. Tu Phan	881
2. Robert Rodriguez	872
3. Ramon Alvarez	783
4. Jesus Valdez	753
5. William Smiley	750
6. Monica George Tucker (tied)	729
6. Wilfredo De Los Angeles (tied)	729
7. Julio Chavez	728
8. Victor Valenzuela	712
9. Frank DeMascio	683
10. Marc Marcus	655
11. David Resendez	625
12. Kenny Wilkerson	592
13. Manjit Singh	579
14. Ruben Ramirez	564

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The three CNG fuel compressor units installed at Arthur Winston Division 5 include shielding to reduce noise. Identical units were placed at divisions 1 and 7.

MTA Engineering Completes First CNG Public/Private Partnership Project at Three Bus Divisions

By STEFANIE SPIKELL

(May 8, 2001) The MTA recently completed the third of three CNG bus-fueling facilities as part of a \$35 million first-of-a-kind public/private partnership with Trillium USA, Inc.

The achievement is impressive because it saved the MTA a capital outlay of \$13.5 million, increased the agency's CNG fueling capacity by 55 percent and put the new fueling stations in service perhaps a year sooner than the MTA could have on its own.

The new fueling systems were constructed at Metro Bus Division 1, at Arthur Winston Division 5 and at Division 7. Trillium will own and operate the equipment for 10 years. After that, the MTA may buy the equipment for \$1 or contract with Trillium to continue to operate the facilities.

The MTA recently issued a request for proposals for construction of CNG facilities at divisions 2, 6 and 9.

CNG buses were pioneered by the MTA more than 10 years ago in support of the Alternative Fuels Initiative sponsored by the Federal Transit Administration. Over the past five years, the MTA has increased its CNG fleet to more than 50 percent of its buses.

Forced to hasten construction

With the MTA's Accelerated Bus Procurement Plan committing the agency to buying 2,100 buses by 2004, the agency was forced also to accelerate installation of CNG fueling facilities. The partnership with Trillium USA was an innovative approach to rapid construction of the new facilities.

Warren Fu, Director of Facilities Engineering, says the partnership allowed the MTA to speed its construction process while lowering its costs.

"Trillium USA provided the finance, design, development, supply, construction, testing and maintenance of the new fueling facilities at our bus divisions," he says. "All facilities were completed ahead of schedule and with minimal disruption to MTA Operations."

This approach saved six to twelve months compared with the MTA's

conventional design-bid-build schedule.

'Served our need well'

"Trillium USA, a leader in CNG facility construction, served our need well while engaging their own company in a profitable venture," says Joel Sandberg, Deputy Executive Officer of Engineering.

"This is the kind of win-win situation the MTA is proud of. We have served the need of our public for faster turnaround on bus maintenance," he adds. "We have served our own need for cost-effective solutions and we have provided work for a company with specific technical expertise."

Trillium's CNG fueling systems have had no reported failures and have caused no service disruptions since they became operational.

The team that executed the three projects included Warren Fu, Engineering; Richard Hunt and Don Ott, Operations; Victor Ramirez, Procurement; and Mark Barton and Jan Hull from Trillium USA, Inc.
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An Ordinary Day... Until Cops Busted Them for Picking Pockets

By BILL HEARD, Editor
(May 8, 2001) After a leisurely breakfast at Clifton's Cafeteria, April 27, three women and their male companion set off for work. They boarded a Metro Bus on Spring Street. It was just another day on the job – picking pockets.

Just another day, except on this day the LAPD Transit Group's five-member Pickpocket Detail kept the group – all pros with a string of arrests for Grand Theft, Person – under close surveillance.

During a three-hour odyssey that had them boarding buses along Spring, Wilshire, Vermont, Adams, Olympic, Washington and Broadway, the undercover officers watched as the suspects wove a criminal ballet around their victims.

The pickpockets would surround an elderly woman and distract her attention. As team members shielded the action, officers reported, one member would quickly open the victim's purse and extract a wallet.

Didn't know they'd been robbed

The team's action was so practiced and smooth, says LAPD Sgt. Bruce Vermaat, officer in charge of the Pickpocket Detail, the victims didn't realize they had been robbed.

Eventually, the undercover officers were able to observe two successful thefts and two attempts. They arrested the alleged pickpockets when they exited a bus near Union Station. Officers recovered four victims' wallets and some \$42.

The suspects were jailed on \$200,000 bail and should come to trial within the next 10 days. Sgt. Vermaat credited officers Refugio Garza, Lorena Alcaraz, George Oto and Lori Tabares with the arrests. The team boards 300 to 400 buses a month.

In the past 18 months Pickpocket Detail officers have arrested 44 professional and "opportunistic" pickpockets on Metro Buses. Since April 1999, the team also has arrested 31 sexual predators encountered during their surveillance activities.

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LAPD TIPS: You can avoid becoming a pickpocket victim

Source: LAPD Transit Bureau's
Pickpocket Detail

- When boarding or exiting a bus or train, be aware of persons crowding or bumping into you.
- If possible, take a seat next to a window.
- Women should carry a purse that is secured with a zipper or snap. Hold the purse in front of you and clutch it to your chest. Don't let the purse hang from the strap at your side or behind you.
- Men should keep their wallets in a front pocket or an inside jacket pocket when traveling in a transit vehicle or in the midst of a crowd.
- Never remove large amounts of cash from your purse or wallet in public view. You could become a

pickpocket target.

- Account for all of your property before exiting a bus or train.
- Report any suspicious activity or persons to the bus operator. The operator will contact the LAPD.

Transit Ops' Poster Offers Traffic Tips During Rolling Blackouts

(May 8, 2001) Monday's rolling blackout was an effective reminder that the months ahead will be trying ones for homeowners – and for motorists who may have to navigate city streets without the aid of traffic signals.

In fact, a state official recently warned an audience that the state could experience as many as 34 days of rolling blackouts this year.

"Operators, this is a Code 1," shouts a poster now being placed at Metro Bus operating divisions. "Rolling blackouts affect traffic signals, too."

A large photo shows what appears to be a horrific traffic jam at the intersection of Cesar Chavez and Vignes streets.



The "traffic jam" shown on the poster never actually happens, but it could, warns John Roberts of Bus Operations, in a prolonged power outage.

Congestion could happen

Although it's a composite of five traffic photos, congestion like this could happen in a prolonged blackout, says John Roberts, deputy executive officer, Bus Operations.

"We're putting up the poster to make bus operators aware of the potential obstacles they face at intersections in the event of a power outage," he says.

The poster was the brainchild of Operations Control Superintendent Tom Jasmin and was created by Transit Operations Supervisors Carlos Baez and Ira Camp of the Office of Central Instruction.

It offers five tips to bus operators who may be caught at an intersection during a power outage. Every motorist also should heed these tips.

- **Treat** the intersection as a four-way stop.
- **Know** what you are getting into and where you are going.
- **Slow down** and approach the intersection with caution. Stop if other drivers insist on taking the right-of-way.
- **Show your intentions** by using the proper signals well in advance.
- **Proceed** when it is safe to do so. Look left, right and then left again before entering the intersection.

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MTA Submits Petition to CPUC Seeking Power Outage Exemption



(May 9, 2001) Metro Rail lines should be exempt from rotating power outages, the MTA has told the California Public Utilities Commission in a formal petition signed by CEO Julian Burke.

The MTA "will be significantly impacted in our ability to operate vital public transit service during rotating power outages," the petition stated. "In order to maintain, preserve and protect the safety of our passengers, employees and Los Angeles citizens...(the) MTA must be exempt...."

Southern California Edison, which provides electrical power to portions of the Metro Blue Line and Metro Green Line, notified the agency, April 11, that the MTA will be reclassified as a "non-essential customer."

The Metro Green Line experienced its first rolling blackout Tuesday afternoon. The outage affected the tracks between the western-most stations – Douglas/Rosecrans and Marine/Redondo – for about an hour.

The MTA Board voted April 26 to seek the power outage exemption. The California Transit Association (CTA) also is asking the CPUC to approve a blanket exemption for rail operators. The CPUC recently granted such exemptions to BART and the underground portions of the MUNI light-rail system in San Francisco.

Rail system at capacity

The petition notes that the MTA's "at-grade rail systems are packed to capacity...during rush hour, a prime time for rotating outages. With the increasing price of gasoline, MTA expects even further demand on its rail systems."

The CPUC staff currently is reviewing the MTA and CTA petitions. The Metro Red Line draws its power supply from DWP, and is not affected by Edison power outages.

In its petition, the MTA outlined eight safety hazards that could endanger Metro Rail passengers in a power outage. The MTA also raised the possibility that federal law "may prohibit imposition of rotating outages on these rail operations."

The petition cited federal regulations that override state or local rules or regulations that would affect the normal functioning of a (grade crossing warning) system...without first taking measures to provide for safety of highway traffic...."

The MTA's petition said evacuating passengers from stranded trains would be a key safety hazard in a power outage. Most evacuations would require the assistance of fire and police personnel who could be used elsewhere in a blackout.

The petition noted that crossing gates on the Metro Blue Line automatically come down and block traffic in a power outage. A Union Pacific train could hit an impatient motorist who drove around the lowered gates.

Power outages also could shut down some electronic communications equipment.

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As a Metro Blue Line approaches an intersection in downtown LA, all three rail safety signs are visible in this photo. The white signal, center, is for the train operator. The fiber optic sign warns of the train's approach, while the red arrow indicates a left turn is prohibited until the train passes. PHOTO BY LUIS INZUNZA

New Signs, Cameras Reducing Accidents, Illegal Crossings on Metro Blue Line

By BILL HEARD, Editor
(May 9, 2001) Between July 1990 and December 2000, Metro Blue Line trains were involved in 157 accidents at 19 intersections in Los Angeles – about 15 accidents a year.

For the first three months of 2001, there were no left-turn accidents at those intersections.

A second rail safety effort – the Metro Blue Line photo enforcement program – is credited with reducing by almost 50 percent the number of motorists violating rail crossings at 17 gated intersections along the 22-mile alignment.



Chart shows the number of motorists violating rail crossings (top line) trending downward since January 1998. Bottom line shows that the number of citations also has declined since photo enforcement cameras were installed at Metro Blue Line rail crossings.



Abdul Zohbi

Two changes in intersection signals have made the difference in reducing left-turn accidents at the 19 intersections where rail cars run at street level, says project manager Abdul Zohbi of Rail Operations Safety.

"Fifty percent of accidents involving the Metro Blue Line are caused by motorists making illegal left turns," says Zohbi. "The new signs are intended to increase the awareness of trains and prevent illegal or inadvertent left turns."

Silhouette of a train

The most noticeable feature at the 19 intersections these days is a large fiber optic sign that shows the silhouette of a train. It blinks to alert motorists when a train is approaching the intersection.

The MTA also reconfigured the railway signals that motorists sometimes mistook for left-turn indicators. Now located out of the motorists' line of

sight are three new signals.

Designed as vertical, diagonal or horizontal white bars, they tell a train operator whether to proceed, slow or stop at the intersection, but are meaningless to motorists. They take the place of the red, yellow and green "T" signals that may have confused drivers.

The photo enforcement program, which began in September 1995, uses state-of-the-art electronic cameras to photograph motorists who drive under or around the safety gates when trains are approaching a rail crossing. The cameras are mounted on stanchions at diagonal corners of the crossings.

In 1998, the cameras recorded 7,258 violations and 3,249 citations were issued. The following year, 4,738 violations were logged and 1,789 citations issued. In 2000, there were 3,786 violations and 1,637 citations.

Fewer violations, citations

During the three-year period, that's 47 percent fewer violations and a 49.6 percent drop in citations for illegal rail crossings.

"Since the photo enforcement program began in 1995, we've issued 8,626 citations," says Zohbi. "We hope those are 8,626 people who will not do that again."

The difference in the number of violations and the number of citations issued includes instances when the vehicle had no front license plate, the plate or the driver's face was obscured or the camera needed servicing.

Recently, the MTA Board approved the purchase of six cameras for use at six additional crossings in downtown LA. The MTA also plans to extend both the photo enforcement program and the left-turn fiber optic sign program to Long Beach.

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Chief Operating Officer Allan Lipsky reports quarter highlights.

MTA Highly Productive in Third Quarter, Lipsky Reports

(May 10, 2001) In the January to March period, the MTA "accomplished as much as this agency has ever accomplished in a quarter," Chief Operating Officer Allan Lipsky said, Tuesday, following the third quarter review of agency achievements and challenges.

During opening remarks in the Board room, he highlighted progress on the budget – "best budget we've ever delivered" – and cited accomplishments by Transit Operations, Countywide Planning, Construction and Support Services.

"We all came through with flying colors," Lipsky said, adding that "it's not just departments and not just numbers. It's the people. All of us working together to produce these results."

In a departure from past quarterly review meetings, the winners of the new "Employee of the Quarter" program were introduced by their department heads, who described their achievements. For a complete list of winners and photos, click here for [Employee of the Quarter](#) or go to the Human Resources Intranet web page.

Four departments also were singled out for recognition. The Materiel Department was cited as tops for its support of bus maintenance. Transit Operations was honored for improving on-time service, cleanliness and other achievements.

Real Estate earned \$3.9 million

The Real Estate Department was recognized for bringing in \$3.9 million in revenues during the quarter. Public Relations was cited for improving communications with the media and the public through two new Internet web sites.

During reports by individual department heads, Jeff Christianson of Engineering and Construction said his department completed a number of major projects, including new CNG fueling station at the Regional Rebuild Center and at Division 1, installation of a sound wall on the Metro Green Line and an upgrade of the Metro Red Line radio system.

In the next quarter, Construction plans to complete the Metro Blue Line platform extensions, among other projects.

Jim de la Loza of Countywide Planning reported that the Long-Range Transportation Plan is being circulated for public comment. His department has executed a \$140 million grant for bus purchases and has initiated an on-board customer satisfaction survey.

Challenges ahead include developing automated passenger counting data and conducting public hearings for corridor studies of the Mid-City and Westside.

Bus cleanliness improved

Reporting for Transit Operations, Tom Conner said Metro Bus cleanliness had improved for the seventh straight quarter. Customer complaints – at 3.14 per 100,000 boardings – continued at a low level. Light- and

heavy-rail service met their in-service, on-time goals.

In the quarter ahead, Transit Operations will work to bring the P-2000 cars fully on-line, make efforts to hold down fuel and electricity costs and to fill operations and maintenance job vacancies.

Quarterly successes for the six departments comprising Support Services, said Lonnie Mitchell, included the build-out of new Plaza-level spaces, \$3.5 million in revenues generated by Marketing, a customer satisfaction survey initiated by Human Resources and 41 contract audits by Management Audit.

Mitchell said challenges for the next quarter include an upgrade of the Oracle FIS program, implementing the new performance-based compensation program and increasing the use of Purchase Cards.

Of the departments reporting to the CEO's office, Labor Relations resolved 40 arbitration cases, System Safety and Security completed safety audits at operating divisions, Ethics completed Form 700 filings at an annual savings of \$10,000 and the County Counsel obtained several favorable court judgments for the MTA.

In the next quarter, the CEO's office hopes to resolve outstanding Consent Decree issues and conduct orientation for new Board members, among other projects.

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Construction is underway of new freeway overpass adjacent to the Metro Red Line's Universal City station.
PHOTO BY JOHN MAZZARELLA

Overpass Construction to Close Southbound I-101 Traffic at Universal City

By RICK JAGER

(May 11, 2001) The southbound lanes of the Hollywood Freeway (I-101) will be closed for about eight hours early Sunday, May 13, while construction crews erect steel girders to support a new overpass adjacent to the Metro Red Line's Universal City station.

The freeway lanes will be closed between 1 a.m. and 9 a.m. Southbound traffic will exit the freeway at Vineland, continue south on Ventura Boulevard and reenter the freeway just past Lankershim Boulevard.

When completed later this year, the new freeway overpass and ramps will improve access to the Universal City station and will enhance traffic flow in Universal City, Studio City and surrounding communities.

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By GARY WOSK

(May 11, 2001) Beginning June 1, the MTA will guarantee delivery of Metro System identification cards within 20 days to kindergarten through 12th grade students.

Students who don't receive their cards by the deadline can receive free monthly pass stamps. Currently, delivery of ID cards takes between 14 and 17 days from the time the application is received by the MTA.

"We are committed to trying to improve this program," said Agapito Diaz, Director of Revenue. "To that end, the 20-day guarantee is our way saying 'We're serious about this and do want to improve service.'"

Each month, the MTA sells 25,000 monthly pass stamps to students, K-12. Annually, the MTA processes some 45,000 student ID applications.

Streamline the process

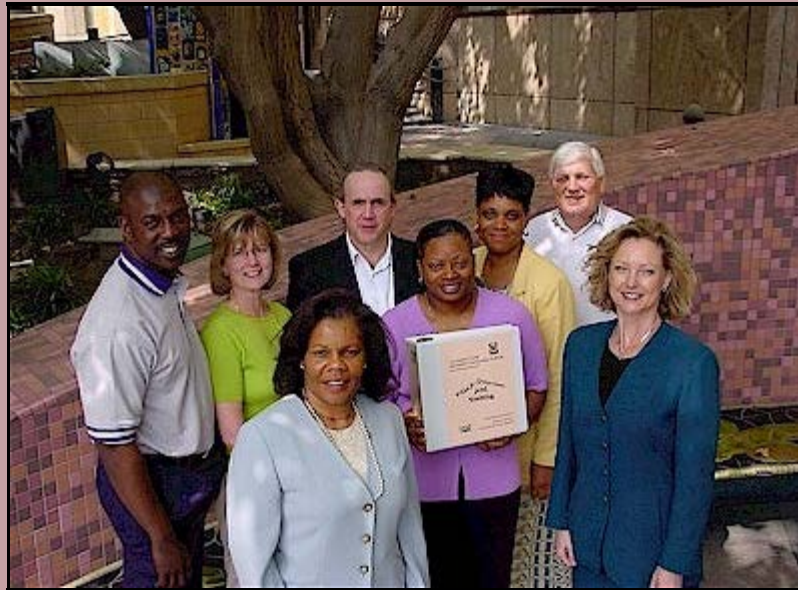
The change-over from a manually managed program to one that uses the latest computer technology will greatly streamline the time involved in processing applications and issuing cards.

In addition to the 20-day guarantee, applications for student identifications now can be downloaded from the MTA's Internet website. They can be mailed to the MTA or dropped off at a Customer Service Center, at MTA headquarters or at a school.

The 20-day guarantee and making applications available on-line are just the first steps in the effort to upgrade the ID delivery process.

In June, the MTA will issue a Request for Proposal for a contractor to develop a reduced-fare ID card application and renewal system, manage the new database and process the applications for MTA clients.

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BACK TO SCHOOL - Suitland High School staff traveled from Maryland for training seminar on MTA's Transportation Careers Academy Program. Pictured are, back row, from left, Tyron Tarlton, Technology Instructor, Suitland High School; Commander Sally Holloway, Liaison, U.S. Department of Transportation; James Ganter, Social Studies Instructor, Suitland High School; Rachel Mitchell, Counselor, Suitland High School; Thomas Tuthill, Vice Principal, Suitland High School. Front row, from left, Naomi Nightingale, Director, Human Resources; Thelma Merchant, Chemistry Instructor, Suitland High School; Holly Balderas, Senior Development and Training Specialist; Human Resources Development and Training.

U.S. Department Of Transportation Recognizes TCAP As A National Model

By HOLLY BALDERAS

(May 11, 2001) The MTA's Transportation Careers Academy Program (TCAP) has once again been cited as a national model for preparing future workers for the transportation industry's fast-emerging careers.

At the request of the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), the MTA recently hosted a two-day training seminar for their representative and for the staff of Suitland High School in Prince Georges County, Md.

This intensive training provided technical assistance to Suitland High School and USDOT on how to replicate the MTA's TCAP model. In partnership with the USDOT, Suitland High School plans to open its doors in September 2002, to a new School of Transportation, based on the MTA's program.

The MTA's Human Resources Development and Training Department developed and conducted the training seminar.

Technical assistance sessions focused on TCAP's developmental history, its unique instructional design and industry-based components, samples of materials developed and details of the many lessons learned over the years.

Panel discussed mentoring

A panel of experienced TCAP participants discussed mentoring students, supervising student interns and the numerous coordination aspects of an Academy.

The panel included Rick Owens, Regional Transportation Planning and Development; Yvette Robles, Government Relations; B.J. Moore, TCAP Coordinator from Locke High School; and Wendy Granados, TCAP student from Locke High School.

The team from USDOT and Suitland High spent 4 to 5 hours on the front line – conducting site visits to TCAP schools, sitting in on classes and meeting with teachers and students.

This isn't the first time MTA has been asked to help other agencies and schools replicate its successful TCAP model. Over the past years, organizations in Seattle and Washington D.C. have made site visits. The MTA also has conducted numerous technical assistance workshops across the nation.

Initiated by MTA in 1993, TCAP is a 'school-within-a-school' that integrates transportation-related technical skills into traditional high school academic subjects.

Students receive excellent preparation for advanced studies because they benefit from the guidance and instruction of Academy teachers working side-by-side with industry professionals.

TCAP students learn in a 'real-world' environment in the career areas of urban planning, engineering, architecture and transportation technologies.

For further information about TCAP contact Benita Horn at 922-5252 or Holly Balderas at 922-5260.

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Buyer of the Quarter



Richard Bonino received Procurement's "Buyer of the Quarter" award in a recent ceremony. From left are Executive Officer Lonnie Mitchell, Al Mitchell, Bonino and Ron Dupuis.

Richard Bonino is Procurement's 'Buyer of the Quarter'

By RON DUPUIS

(May 14, 2001) Richard Bonino has been named the Procurement Department's "Buyer of the Quarter" for his commitment and dedication to providing outstanding service to his customers.

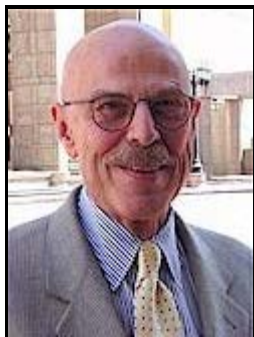
Bonino is responsible for purchasing Cummings Engine parts, TMC Bus parts, Voith Transmission parts and Bendix Brake parts. He continuously uses his experience in the planning and performance of his normal work activities, as well as in the execution of complex procurements.

Bonino is assigned to the Regional Rebuild Center Process Action Team, which is responsible for developing acquisition plans, and improving Engine and Transmission rebuilds for the Metro Bus fleet. He was responsible for awarding contracts for the TMC Bus Refurbishment project.

Bonino approaches all of his assignments with a positive, professional attitude. His communication style and friendly personality have worked effectively in dealing with his internal, external customers and suppliers. The quality of his work is outstanding and exemplary.

He is always willing to take on new assignments and help others. Bonino has distinguished himself as being dependable, highly motivated and a true asset to the Purchasing Section, Procurement Department and the MTA.

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**"I think this budget
does a remarkable
job of holding the
line on costs."**

CEO Julian Burke

MTA FY 02 Budget Holds the Line, Despite Higher Fuel, Other Costs

- **Record Amount of Bus Service Proposed**

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By MARC LITTMAN

(May 14, 2001) The MTA will fund a record amount of bus service in Los Angeles County under a proposed \$2.724 billion budget for the fiscal year that starts July 1, 2001.

The spending plan unveiled today also funds expanded Metro Rail service on the Metro Blue and Green lines, new street and highway improvements and other regional transportation programs. It will allow the MTA to move forward with preliminary engineering for busway and light rail projects in some of the most traffic clogged corridors in the county.

The MTA Board will hold several public meetings in May to review the transportation agency's proposed budget for the fiscal year that begins July 1, 2001. A public hearing is set for 9:30 a.m., May 17. The Board will consider adopting the budget at the May 24 meeting.

The proposed \$2.724 billion MTA budget is balanced. It is up \$183 million, or approximately 6.7 percent more than the current fiscal year budget.

This reflects expansion of Metro Bus and Metro Rail service, more funding for freeway carpool lanes and sound walls as well as more money for municipal bus operators, Metrolink, and paratransit services. Moreover, the MTA faces sharp increases in fuel and energy costs as well as higher premiums for workers compensation insurance.

Higher fuel costs, alone, will add \$2.21 an hour to MTA's operating costs next year. The agency also is projecting an increase in workers compensation expenses.

MTA Holds Line On Operating Costs

Despite these challenges and a projection of 3 percent more Metro riders, Metro Bus hourly operating costs in the next fiscal year will be \$98.41, an increase of just 11 cents or 1/10th of 1 percent compared with this fiscal

year.

Hourly costs for operating light-rail trains will dip 7.5 percent next year to \$294.74 an hour while Metro Red Line hourly operating costs will rise 1.9 percent to \$242.21.

"I think this budget does a remarkable job of holding the line on costs," said CEO Julian Burke. "The new labor contracts we negotiated last fall will allow us to operate more efficiently. At the same time, we're pushing forward with Metro Rapid bus technology, light rail, traffic signalization, freeway carpool lanes, and other significant projects that can squeeze more capacity out of local streets and freeways on a faster timetable with less cost than MTA's past emphasis on subways."

The draft budget does not call for a fare increase; however, MTA directors may consider a new comprehensive fare structure later this year. There has been no change in MTA fares in more than six years.

Record Bus Service Proposed

Buses will remain the highest priority in FY 2002. Burke has proposed that MTA spend 45.4 percent of its budget (\$1.239 billion) on MTA bus operating and capital and municipal bus operator subsidies. The proposed bus expenditures compare with 43.8 percent (\$1.114 billion) this fiscal year.

The FY 02 budget includes \$15 million for preliminary engineering for new bus rapid transit projects linking the West San Fernando Valley and the Metro Red Line North Hollywood station, as well as possible bus rapid transit and/or light rail in the Wilshire Boulevard/Mid-City corridor.

The MTA will operate a record amount of Metro Bus and contract bus service in FY 02. The peak hour bus fleet will increase to 2,129 buses compared with 2,012 currently. MTA revenue bus service hours will be 7.485 million next year compared with 7.312 million this fiscal year and nearly 1 million more service hours than MTA delivered just three years ago.

The MTA will take delivery of 420 new low-floor compressed natural gas buses next year and also order new buses that have greater capacity than the standard 40-foot buses.

Buoyed by the success of the two Metro Rapid Bus lines on Ventura Boulevard in the San Fernando Valley and along Wilshire and Whittier boulevards, MTA directors later this year will consider expanding Metro Rapid to other high volume bus lines throughout Los Angeles County. The MTA's recently adopted Long Range Transportation Plan calls for establishing another 22 Metro Rapid Bus lines within the next decade.

The MTA next year also will provide \$197 million in subsidies for the 16 municipal bus operators in Los Angeles County, an increase of \$35 million, or 21 percent, over this year.

More Money for Streets, Highways

The second largest slice of the budget pie -- \$535 million or 19.6 percent -- is recommended for highway and other regional transportation programs.

These include such as freeway carpool lane construction (42 miles will be funded in FY 02), freeway sound walls (13 projects in FY 02), street widening, better traffic signal coordination, grade separations at railroad crossings, bikeways, ride-sharing incentives, shuttles, and other local

transportation improvements. It also includes continued funding for the Metro Freeway Service Patrol to help stranded motorists.

This recommended portion of the MTA budget is up \$44 million, or 9 percent, over FY 01

Metro Rail Service Will Expand

The next biggest portion of the draft budget -- \$411 million or 15.1 percent -- is recommended for Metro Rail construction and operating costs.

This includes monies to close out construction activities for the subway extension to North Hollywood which opened last year, completion of the 101 Freeway overpass bridge serving the new Universal City Metro Red Line Station, buying new rail cars, and preliminary engineering and design of a Metro Rail light rail extension from Union Station to Atlantic Boulevard in the Eastside.

There will be a sharp 17.3 percent jump in Metro Rail service on the Metro Blue and Green lines in FY 02 once MTA begins running three car trains on the Metro Blue Line later this year this summer when the station platforms are extended on the 22-mile line from downtown Los Angeles to Long Beach. The Metro Green Line from Norwalk to El Segundo then will begin running two car trains.

Burke noted that in FY 02 it will be cheaper to carry passengers on Metro Rail than by MTA-operated buses and its contract carriers -- 47 cents versus 54 cents per mile.

In addition, in FY 02 the MTA is contributing \$37 million in subsidies to the Metrolink commuter rail operation, a \$1 million increase over the current year and representing 1.4 percent of the MTA's proposed budget.

Paratransit Gets Increased Subsidies

The MTA's draft FY 02 budget also will fund an array of other transportation programs including subsidies for door-to-door paratransit service for the disabled who can not access regular fixed route public transportation. MTA CEO Burke is recommending \$60 million in such funding in FY 02, an increase of \$11.5 million over this year.

Debt Service Stable

Rounding out the proposed FY 02 spending plan is debt service. MTA's debt service next year will be \$339 million, 12.5 percent of the total budget, compared with \$332 million or 13.1 percent of the current MTA budget.

MTA funding comes from the farebox, local, state and federal governments and other sources such as lease rentals, investment income, and advertising revenue from bus ads.

The draft budget summary can be viewed on MTA's Internet web site at www.mta.net or copies can be requested by calling Waylynn Pitts at MTA at 922-4880 or by visiting MTA's Records Management department weekdays between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

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Artist's rendering of proposed San Fernando Valley east-west busway shows a section of the busway, complete with pedestrian path, bike path, and landscaping on the busway near Coldwater Cyn Blvd. Rendering artist: George Bungarda. Illustration courtesy of Gruen Associates.

MTA Releases Draft Environmental Report On Proposed San Fernando Valley East-West Busway

By ED SCANNELL

(May 15, 2001) The MTA has released a draft environmental study of a proposed 14-mile Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) busway that would speed the travel of thousands of commuters between the Warner Center Transit Hub in the west San Fernando Valley and the Metro Red Line subway station in North Hollywood.

Operating as an exclusive roadway for buses, the busway would reduce travel time between North Hollywood and the planned Warner Center Transit Hub to approximately 30 minutes, including stops. It currently takes 55 minutes to make the same trip via on-street bus service.

The busway would pass through communities that include North Hollywood, Valley Glen, Van Nuys, Sherman Oaks, Encino, Tarzana and Woodland Hills. It would link such activity centers as Warner Center, Pierce College, the Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area, the Van Nuys Government Center, Valley College and North Hollywood.

Release of the draft environmental study (Draft EIS/EIR) signals the beginning of a 45-day comment period that will include two public hearings. The first is scheduled June 21 at Pierce College; a second hearing will be held, June 26, at LA Valley College. Both meetings will begin at 5 p.m.

May be considered in July

Following the 45-day public comment period, the MTA Board will take the project under consideration tentatively at its July meeting. At that time, the Board may designate the Locally Preferred Alternative for the corridor. This designation would allow continuation of preliminary engineering for the project and work on the Final EIR/EIS.

Final design and construction of the busway could start in late 2002. The project likely would be completed in 2005.

The 26-foot wide Bus Rapid Transit busway would be built in the median of the Burbank/Chandler right-of-way. Typically 100 feet wide, the right-of-way was purchased by the MTA from Southern Pacific in 1991.

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, the time between bus arrivals would vary between seven minutes to 10 minutes in each direction. A passenger information system at each station would inform travelers when the next bus is due to arrive.

Amenities and park-n-ride lots

Stations would have amenities typically associated with rail transit, such as covered waiting platforms, secure lighting and appealing design. Park-n-ride lots located at various locations along the route would provide parking for approximately 3,000 vehicles, augmenting existing parking spaces at the Metro Red Line North Hollywood Station.

The Los Angeles Department of Transportation may 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.

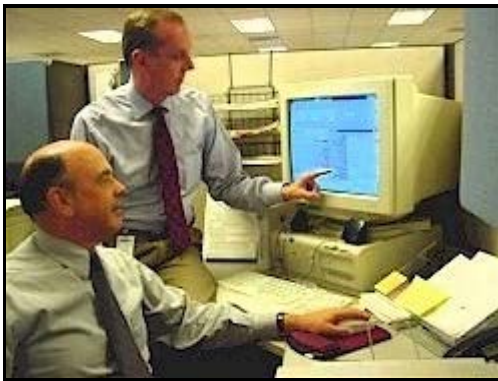
The busway would be fully landscaped with groundcover, trees and other plantings, including over 4,000 new trees.

Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) buses and other clean fuel technologies are under consideration for deployment along the busway. The MTA currently operates the largest fleet of CNG-fueled buses in North America.

The project will include room for a cross-valley bikeway. The MTA will initiate the bikeway design as part of the busway design and will seek funding so the two projects could be built concurrently.

The cost of the full BRT, including the busway, stations, landscaping, environmental mitigation, park-n-ride lots, new buses, and traffic signals is estimated at approximately \$285 million. _

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Jeff Christiansen, deputy executive officer, Program Management, points out a feature of the Contract Control System to Dennis Partridge, configuration management manager.

MTA's Project Management Software Proves its Value

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(May 15, 2001) In 1991, MTA analysts developed a unique computer program to help manage the progress and control the cost of Metro Rail construction projects. The agency recently closed a \$225,000 deal to sell the source code marketing rights for the now upgraded system to an East Coast construction management firm.

By using the Contract Control System – CCS – the MTA has saved more than \$10 million in construction costs since 1995.

Impressed by the system's potential, the Federal Transit Administration not only endorsed CCS, in 1994 it recommended its use on all federally funded projects. The Massachusetts Water Resources Authority and Tren Urbano, a transit project in Puerto Rico, both used CCS software.

In addition to revenues from the recent sale, the MTA has earned another \$62,000 over the years from CCS, according to Jeff Christiansen, deputy executive officer, Program Management.

Value of the CCS system

But, the real importance of the system has been its on-going value in helping the MTA track millions of dollars in contract changes, and the thousands of documents generated by its construction projects and procurement activities.

"Prior to creation of CCS, we had six or eight people performing change control for just one project, Metro Red Line Segment 1," says Christiansen. "At the peak of our activity, five people were doing change control for four or five projects."

CCS permitted the MTA to reduce its reliance on agency construction staff by 75 percent, while increasing productivity by 300 to 400 percent, Christiansen said.

"Everyone talks about the promise of computers, but no one ever gives any good examples," he adds. "We think this is an excellent real-life example of how we did things quicker and with fewer people because of the system we designed."

Got end-users involved

Dennis Partridge, configuration management manager in Program Management, was a key member of the team that developed CCS. The team divided the construction management process into 12 elements, got end-users involved in the design and – over the course of two years – created the software package.

Partridge also has taken the lead in adding new modules called PATS (Procurement Acquisition Tracking System) and COTS (CloseOut Tracking System). He has trained some 450 MTA employees to use the new

modules, which track procurement activities and monitor the close-out status of projects.

"Operations is using CCS to view as-built drawings of the rail lines before they do repairs," he says. "CCS is now being used on all capital improvement projects and we're focusing on building efficiencies into the procurement process."

Christiansen expects CCS will continue to evolve as it proves to be useful in other areas of the MTA. "We're trying to stay on the leading edge of project management."

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Subway Ridership Marks Record as Gas Prices Spiral

By MARC LITTMAN

(May 16, 2001) Spiraling gas prices helped boost ridership on Metro Buses and Metro Rail in April. Ridership on the Metro Red Line subway is at an all-time high and the subway is carrying nearly twice as many riders as it did a year ago.

Average weekday boardings on Metro Buses in April were 1,196,042. That's up almost 100,000 boardings compared with April 2000 (1,100,492).

MTA officials credit the gain to a record amount of bus service and many new buses on the road, including the Metro Rapid Buses. A still strong economy in Los Angeles is a factor, but steep gas prices also are attracting riders.

Weekday boardings on the 59-mile Metro Rail system in April averaged 216,400. That compared with 149,850 boardings in April 2000.

Metro Red Line record

Of the Metro Rail total, the Metro Red Line recorded 125,050 average weekday boardings in April, a record, and just about double the 63,325 boardings in April 2000.

MTA officials are encouraging tourists and their local hosts to take advantage of Metro Rail this summer to visit dozens of major entertainment and cultural attractions.

Universal Studios, for example, has a special promotion for Metro riders going through July. The theme park will deduct the cost of a round-trip fare from the full price of studio tour admission.

MTA publishes a brochure that shows how to visit numerous attractions from the Long Beach Aquarium to the Watts Towers, Olvera Street, Mann's Chinese Theater, Universal City and the NoHo Arts District via Metro Rail.

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Riding in as a group from the Westside were, from left, Phil Ganezer, Lynne Goldsmith, April McKay, Tim Papandreou, Allan Lipsky, Carol Inge, Joanna Cucchi and Bruno Guillemet.
PHOTOS BY BILL HEARD

60 Employees Pedal in on 'Bike to Work Day'

(May 17, 2001) From Pasadena they came. From Santa Monica, the Westside and the Valley. Pedaling their way to MTA Headquarters or the operating divisions on "Bike to Work Day."

Some 60 employees registered to participate in the event, joining hundreds of others from across Los Angeles County who rode their bicycles to work, Thursday.

"It was nice and cool because it was foggy today," says April McKay, who rode in with a group of eight employees from Santa Monica, Venice and Culver City. "We made good time until we got downtown and were slowed up by the traffic lights."

Led by pacesetter, Phil Ganezer, the group rode the 16 miles in about an hour and 45 minutes. They grabbed some juice and pastries at the MTA's "pit stop" on the Plaza, then headed for the showers on P-1.

"I'm all refreshed now and ready for the ride home," says McKay. "I just hope my T-shirt and riding shorts dry



Intern Justine Hearn, left, and Planning Manager Lynne Goldsmith coordinated the MTA's participation in "Bike to Work Day." Below, riders gather for noontime victory celebration. Click on image for larger view.



out before it's time to go home."

"Bike to Work Day" is one of the central events of California Bike Commute Week, May 14-18. The MTA is one of a number of sponsors that include SCAG, the Air Resources Board and the American Lung Association.

Planning Manager Lynne Goldsmith and Intern Justine Hearn of Countywide Planning's Bikeway Planning office coordinated the MTA's participation in "Bike to Work Day." Irma Rivera of Human Resources Special Programs organized the MTA's "pit stop," which included gift bags for the riders.

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MTA's New Purchasing Card Will Make Buying Small Items Easier, Quicker

(May 17, 2001) Need a dozen ballpoint pens? A 3/16th-inch box wrench or a fluorescent light tube? But, you really don't want to requisition such a small item?

Well, help is on the way from Material Management's Purchasing Department.

Under a new program, Purchasing will issue a special type of VISA credit card – an MTA Purchasing Card – to department managers who request them for use by their employees. Using the cards will make it quicker, easier and more convenient to buy those small-dollar items every department needs to operate efficiently.



Margaret James of Material Management takes a look at one of the new MTA Purchasing Cards, a special credit card issued by VISA. James is administrator of the Purchasing Card program.

The Purchasing Cards have a \$1,000 cap per transaction and can only be used to buy supplies and parts. The cards are clearly identified as MTA property and can't be mistaken for an employee's personal credit card.

"The main advantage is that end-users will get the items they need quicker with less administrative time," says Ron Dupuis, director of Purchasing. He also notes that merchants will get paid more quickly when employees use the Purchasing Card.

Card holders are responsible

Card holders are responsible for the card's security, for documenting and reconciling monthly purchases and for compliance with the MTA's procurement policies. Purchase Cards shouldn't be used to avoid or to bypass appropriate purchasing procedures.

Department managers will determine the expenditure controls over the cards issued to their departments. They'll receive monthly reports on transactions made against their cards and are responsible for reviewing the charges.

Departments can use their Purchasing Cards to buy office supplies, tools, equipment and other items on-line from vendors who already have the MTA's discount programmed into agency's account.

In addition to saving time at both ends of an order transaction, the cards also are expected to save money.

"The rule of thumb is that it costs in excess of \$150 to process even a small purchase order," says Dupuis. "When someone saves time and money by buying an item with the Purchase Card, that's time and money we can use on our higher-dollar procurements."

The Purchasing Department successfully conducted a pilot program over the past year to test the program. The MTA participates in the VISA Procurement Credit Card program under an agreement with the State of California.

Managers who are interested in participating in the Purchasing Card program, or would like further information, should contact Margaret James, Purchasing Card administrator.

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- **Update, May 22:** The California Senate passed SB 919, Monday, by a vote of 27-7. The bill now moves to the Assembly Transportation Committee.

Polanco Bill Would Strip MTA of Control over Ad Displays

(May 17, 2001) The MTA could be stripped of the right to control billboards and other advertising displays placed on its buildings and property under a bill now pending before the California Senate's Appropriations Committee.

SB 919, sponsored by State Sen. Richard Polanco (D-LA), prohibits the MTA from "regulating the placement or maintenance of any advertising display" located now or in the future on MTA property or rights-of-way. The MTA Board voted April 26 to oppose the measure.

If passed and signed into law, the bill could disrupt the MTA's plans to provide 10 Automated Public Toilets (APTs) at Metro System locations and permit 54 advertising structures to be erected on agency property. The MTA stands to make at least \$7.9 million over 10 years on the deal.

A primary backer of SB 919 apparently is a company that failed to bid for the APT contract. The company is now suing the MTA, but agency officials believe the bill is intended, in effect, to overturn the MTA Board's contract award decision.

Wide-ranging impact

MTA officials also foresee a wide-ranging impact on the agency should the legislation become law.

SB 919 could prevent the MTA from controlling the use of its own property, managing leases, receiving revenue or maintaining ad displays on its property – even cleaning off graffiti vandalism.

As currently written, the bill would not allow the agency to place ads at Metro Bus or Metro Rail stations. It would short-circuit efforts to provide free customer service advertising or to sell advertising space, a revenue source that currently generates some \$1 million annually.

If the bill becomes law, the MTA may not be able to object if another government agency or company decided to place billboards on its property. The agency also may not be allowed to control the advertising content of billboards, even those for services or for products, like alcohol or tobacco, that violate Board policy.

The Government Relations staff believes the bill sets a precedent that would erode the decision-making authority of the MTA.

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Update: May 18

FY 2002 Budget, Eastside Light Rail, Wilshire/Western Development on May Committee Agendas

(May 18, 2001) The MTA's budget for Fiscal Year 2002, the Eastside Light-Rail Transit Project and a proposed development at the Metro Red Line's Wilshire/Western station were among items on Board committee agendas for May.

The Operations Committee meeting, originally scheduled for Wednesday, was cancelled. Among items on the committee's agenda that may be considered by the full Board is the proposed cancellation of Metro Bus Line 497 from Los Angeles to Pomona and Montclair. MTA service would be replaced by Foothill Transit, which plans to begin service Monday, June 11.

The Executive Management Committee meeting also was canceled and all items forwarded to the full Board.

- **Finance and Budget Committee, 9:30 a.m., Thursday, May 17**

Fiscal Year 2001-2001 Budget, Item 30: **Approved and sent to the full Board.** The \$2.724 billion FY 02 budget includes funding for a record amount of bus service for the new fiscal year starting July 1, 2001. The spending plan also funds expanded Metro Rail service on the Metro Blue and Green lines, new street and highway improvements and other regional transportation programs.

A public hearing will be conducted during the committee meeting. The Board will consider adopting the budget at the May 24 meeting.

- **Planning and Programming Committee, 1 p.m., Thursday, May 17**

Metro Red Line Wilshire/Western Station Joint Development, Item 41: **Approved and sent to the full Board.** The CEO would be authorized to enter into a six-month exclusive negotiations agreement with Wilshire Entertainment Center for development of about 2.34 acres at the Wilshire/Western station.

The company is proposing a 50,800-square foot mixed-use development with retail space and restaurants, 182 rental units occupying 248,000 square feet, 10,000 square feet for mechanical and administrative use, and 156,200 square feet of parking. The area would accommodate 12 41-foot buses and one 60-foot bus.

Eastside Corridor Environmental Clearance, Item 45: **Approved and sent to the full Board.** The committee will consider whether to adopt an environmental impact statement on the proposed Eastside light-rail line.

The recommended rail alignment would begin at Union Station, head south on Alameda to 1st Street, where it would bear east to Indiana Street. After a short southerly jog, it would continue east on 3rd Street and end on Beverly Boulevard. The eight-station line would travel above ground except for a tunnel segment between 1st and Boyle and 1st and Lorena.

Development of Taylor Yards, Parcel C Item 46: **Approved with revisions as noted.** The MTA owns Taylor Yards, a 24-acre site along the Los Angeles River between the Pasadena Freeway and the Glendale

Freeway. The MTA purchased the property in the late 1980s for use as a maintenance yard for the Pasadena Blue Line, but another site has been chosen.

Under the revised motion, the staff would be directed during the next 60 days to work with the City of Los Angeles to clarify issues related to the property, including its possible disposal and appropriate uses within the overall development of the Taylor Yards, as well as clarify the MTA's funding obligations relating to the possible sale of the property.

The staff would be directed to begin an appraisal of the site and to report back in 60 days with a recommendation for developing the site for recreation.

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Attending the kiosk dedication ceremony were, from left, Carlos Vargas, Jose Isaías Rodríguez Hernández, Carla Barragán, LA City Councilman Nick Pacheco, Jalisco Secretary Abraham González Uyeda, Mexican Consul Lara Marta, CEO Julian Burke, Monica Medina, Humberto Esparza Jiménez, Enrique Banuelos Solís and Diego Cardoso, MTA director, Regional Transportation Planning. PHOTO BY LUIS INZUNZA

Mexican Official Dedicates Decorative Benches for Mariachi Plaza

(May 18, 2001) A top Mexican official today dedicated 17 decorative wrought-iron benches donated by the State of Jalisco during a ceremony hosted by the MTA at Mariachi Plaza in East Los Angeles.

Abraham González Uyeda, secretary of economic development for Jalisco, said the benches represent the state's 17 municipalities. Mexican artisans created the benches as a gift to the people of Los Angeles.

"With the gift of these 17 beautiful benches from the State of Jalisco our partnership continues to enrich this vibrant, urban setting next to the future site of the proposed East Los Angeles light rail station at First and Boyle," said City Councilman Nick Pacheco (14th District), who represents the community. "These benches will celebrate, in perpetuity, the mariachis of Los Angeles who bring their music and vitality to the plaza every day of the year."

In 1998, the State of Jalisco donated a traditional Mexican kiosk for Mariachi Plaza at 1st and Boyle streets. Juan Pablo Salas, a renowned stone artisan from Guadalajara, assembled the kiosk. The Installation of



The Mariachi Plaza kiosk, donated in 1998 by the Mexican State of Jalisco, stands at the intersection of 1st and Boyle. The decorative benches complete the landmark installation.

the benches completes the cultural landmark.

The benches also serve as pedestrian enhancements for the plaza, which lies along the alignment for the proposed East Los Angeles light-rail line.

Uyeda attended the ceremony on behalf of the governor of Jalisco, Francisco Ramírez Acuña. The ceremony featured mariachi music by a Roosevelt High School group and folkloric ballet by Bronson House Catholic Charities.

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It was a cloudy, cold day, but hundreds of applicants attended a recent Job Fair at the MTA's Regional Rebuild Facility. PHOTO BY JIM PACHAN

Despite Cold Weather, 650 Applicants Attend MTA Job Fair

By EDWARD FENTON

(May 18, 2001) More than 650 people visited the MTA's most recent Job Fair, April 28, to inquire about positions as bus operator, service attendant and mechanic "c" positions.

Even though it was a very cold and cloudy day, a line of prospective applicants was waiting outside the Regional Rebuild Center even before the event began.

Members of the Human Resources Employment Section, along with Maintenance and Operations personnel, offered assistance to the candidates by giving instructions on how to properly fill out employment applications.

Facilities Maintenance employees helped set up tents in the RRC parking lot to accommodate the event. Transit Security also assisted with crowd control.

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Starts Thursday!

New [Home Access Log-in](#)

- **Redesign of Log-In Page Will Make Intranet Home Access Easier**

(May 21, 2001) Accessing the MTA Intranet from home or any remote location is going to be quicker and easier, thanks to a new log-in procedure that goes into effect Thursday, May 24.

Try it!
Click on
link
above

The requirement to enter badge number and hire date for entry will remain the same. But, the new system for entering hire dates will be less rigid than the current procedure, which is sensitive to the placement of leading zeroes in month and day entries.

The new procedure, for example, will recognize a hire date that is typed as 4-8-93, as 04-08-93 or even as 04-8-93, instead of only as 4-08-93 as currently required.

"Although accessing the Intranet from home has been relatively easy," says Bill Heard, Intranet editor, "the new procedure developed by Bob Dodd of ITS is closer to those in use elsewhere on the net and should be easier for even a first-time browser to use."

After clicking on "Employee Access" at www.mta.net, the MTA's Internet home page, the new design will bring up a short "Welcome" page with a link to the log-in page. A link also will be provided to a page listing "Conditions for using metro.net."

At the new log-in page, a user will enter badge number in the "LoginID" slot and hire date in the adjacent three-section "Password" slot. Click "login" and the Intranet home page appears. Click "clear" to start again if either badge number or hire date is entered incorrectly.

The news, information and department listings on the home-access version of the Intranet is the same as what's available from MTA-owned computers with the exception of the telephone directory and the FIS system.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: (May 22, 2001) A story in the Los Angeles *Times*, Tuesday, claims that the MTA has asked the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals to "set aside a consent decree requiring them to improve bus service...." The *Times* story concerned a legal brief written by MTA attorneys. The brief was requested, April 27, by the Appeals Court, which asked the MTA and the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund – representing the Labor/Community Strategy Center (the Bus Riders Union) – for their legal views on a recent U.S. Supreme Court decision and on two other cases that could affect the October 1996 Consent Decree. The MTA released the following statement on Monday, May 21.

MTA CONSENT DECREE STATEMENT

May 21, 2001

In signing the Consent Decree in October 1996, the MTA agreed to significantly expand Metro bus service, reduce overcrowding, and introduce new types of bus service. MTA remains committed to achieving those objectives:

- MTA is completely revamping its bus fleet by ordering more than 2,000 buses. Already more than 1,200 new compressed natural gas buses have been delivered and about 20 new buses arrive weekly. By mid-2005 the entire fleet will be replaced.
- Since 1996, the number of buses in peak hour service has increased by 377 and MTA has added 1 million more annual hours of Metro Bus service. In addition, the agency has started new routes including the highly successful Metro Rapid Buses that utilize technology to extend green lights and speed travel time compared to local bus service.

Neither the MTA staff nor Board of Directors has wavered from this position. Indeed, the draft MTA budget for Fiscal year 2002 calls for funding a record amount of Metro Bus service with nearly half the agency budget committed to funding Metro Bus and contract service and subsidies for 16 municipal bus operators in Los Angeles County.

The Bus Riders Union recognizes the progress MTA has made but keeps demanding more and more. The MTA Board had no choice other than to ask for the courts to consider the issues.

A year ago MTA appealed a decision by U.S. District Court Judge Terry Hatter to order additional buses on top of the more than \$1 billion that MTA is spending on new buses and service. The MTA appealed to get legal clarification of what its obligations are.

The federal appeals court has the power to affirm Judge Hatter's ruling or ask that it be reconsidered, including determining whether or not the Consent Decree is still enforceable. MTA believes that the court should decide the matter.

However, no matter what the court decides to do, Metro passengers can rest assured that the MTA remains committed

to the basic principle of the Consent Decree to improve Metro Bus service.

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MTA to Expand Rideshare Incentive Programs in LA County

By GARY WOSK

(May 23, 2001) Two successful MTA rideshare programs – Rideshare Rewards and Club Metro – will now be offered in all areas of Los Angeles County.

At a time when gasoline prices are skyrocketing, employees of participating companies will be offered gift certificates and discount coupon books in exchange for their efforts to ease traffic congestion and improve air quality. To date, participants in the two programs have earned more than \$450,000 in incentives.

More than 4,000 employers with fewer than 250 employees have enrolled in Rideshare Rewards and Club Metro. Since their inception, the rideshare programs have demonstrated significant annual increases in participation rates.

The state-funded programs were developed as part of an effort to encourage the county's smaller employers to voluntarily provide ridesharing programs.

Stores redeem certificates

Rideshare Rewards, designed for drive-alone, offers up to \$120 in gift certificates redeemable at Target retail stores, Ralph's supermarkets, or Unocal gas stations.

Participants who rideshare a minimum of five times per month during a three consecutive month period earn \$2 a day for each day they rideshare. Ridesharing includes carpooling, vanpooling, riding the bus or train, walking, bicycling, or telecommuting.

Club Metro is an incentive program for employees who have been regularly ridesharing for six months or longer. Club Metro rewards participants with an entertainment discount book, offering great savings at a variety of restaurants and entertainment venues located throughout Southern California.

Launched in 1998, Rideshare Rewards (formerly known as Rideshare 2000) and Club Metro have reduced traffic congestion by 870,000 one-way vehicle trips and more than 13,000,000 vehicle miles.

The programs also have improved air quality by eliminating 108,000 pounds of vehicle emissions. With the expansion of the programs, MTA hopes to eliminate an additional 20 million vehicle miles and 180,000 pounds of emissions over the next 4 1/2 years.

"The Rideshare Rewards and Club Metro programs benefit employers, employees, the community and the environment," said Regional Planning Program Manager Cosette Stark. "Employers win because the programs are free and easy to administer. Employees benefit because they enjoy a less stressful ride to work and are financially rewarded for their efforts. And, of course, fewer cars translate into less congestion and cleaner air for the community and the environment."



Rideshare Funding

Programs are funded, developed and implemented by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority with additional funding from the Regional Transportation Agencies Coalition and the Mobile Source Air Pollution Reduction Review Committee.

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MTA Board Gives Green Light to Eastside Light-Rail Project

By ED SCANNELL

(May 24, 2001)The MTA Board adopted a 6-mile, \$760-million light-rail project, Thursday, as the "locally preferred alternative" for LA's Eastside.

Outlined in a draft environmental report released earlier this year, the Eastside Light Rail Transit Project would serve one of the most densely populated and heavily transit-dependent areas in Los Angeles County.

The Eastside rail extension would be linked at Union Station with the 13.7-mile Pasadena Blue Line, which is expected to begin operations in mid-2003.If it receives final environmental approval later this year, construction could begin in mid-2003.Revenue service could start in mid-2007.

The recommended rail alignment would begin at Union Station, head south on Alameda to 1st Street, then bear east to Indiana Street. After a short southerly jog, it would continue east on 3rd Street and end at Beverly Boulevard and Atlantic boulevards.

1.7-mile tunnel segment

The extension would include nine stations and operate at street level with the exception of a 1.7-mile tunnel segment through Boyle Heights where streets are too narrow for a rail line.

In addition to improving access to downtown Los Angeles and communities stretching from downtown to Pasadena, the extension would provide eastside residents with easier access to other cities served by Metro Rail.

Several features make the Eastside an excellent candidate for such a project.

The 40-square-mile Eastside is a densely populated area with a current population of 403,000.That figure is expected to grow 25 percent by the year 2020 and, during the same period, the number of jobs is expected to climb by 30 percent.

Many are transit-dependent

Many Eastside residents are transit dependent.More than 19 percent of workers use the bus system to get to work as compared to 6.8 percent for Los Angeles County as a whole.

As many as 50 percent of the commuter trips in some Eastside

neighborhoods occur on public transit.

The federal government had committed \$495 million toward the cost of extending the Metro Red Line to East LA. The MTA suspended work on the subway in January 1998, but has since determined that a light-rail line can improve mobility on the Eastside while retaining federal funding eligibility.

On the governor's recommendation, the legislature earmarked state surplus funds to fully fund the Eastside alternative. The projected cost of the Eastside Light Rail Transit Project is approximately \$760 million.

Following Board certification and approval by the Federal Transit Administration, the Eastside rail project would be ready for final design and construction.

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Board Elects John Fasana 1st Vice Chair, Approves LRTP, Metro Rapid System

(May 24, 2001) The MTA Board elected John Fasana of Duarte as its new 1st Vice Chair, Thursday, a vote that anticipates his election as Board chair in the next fiscal year. The Board also voted to change the chair's term back to one year from the current two years.

A city councilman and former mayor of Duarte, Fasana is one of four City Selection Committee appointees to the Board. He served on the former SCRTD Board and on the MTA Board since July 1992.



John Fasana

Fasana also serves on the League of California Cities Transportation Committee, the SCAG Transportation and Communications Committee, the Foothill Transit Zone, the San Gabriel Valley Transportation Coalition and the San Gabriel Valley Association of Cities.

Fasana graduated from Whittier College with a bachelor's degree in business administration. He and his wife, Kristin, have two daughters and a son.

Other Board action

In other action, the Board approved the Long-Range Transportation Plan and a motion designating the Metro Rapid bus system as a permanent transit mode for LA County. The Board directed the MTA staff to draft a plan to expand the system and allocated funding for the planning phase.

The Board also confirmed its opposition to SB 919, state legislation that would restrict the MTA's ability to control billboards and other advertising displays on its property.

The Board did not take up a motion to cancel Metro Bus Line 497 (the LA –Pomona-Montclair Express) or a motion on a joint development at the Metro Red Line's Wilshire/Western station. A 50,800-square foot mixed-use development with retail space, restaurants and 182 rental units is proposed for the site.

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Glamor and Romance Roll into LA



By Bill Heard, Editor

(May 29, 2001) The glamour and romance of a bygone era of rail travel arrived in Los Angeles, Friday, when the American Orient Express – featuring historic cars from the 1940s and '50s – rolled into Union Station.

Although the deluxe, 16-car passenger train was in town just long enough to be washed, cleaned and receive passengers for a Pacific Coast tour, there was time to host a group of MTA employees for a quick tour.



The American Orient Express includes club cars originally built for the Union Pacific Railroad and an observation car that served for 20 years on the New York Central's 20th Century Limited.

The Pullman Company built the sleeping carriages between 1948 and 1958 for use on the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad, the Nickel Plate Railroad and the Southern Pacific and Union Pacific railroads.

\$15 million renovation

All together, some \$15 million was spent in renovating the cars whose interiors now include plush furniture and glisten with polished mahogany and brass. The New York observation car, dedicated by General Dwight Eisenhower in 1948, features a circular bay window.








The ceiling of the Seattle club car is painted to resemble an early morning sky twinkling with 24-karat gold stars, while the ceiling of the Rocky Mountain club car depicts the Milky Way in pure gold leaf.

A 44-member American Orient Express crew includes porters, chefs, serving staff, bartenders and tour guides. The Denver-based company contracts locomotion services from Amtrak, which provides a three- or four-member train crew.

The route of the American Orient Express is a huge circle that encompasses Canada and the United States. The U.S. route covers the Eastern Seaboard, the Old South, Southwest and Pacific Coast. Branch lines take passengers through the national parks of the

western states.

A trip on the American Orient Express is somewhat more pricey than riding Metro Rail. Peak season tours range from about \$3,400 to \$5,800; off-peak tours are \$3,200 to \$5,300.

GALLERY		
	<p>The American Orient Express, which features restored historic rail cars from the 1940s and '50s, tours the United States and Canada year-round.</p>	
	<p>Porter Barbara Navy, left, welcomes passengers aboard the American Orient Express. At right, Chief Purser Carmen Beck describes the train to a tour group of MTA employees seated in a lounge car.</p>	
	<p>Chef Courtney Nguyen displays a sumptuous platter of fresh meats, cheese and vegetables while Roger Chase chops tomatoes. At right, Michelle Caldwell tries to decide where to sit in a lounge car.</p>	
	<p>The table is set with fine china and sterling silver and awaiting the evening's diners. At right, bartender Juan Bermudez stands ready to serve refreshments to thirsty passengers.</p>	
	<p>Warren Morse, at left, imagines taking a sip of champagne in one of the train's Presidential Suites. At right, Lonnie Mitchell, Tom Conner and Gary Spivack take a look at the Zurich dining car.</p>	
		PHOTOS BY BILL HEARD

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'How You Doin'?' Program

Division 1, Division 6, Metro Red Line Take April Honors

(May 30, 2001) The stats are in for April and Division 1 transportation, Division 6 maintenance and the Metro Red Line are tops in the Transit Operations "How You Doin'" program. It wasn't the first time the three units had earned trophies. Division 6 maintenance ranked number one in January and March. Division 1 transportation was named "Most Improved" in the first quarter and the Metro Red Line was the top rail line in March.



Shown as members of the Metro Red Line team are Cheryl Brown, Rail Administration; Ralph de la Cruz, Rail DEO; and Tanzeem Rizvi and Paul Squires, Wayside Systems. Vehicle/Equipment Maintenance Employees: William Bellmonte, Hilda Alvarado, Raul Quintana, Jim Rogers, Richard Perez, Hector Villa, Eston Bakaimani, Ricardo Cuellar, Henry Tran and Arnold Nacar. Also, Ed Langer, Wayside Systems; Rita Malone, Transportation Division Manager; George Matejovsky, Wayside Systems; Bob Ogus, Vehicle/Equipment Maintenance; Manuel Banuelos (kneeling) Transportation; Jess Diaz, Rail Transportation Superintendent; Jack Eich, Vehicle/Equipment Maintenance Superintendent; Esther Cabison, Wayside Systems and Don Gump, Stores/Logistics.



Pictured at Division 6 maintenance are, front row, Rick Hittinger, Joe Medrano, Fausto Flores, Edgar Grazziani, Jose Ramierz, Hector Esparza, Cassandra Webb, Ron Whitney and Richard Hunt. Back row: Jim Lukens, Yuriy Kaganovsky, Darryl Henderson, Gloria Stephens, Manuel Lopez and

Manuel Guerra.



Division 1 team members, from left, are Yolanda Aguilar, Rosa Graciano, John Roberts, Limon Gabino, Pedro Gomez, Jaun Romo, Rolando Lopez, John Alvarez, Beatrice Evans, Richard Cuevas, Victor Gonzalez, Connie Velasco and Jesse Castorena.

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Salvador L. Gatdula
1944-2001

Funeral Services for Sal Gatdula Set Saturday in Downey

(May 30, 2001) Salvador L. (Sal) Gatdula, 57, an Equipment Engineering manager who had worked for the MTA for 15 years, died Sunday at San Vicente Medical Center after a brief illness.

Gatdula had been a key member of the team that successfully developed the MTA's fleet of compressed natural gas buses. He was married and the father of two children.

Visitation services will be held Thursday from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Friday from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. at Forest Lawn Mortuary at 4471 Lincoln Ave., Cypress (800) 204-3131.

Mass will be celebrated at 9 a.m., Saturday, June 2, at St. Raymond Catholic Church, 12348 South Paramount Blvd., Downey (562) 923-4509. Burial services will follow immediately afterwards at Forest Lawn Mortuary.

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Friends Ask TOWP Donations



Dotti Kesinger

for Dotti Kesinger during Cancer Treatment

(May 30, 2001) Co-workers of Dotti Kesinger, an administrative aide in Accounting, are asking employees to donate TOWP hours to help during her battle against cancer.

Kesinger was diagnosed with cancer in mid-March and had surgery later that month. She had a second surgery in April and is scheduled to begin two months of chemotherapy this week.

Meanwhile, her TOWP account is running low. Employees who would like to donate TOWP hours to Kesinger may contact Susan Cariasa at 922-6162 or Rosa Garcia Gonzalez at 922-6172.

Human Resources [Policy HR 7-2](#) (Time Off With Pay), Paragraph 1.6, describes donation of TOWP hours. The paragraph also provides a link to a [Request and Authorization form](#) that can be printed out and completed by the donor. Forms may be sent to Cariasa or Gonzalez at Mail Stop 99-20-8.

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MTA Introduces New Metro Bus Line 340; Minor Route, Schedule Changes Set June 3

By RICK JAGER

(May 31, 2001) The MTA will introduce Metro Bus Line 340 (Hawthorne Boulevard Limited) and extend Line 107 (54th Street-Fairview Boulevard-Santa Ana Street) as well as make other minor route and schedule changes effective Sunday, June 3.

Line 340 will provide limited stop service on Hawthorne Boulevard between the Metro Green Line and Washington Boulevard. Service will be provided on weekdays during the morning and afternoon peak travel times.

In addition, the MTA will extend Line 107 to serve the Slauson Metro Blue Line station. Line 107, operating seven days a week, will replace service formally provided by Line 114. Line 114 (Florence Station-Santa Ana Street-Clara Street) will be discontinued effective June 3.

To further improve operating efficiencies and avoid duplication of services, the MTA will cancel the following lines effective June 3:

- Line 402 (LA-Pasadena-Park-n-Ride Express)
- Line 436 (LA-Venice Blvd.-Ocean Park Express)
- Line 466 (LA-Downey-La Mirada-Park-n-Ride Express)

Minor schedule modifications to improve efficiency in bus service will be effective June 3 on Metro Rapid Lines 720 and 750 and on the following Metro Bus lines: 2, 3, 4, 16, 18, 20, 21, 26, 33, 37, 40, 45, 46, 51, 55, 56, 60, 66, 70, 78, 79, 92, 93, 102, 108, 110, 111, 115, 150, 152, 154, 156, 158, 161, 163, 164, 165, 166, 170, 175, 176, 183, 200, 204, 207, 209, 210, 212, 217, 233, 234, 236, 240, 243, 251, 252, 258, 259, 262, 302, 304, 310, 311, 315, 316, 333, 340, 345, 357, 362, 378, 379, 401, 410, 418, 426, 434, 442, 445, 460, 483, 484, 485, 490, 561 and 576.

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