

Metro Report Archives

August 2001 Articles

[MTA Report](#)

[Bulletin Board](#)

[Statement by MTA Ceo Julian Burke](#) Concerning the Ruling by the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals (Aug. 31, 2001)

[A New Look for mta.net](#) Sharpens Focus On Customer Needs (Aug. 31, 2001) The MTA is introducing a new look for its web site this week that reflects the agency's diverse range of transportation responsibilities and puts customers just a click away from vital information.

MTA Declares September '[Metro Blue Line Safety Month](#)' as Kids Head Back to School (Aug. 30, 2001) - As thousands of children living near the Metro Blue Line tracks head back to school, the MTA is moving safety to the head of the class by declaring September 'Metro Blue Line Safety Month.'

[Survey Quizzes Patrons](#) on Parking Lot Use at NoHo, Universal City (Aug. 29, 2001) When Metro Red Line patrons find the parking lots at the North Hollywood and Universal City stations chockablock with cars by 9 a.m., they're miffed. And some park illegally.

Successful Start for Snoble, Cutting Workers Comp are Top Goals for [Board Chairman Fasana](#) (Aug. 28, 2001) Getting the MTA's new CEO, Roger Snoble, off to a successful start is one of Board Chairman John Fasana's primary goals for the year ahead. In a short address during the August Board meeting, Fasana also said the agency must target reductions in workers compensation costs.

[FTA Awards MTA](#) \$4.4 Million for CNG Buses (Aug. 24, 2001) The MTA will receive more than \$4.4 million in federal funds to purchase compressed natural gas (CNG) buses, U.S. Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta has announced.

Munis Join With MTA To Promote September's '[Try Transit Week](#)' (Aug. 24, 2001) Commuters throughout LA County will have a chance to ponder the benefits of giving their cars a day off, thanks to the efforts of MTA's Marketing department.

Santa Monica's [John Catoe](#) to Join MTA as Deputy CEO (Aug. 23, 2001) John B. Catoe, director of Santa Monica's Big Blue Bus will join the MTA later this year to serve as deputy chief executive officer to the agency's new CEO, Roger Snoble.

Board Action Update, Aug. 23:
[Universal Fare System](#) May Simplify Fare Collection, Cut Fare Fraud, Reduce Passenger Hassles (Aug. 23, 2001) It could be the wave of the future for LA transit riders. A wallet-sized card that allows passengers to board more quickly and conveniently on any bus or train in the county, prevents fare fraud and provides feedback on ridership.
Approved by the full Board.

[State Controller](#) Finds MTA Complying with Consent Decree (Aug. 22, 2001) The MTA is complying with the 1996 federal Consent Decree, State Controller Kathleen Connell said, Tuesday, in releasing an audit of

the agency.

'No-Graffiti' Signs Attract – Guess What – Vandals! Deputies Make 2 Arrests ; Data Base Lists Vandalism Suspects (Aug. 21, 2001) It was like tempting a bear with honey. When Sheriff's deputies placed a "No-Graffiti" sign at a bus stop in East LA, recently, two vandals just couldn't resist. They defaced it with a "slap tag."

Mayor Hahn Names LA Native, former MTA Intern to Serve on Board (Aug. 17, 2001) A native of Los Angeles whose family has long been prominent in the African American business community. A recent arrival to the city who until last month served as an MTA intern. New MTA Board members Paul C. Hudson and Allison Yoh – appointees of Mayor James Hahn – are profiled below by Editor Bill Heard.

MTA Metro Art And Poetry Society of America Launch "Poetry In Motion" Series for 2001-2002 (Aug. 17, 2001) MTA Metro Art and the Poetry Society of America will continue their co-presentation of *Poetry in Motion*® L.A. for the next 12 months. The literary arts program is aimed at bringing poetry to more than one million Metro Bus riders daily.

Committee Action Update, Aug. 17:

Universal Fare System May Simplify Fare Collection, Cut Fare Fraud, Reduce Passenger Hassles (Aug. 14, 2001) It could be the wave of the future for LA transit riders. A wallet-sized card that allows passengers to board more quickly and conveniently on any bus or train in the county, prevents fare fraud and provides feedback on ridership.

MTA Aids Victims of Deadly Hollywood Hotel Fire (Aug. 16, 2001) The MTA came to the aid of the displaced residents of a Hollywood hotel heavily damaged by an early morning fire. Two women were killed in the blaze and two children were hospitalized.

State Auditor Faults MTA in Monitoring Bus Operator Driving Records MTA Cites 'Excellent Safety Record'; Agency Outlines Series of Improvements (Aug. 15, 2001) The California State Auditor, in a report released late Tuesday, criticized the MTA's record-keeping system for preventing Metro Bus operators from violating state and federal restrictions on hours behind the wheel.

Day Planners for Students Have Built-in Safety Message. (Aug. 14, 2001) Waving the "Safety First!" banner of the Office of Safety, Systems and Security, the communications team of Public Affairs and Marketing hit the streets with a new safety campaign, a "Student Planner" for students attending schools along the Metro Blue Line alignment.

MTA Board Approves Funding for Metro Freeway Service Patrol to Ease Traffic During Freeway Construction (Aug. 13, 2001) Anticipating a heavy schedule of highway construction over the next two years, the MTA will help Caltrans mitigate traffic congestion by providing an additional \$3 million for the Metro Freeway Service Patrol (FSP).

MTA Aids Victims of Deadly Hollywood Hotel Fire (Aug. 16, 2001) The MTA came to the aid of the displaced residents of a Hollywood hotel heavily damaged by an early morning fire. Two women were killed in the blaze and two children were hospitalized.

[State Auditor](#) Faults MTA in Monitoring Bus Operator Driving Records MTA Cites 'Excellent Safety Record'; Agency Outlines Series of Improvements (Aug. 15, 2001) The California State Auditor, in a report released late Tuesday, criticized the MTA's record-keeping system for preventing Metro Bus operators from violating state and federal restrictions on hours behind the wheel.

[Day Planners](#) for Students Have Built-in Safety Message. (Aug. 14, 2001) Waving the "Safety First!" banner of the Office of Safety, Systems and Security, the communications team of Public Affairs and Marketing hit the streets with a new safety campaign, a "Student Planner" for students attending schools along the Metro Blue Line alignment.

MTA Board Approves Funding for [Metro Freeway Service Patrol](#) to Ease Traffic During Freeway Construction (Aug. 13, 2001) Anticipating a heavy schedule of highway construction over the next two years, the MTA will help Caltrans mitigate traffic congestion by providing an additional \$3 million for the Metro Freeway Service Patrol (FSP).

Metro Blue Line Rider's [Good Deed](#) Earns Praise of Board's Operations Committee *August 3, 2001* - No good deed goes unpunished, it must be written somewhere, but in the case of a Good Samaritan who came to the aid of a fellow transit passenger, a certain good deed was, at least, reimbursed.

[MTA Unveils Plaque](#) Honoring Late Congressman Julian Dixon (Aug. 2, 2001) In a ceremony, Thursday, on Patsaouras Plaza, MTA officials unveiled a plaque honoring the late U.S. Rep. Julian Dixon. The plaque will be placed in the recently renamed 7th/Metro/Julian Dixon Metro Rail station.

[Court Decision](#) Will Disqualify Tutor-Saliba-Perini from Future MTA Contracts, Burke Says. Feds to Investigate. (Aug. 2, 2001) The Superior Court judgment against Tutor-Saliba-Perini Corp. "will certainly disqualify this contractor from bidding" on MTA projects in the future, CEO Julian Burke told a group of reporters gathered, Wednesday, at MTA Headquarters.

[Jury Awards \\$29 Million](#) to MTA in Suit Against Tutor-Saliba-Perini (Aug. 1, 2001) A Superior Court jury returned a verdict, Wednesday, awarding the MTA more than \$29 million in its six-year quest to recover damages from the Tutor-Saliba-Perini Corp.

Bulletin Board

- **Proud of Your [Classic Car](#) or Bike? Sign Up for the Car Show** (Aug. 24, 2001) The MTA and the Rapid Transit Club are inviting employees who own classic autos or motorcycles to participate in a benefit – "Showin' for a Cure" – Oct. 13, at the Regional Rebuild Center.
- **[FIS System](#) Due for Overhaul; Dec. 31 Rollout for Major Upgrade** (Aug. 23, 2001) The MTA's Financial Information System (FIS) reached its fifth birthday in March and, although it received a tuneup for Y2K, some felt it was due for a major overhaul.
- **Non-Rep Employees Will Get [2 Paychecks](#) on Friday**
- **[Division 18 Operator](#) Injured in Collision with Trash Truck**

(Aug. 22, 2001) A Metro Bus operator was hospitalized, Tuesday, following a collision with a trash truck in Hawthorne. Six passengers also were injured.

- **Intranet Welcomes [Engineering/Construction Web Pages](#)** (Aug. 22, 2001) The MTA Intranet is cutting the electronic ribbon, today, on a bright new addition to metro.net – the Engineering/Construction Division web pages.
- **SAVE THE DATE: [Venice Division 6 Celebrates 100 Years of Service](#)** (Aug. 20, 2001) MTA Division 6, the Venice Division, is celebrating its centennial on Saturday, Aug. 25, with an open house for employees: a day at the beach with community, transportation and historic displays, family fun, and festivities that include a bus-size barbecue and live music.
- **[Division 10 Storeroom](#) took top honors as Procurement's Storeroom of the Quarter** for the April – June quarter of FY 2001.
- **[MTA's Brad Balduff](#) Fought Back From Amnesia, Paralysis and Blindness to Regain a Productive Life** (Aug. 15, 2001) Memory Lane doesn't go back far for Bradford Balduff, the MTA's 32-year-old assistant webmaster – 10 years to be exact. Before that, everything is a blur.
- **[Procurement Housecleaning](#) Reaps Mounds of Paper** (Aug. 7, 2001) When employees in MTA Procurement realized, recently, that they were up to their ears in paper, they cleaned house. By the barrelful.
- **NOW PLAYING Public Affairs [Travelin' Safety Show](#)** - MTA Public Affairs staff and volunteers have flooded communities with the Office of Safety, Systems and Security's 'safe crossing' message at schools, community events, businesses, organizations, and the advertising media. Here is a tour of just *some* of the stops along the way.
- **Valley Busway [Project Manager](#) Stays Calm in Eye of MTA's 'Perfect Storm'** The 14-mile busway the MTA Board has approved to link the Metro Red Line station in North Hollywood to Warner Center in Woodland Hills – and what route it will ultimately follow – have been the all-consuming question confronting MTA Project Manager Kevin Michel 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- **'HOW YOU DOIN'?' [Transit Operations](#) Announces Top Divisions of Quarter and Month.**

[Back to Archives](#)

Former MTA Intern Allison Yoh Now Serves on Board

• A Bus Rider, She Doesn't Own a Car



Allison Yoh

By BILL HEARD, Editor

Allison Yoh is a confirmed transit rider who doesn't even own a car. She was chosen by Mayor James Hahn, in fact, as someone who could bring the bus rider's perspective to the 13-member Board.

Yoh, 30, is a native of Florida and a graduate student who's working toward a master's degree in urban planning at UCLA. She was hired, last summer, as an intern in Countywide Planning's Systems Analysis and Research department where she has helped survey bus riders and the public. She resigned that position in July to serve on the Board.

"I ride the buses and talk with people who ride them and I see some of the problems," she says. "I'm there to witness the great things about the bus system and some of the things that impede people's access."

Yoh's eyes were opened to the need for effective community transportation when she volunteered at a county suicide prevention and crisis center in her Gainesville, Fla., home town. Clients, she found, needed the support of family, friends and social services for a successful recovery. "A lot depended upon how well they were able to access those services."

That experience and her internship at the MTA heightened Yoh's interest in transportation, now a specialty area of her master's degree program.

Working on ridership project

Currently, she's working on a project funded by San Jose State and UCLA's Institute of Transportation Studies to learn how some transit agencies have increased ridership. This fall, she'll begin work on a doctorate in urban planning.

"Travel is something that affects everyone's daily life – whether you can get to work on time, drop off your kids or get to school," says Yoh. "I'm really interested in improving the reliability, schedule adherence and other factors that affect whether people can trust transit to work in their favor."

For the past two years, Yoh – who lives on the border of West LA – has used Santa Monica bus lines 1 and 2, Culver City airport buses, Metro Rapid and Metro Bus lines on Wilshire Boulevard to take her where she needs to go. Only occasionally does she drive a borrowed car.

As a UCLA student, she can ride the Big Blue Bus free by swiping her student ID card – the "Bruin Go" pass – in the fare machine when she boards. This pilot program is similar to some aspects of the Universal Fare System the Board will consider in the months ahead.

"I think it would be great for bus riders not to have to worry about having a token or passes or paying an extra quarter for a transfer," Yoh says. "It will make transferring bus lines much easier."

A real challenge

"That's my perspective as a bus rider," she adds. "Such a massive project brings uncertainty; and the real challenge is trying to anticipate – as best we can – all the unexpected results and problems."

Allison Yoh is the daughter of a Gainesville auto body shop owner and former math professor, Richard, a native of Shanghai. Her mother, Jau, a chemist at the University of Florida, is originally from Liaoning, a province in northern China. Both her parents immigrated to the U.S. from Taiwan. Her brother, Eric, 26, works in their father's business.

Yoh earned a bachelor's degree in anthropology at UC Berkeley in 1994, then worked in the Registrar's Office at the University of Florida before moving to Los Angeles in 1999 to start her master's program at UCLA.

A volunteer computer trainer at the Little Tokyo Service Center, she also is interested in martial arts and modern dance.

[Back to MTA Report](#)

Board Member Paul Hudson Has Deep Community Roots



Paul Hudson

By BILL HEARD, Editor

Paul C. Hudson, 53, is president and CEO of Broadway Federal Bank, the oldest African American bank west of the Mississippi. Born and reared in LA, he practiced law in Washington, D.C., before following his grandfather and father as head of the bank.

Active in the community, Hudson has worked with such organizations as the LA Chamber of Commerce, the American Red Cross and the Economic Development Corp. He currently serves on the boards of Pitzer College, the Orthopaedic Hospital Foundation and the Los Angeles World Airports Business Council, among others.

"This city is my birthplace and where I spent most of my life," Hudson says. His community and family ties will provide a perspective on the transportation needs of the city – which, he notes, is more crowded than ever.

"As a long-time resident, I'm constantly amazed at how much vehicle traffic there is these days on surface streets and freeways at all hours," he says. "I can remember when it wasn't congested."

Positive consumer response

The Metro Rapid system, Hudson believes, has been "an excellent improvement to the city's transportation system" that "met with a very positive consumer response. My goal would be to look for additional innovative ways to improve bus service to get people to their destinations quicker."

Although Hudson admits he's not a transportation expert, he thinks he "can be most effective as a consumer, particularly as a consumer of the sort the MTA should try to attract into the transportation system."

A proponent of the Metro Rail system, he says the addition of the Pasadena Blue Line "can only help in the consumer's understanding and willingness to use public transportation. It's more visible, and that's important."

Hudson earned a bachelor's degree at UC, Berkeley, in 1970, and a law degree in 1973 from Boalt Hall School of Law. He completed the Graduate School of Savings Institution Management at the University of Texas, Austin, in 1989.

With his wife, Brenda, he has a stepdaughter, Gia, 21, a senior at Pitzer College.

[Back to MTA Report](#)

'How YOU Doin'?

They're Doin' Great!

Top Divisions of the Quarter
Division 1 Transportation
Division 5 and Division 6 Maintenance Tie
Metro Red Line

Top Divisions of the Month
Division 1 Transportation
Division 9 Maintenance
Metro Red Line

PHOTOS COURTESY OF TRANSIT OPERATIONS



Division 1 achieved **Transportation Division of the Month**, **Transportation Division of the Quarter** and **Most Improved Transportation Division of the Quarter**. They received a \$1,000 bonus.



Division 2 achieved **Most Improved Maintenance Division of the Quarter**.



Division 5, above, and **Division 6**, below, achieved **Maintenance Divisions of the Quarter**. It was a tie. Both divisions received \$500.



Metro Red Line achieved **Rail Line of the Month** and **Rail Line of the Quarter**.



Division 9 received **Maintenance Division of the Month**. A repeat winner, Division 9 Maintenance crew is pictured above after winning Maintenance Division of the Quarter earlier this year. (File photo was taken in April)

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)

'How YOU Doin'?'

They're Doin' Great!

Divisions of the Month
July 2001

PHOTOS COURTESY OF TRANSIT OPERATIONS



Metro Red Line is "Rail Line of the Month."



Division 6 is "Maintenance Division of the Month."



Division 3 is "Transportation Division of the Month."

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)



Friends in Deed - MTA officials give a hero's welcome to 'Good Samaritan' transit rider Lajuan Ramsey, center, at Operations Committee meeting. Pictured are, from left, Redline Supt. Jess Diaz, Lajuan's mother Sophia Ramsey, Capt. Dan Finkelstein, Ramsey, Transit chief Richard Hunt, Security chief Paul Lennon and Rail chief Ralph de la Cruz.

Operations Committee Comes to the Aid of 'Good Samaritan'

By GAYLE ANDERSON

No good deed goes unpunished, it must be written somewhere, but in the case of a Good Samaritan who came to the aid of a fellow transit passenger, a certain good deed was, at least, reimbursed.

In the early evening of May 31, Venice resident Lajuan Ramsey, a 17-year-old high school student, was awaiting arrival of a Metro Blue Line train at the Wilmington Station when, suddenly, a fellow passenger slipped from the platform. The quick-thinking Ramsey discarded his backpack and immediately leapt to the passenger's assistance.

In the meantime, an equally quick-thinking thief had snatched the backpack from the platform and made off with its contents. They included Ramsey's monthly Metro pass, wallet, school books and, by chance, his birth certificate.

When word of the incident reached MTA officials by way of the watch commander's log, a grateful staff from the Office of Safety and Security began looking for a way to compensate the Good Samaritan. Soon, Ramsey's name was added to the agenda of the MTA Board of Directors Operations Committee meeting, where he was to be presented with a commendation.

When the young man, flanked by a proud mother and his 7-year-old sister, arrived at the MTA Board Room July 19, he received more than an official pat on the back. Tacked onto the commendation was a check for \$231, the amount estimated to cover the replacement cost of the backpack and its contents.

Lajuan Ramsey remained silent in the glow of a hero's welcome, softly thanking a squadron of sheriff's deputies and admiring MTA officials before exiting with his laurels and a bright new Metro Pass.

[Back to MTA Report](#)

Public Affairs staff and volunteers have flooded communities with the MTA's Office of Safety, Systems and Security's 'safe crossing' message at schools, community events, businesses, organizations, and the advertising media. Here is a tour of just some of the stops along the way. Photos and captions, listed below, were submitted by Rich Morallo, assistant communications manager of Public Affairs. -- by Gayle Anderson.



Captions submitted by Rich Morallo.

Neighborhood children were guests of honor June 22 at the ribbon cutting ceremony for the **53rd Street Pedestrian Bridge** just north of the Slauson Metro Blue Line Station. At the event, held near the south-east corner of 53rd Street and Long Beach Avenue, officials announced that the bridge would be scheduled to be open to the public in three months.

The MTA participated at the **Van Nuys Block Party** for public safety and quality of life issues on June 30, 2001, where a trio of **Lakers fans** shows off the "Metro" logo.

A young visitor the MTA booth eyes the train safety pamphlet, "Tracks Means Trains."

More than 30 **train safety volunteers** who help teach the families and students along the Metro Blue Line alignment about track safety were recognized at an awards luncheon held Thursday, June 28 at the MTA. The safety volunteers, who include MTA staff, Los Angeles Unified School District teachers, LAPD officers, sheriff's deputies, and representatives from various rail companies, also saw a Power Point presentation documenting their work in the community.

MTA train safety **Tony Andersen** talks to students about keeping away from tracks during a visit to **Hooper Avenue Elementary School**, which is near the Slauson Metro Blue Line Station.

Members of the **MTA Citizens Advisory Council** toured Metro Rail on Friday, June 29, including a ride on the vintage Pacific Electric Red Car currently running on the Metro Blue Line, and a visit to the Division 11 maintenance facility in Long Beach. Rail Transit Operations Supervisors

Ricardo Perez (left) and Hector Gutierrez (right) escorted the guests during their visit.

Students from **Ascot Elementary School** near the Vernon Metro Blue Line Station took a Metro Rail tour on Thursday, June 14, and visited 7th and Metro Station where they learned about train **safety and security**. Escorting the students were LASD Deputies Albert Martinez, left, and David Neil, third from left, and LAPD Officers Adam Moore, second from left, and Nathan Rubalcaba.

Assisting the DAC members was train safety volunteer **Rudy Beuermann** explaining the Metro Rail system to a visitor at **Youthfest**.

Senior Communications Officer Greg Berumen announces the winners of the MTA/LA Galaxy Safety Writing and Poster Contest during the **awards luncheon** for the winners who are elementary and junior high school students at **Markham Middle School**, and Holmes Avenue and Nevin Avenue Elementary Schools.

Train safety presenter **Cynthia Shavers** explains traffic signage near a highway-rail grade crossing to bus operators with MV Transportation in Paramount last Saturday, July 7. The MTA's safety outreach program, traditionally focusing on schools along the Metro Blue Line tracks, has expanded to include bus companies including **Laidlaw** and MV Transportation, whose operators drive **Access Services** and DASH vehicles. The train safety volunteers explain to operators how to keep their vehicles, passengers and themselves safe near trackways.

The MTA recognized on Wednesday, June 13, the winners of the **train safety essay contest conducted at Los Angeles City College**, which is adjacent to the Santa Monica/LACC Metro Red Line subway station. Communications Officer Joanne Longsdon, far right, and Communications Aide Cristine Coronado, second from left, presented the awards, including a cake, to the students. (Photo courtesy of LACC).

Public Affairs Manager Lynda Bybee congratulates a winner and Poster Contest with Senior Communications Officer Greg Berumen in the background.

LA Galaxy soccer star and safety spokesperson **Mauricio Cienfuegos** helps present awards at the MTA/LA Galaxy Safety Writing and Poster Contest held at Markham Middle School last June 20.

(Seventeen students from schools near Metro Blue Line (MBL) stations received prizes for their winning entries in the **MTA/LA Galaxy Safety Writing and Poster Contest** during an awards luncheon held Wednesday, June 20 at Markham Middle School. Mauricio Cienfuegos, one of the leading scorers of the LA Galaxy soccer team and spokesperson of the train safety campaign, helped present the prizes which included Metro school bags and soccer tickets. The students, from Markham Middle School, Holmes Avenue Elementary School and Nevin Avenue Elementary School, wrote essays and drew posters expressing how they would stay safe around tracks and trains. Markham is near the 103rd MBL Station, while Holmes and Nevin are near the Washington and Slauson Stations, respectively. The MTA started a joint-safety campaign three months ago with LA Galaxy to help draw the attention of thousands of students who live and study near the MBL corridor.)

Rail Transit Operations Supervisor Ricardo Perez explains the Metro Rail to a class of **Metro Art docents** on Monday, June 25, at Division 20. The docents, who received safety and security training on both the light and heavy rail systems, will be conducting tours of Metro Art on the Metro Blue, Green and Red lines.

Division Advisory Committee (DAC) members including (from left) Norma Carrasco, Division 2; Joyce Covington-Trass, Division 5; Robert Rodriguez, Division 2; and Diana Elorriaga (seated), Division 1, provided MTA information during the June 23 **Youthfest** held at the L.A. Sports Arena. Joyce also escorted visitors onto an MTA bus (59) that was on display.

Assisting the DAC members was train safety volunteer Rudy Beuermann explaining the Metro Rail system to a visitor, and **Pat Clark** who brought her daughter to help. Hundreds of students picked up general and safety information from the MTA **Youthfest** booth.

MTA recognized winners of a train safety poster contest at **Condit Elementary School** in Claremont last Wednesday, May 9. From left, Senior Deputy Gary De Bondt, Sergeant Dennis Porter and Public Affairs staff member Stacy Romo, presented various prizes to the first grade students and encouraged their classmates to "Look, Listen and Live" around train tracks.

Two **Chinese delegations** recently visited the MTA and toured Metro Rail. On Monday, July 2, a group of visitors representing various transit and science and technology companies rode the subway, and on Thursday, July 5, another group of delegates from different highway and transportation offices received an agency orientation before touring Union Station and the Metro Red Line.

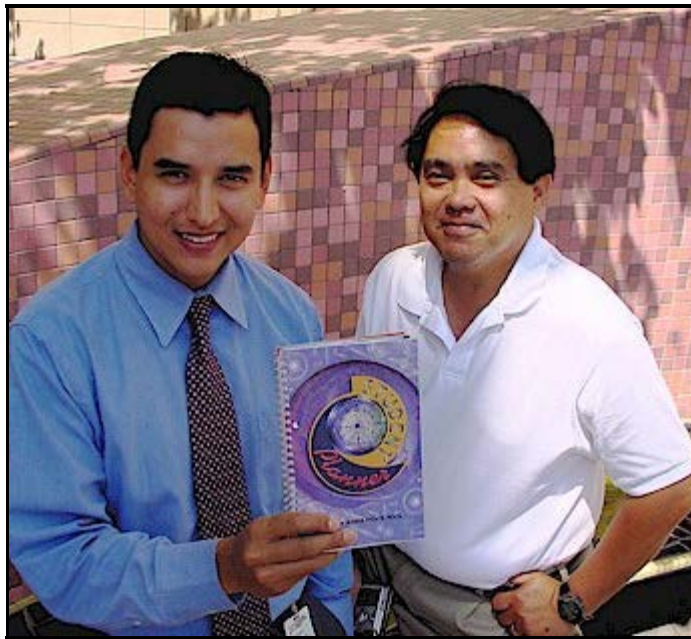
LAPD Chief Bernard Parks displays the train safety slogan, "Look, Listen, Live" at the **Van Nuys Block Party**

MTA Board Member **Yvonne Burke** displays the "Look, Listen and Live" train safety slogan while volunteer **Cristine Coronado** talks to visitors at the agency's booth during the June 16 **Brotherhood Crusade Health Fair** at Exposition Park. Hundreds of visitors learned how to stay safe near tracks and trains.

A Lakers fan and participant at the **Abilities Expo** held at the Long Beach Convention Center last Friday, Saturday and Sunday, was one of hundreds of visitors who passed by the MTA table. Members of the MTA Access Advisory Committee and the Division Advisory Committee answered questions regarding the accessible services on buses and trains, while safety volunteers passed out "Look, Listen and Live" train safety information.

Hundreds of students picked up general and safety information from the MTA **Youthfest** booth.

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)



Marketing's Greg Berumen and Public Affairs' Rich Morallo teamed up to produce day planners with a built-in safety message for students.

MTA's Day Planners for Students come with Built-in Safety Message

By GAYLE ANDERSON

It's not enough that Public Affairs says "Safety" hundreds of times a day. It's the hundreds of ways they say it, thanks to the innovative efforts of the communications team of Public Affairs and Marketing.

Waving the "Safety First!" banner of the Office of Safety, Systems and Security, the communications team's latest campaign to hit the LA streets is the "Student Planner," a real-time day-tripper for students that works just like the time management day planners at the office.

Rich Morallo, assistant communications manager of Public Affairs, came to Marketing with a challenge: "What can we do, new, that keeps our message alive?"

Student planners, a spiral bound notebook with a built-in safety message, was the creative answer. Coordinated by Marketing's Greg Berumen, senior communications officer, the planners were designed and produced for distribution to 5th through 12th grade students who attend schools that border the Metro Blue Line alignment.



The back cover features a strong message from MTA Safety Guy.

The MTA delivered more than 11,000 of the day planners to 19 junior and secondary schools in July with a cover letter from Public Affairs Communications Manager Linda Bybee inviting teachers to integrate the student planners into the daily curriculum.

"Setting priorities and breaking down large tasks into manageable pieces is a difficult but essential skill for students to master," read the letter. "We sincerely hope that the planners will assist in developing students' time management skills."

Equally clear was the strong safety message conveyed by the planner

itself.

The familiar MTA Safety Guy waggles his friendly finger on the back cover, which shouts his earnest message from a cartoon bubble: "Tracks Mean Trains! So Stop, Look and Listen!" A colorful map of the Metro Rail system is placed handily inside the back cover.

Inside the front cover is a clear, sparse warning on graffiti: "Tag? You're it!" The close-up image of handcuffed wrists says it all. Additionally, safety messages are interspersed throughout the pages along with daily attention-getters of fun facts, and inspirational quotes.

Since the outreach program started in 1999, Public Affairs staff and volunteers have flooded communities with their safe crossing message at schools, community events, businesses, organizations, and the advertising media.

"The MTA safety program will soon expand with the completion of the Pasadena light rail, which will connect to the Eastside rail line," said Morallo. "We are currently looking to secure a mobile van that we can take out to the schools, community centers and weekend public events to provide a multimedia train safety information center. It's just another tool to help encourage families to be careful when crossing the tracks."

[Back to MTA Report](#)

Click on
[Public Affairs](#)
[Travelin'](#)
[Safety Show](#)
to tour the
stops along
the way.



Community members consider proposed San Fernando Valley east-west busway.

Valley Busway Project Manager Stays Calm in Eye of MTA's 'Perfect Storm'



Kevin Michel

By GARY WOSK

The 14-mile busway the MTA Board has approved to link the Metro Red Line station in North Hollywood to Warner Center in Woodland Hills – and what route it will ultimately follow – have been the all-consuming question confronting MTA Project Manager Kevin Michel 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

"I'm always going over the project alternatives and community concerns in my mind, searching for a middle ground or compromise," said Michel, "and it's true, that sometimes I have my best thoughts when I'm farthest away from MTA such as working in the garden, playing the guitar, or just taking a walk.

"I have tried to focus my thoughts on something else on my day off, but now I understand that inspiration works best to the beat of its own drummer. And since thoughts of work creep into my free time, I figure it's only fair to occasionally day dream of faraway places and beautiful beaches at work."

The Valley's Bus Rapid Transit project, with its 13 stations, will reduce travel time between the two terminuses by 20-minutes, as compared to a regular bus. It will connect such passenger magnets Pierce and Valley colleges, the Van Nuys Government Center, the Sepulveda Recreation Center, Warner Center and the NoHo Arts District.

Air thick with tension

Although the air in the 100-plus community meetings he's participated in can be thick with tension, the Brooklyn, New York-born Michel reacts to the sometimes emotional remarks from opponents of the project with compassion and a commitment to solutions and compromise.

Michel, who earned a master's degree in public administration from Cal State Long Beach and a graduate certificate in transportation planning from UC Riverside, occasionally discusses the high decibel meetings with his younger brother,

a rock drummer.

The consensus: there is a similarity between a sold-out concert auditorium and public hearings, even though the level of applause and requests for curtain calls differ dramatically.

"You have to keep the meetings fresh, vary the delivery, the order and customize it to the audience," says Michel, a guitarist whose family lineage includes a father who played violin and a grandfather who played in a circus band.

Treat audience with respect

"Whether it's the third set of songs you're performing on the same night or the 100th meeting you've scheduled in the last month, you have to treat your audience and your material with respect," he says. "The public wants to hear a person talking, who's comfortable and knowledgeable about the project, not just someone reading a prepared script."

With the Board's decision in July to name the east-west Valley route as the "locally preferred alternative" for the Bus Rapid Transit project, Michel takes consolation in knowing he played a role in getting neighborhoods involved, regardless if for or against the project.

"I'm part of a continuing and satisfying process. There's a reward in knowing that we intelligently and honestly described the project and encouraged people to become involved to help make the project better and to ensure that reasonable alternatives are looked at," he says.

"Overall, I think it's a good project; it will generate good ridership; it will make the lives of existing transit riders better and it will attract people who currently drive cars."

Michel, who actually grew up in the suburbs of Long Island, is a stickler when it comes to preparation. Before a community meeting, he makes it his business to drive along the stretch of right-of-way on which the busway will be built and explores the side streets. He's walked parts of the alignment and has taken bike rides along the entire length.

"It's quite important to learn the lay of the land, the terrain," he says. "The Valley is composed of many neighborhoods. If you approach these issues from the distance or in quick drive-bys from the major streets, you won't catch all the subtleties."

What neighborhoods are about

"This way I have a sense of what the neighborhoods are about," he says, "and when people can see that you have tried to understand their neighborhood, they are more confident in working with you."

Entering a crowded room with as many as 400 boisterous and suspicious people, including media, would be enough to make anyone apprehensive. The battle-tested Michel, however, has developed a thick skin, the result of being in the trenches of public debate over a prolonged period of time.

"There is some momentary stage fright, which is part of the

process, but I quickly work through it," he says. "Nothing is ever going to be unanimous and passionate opposition is probably inevitable, but this is a legitimate process and we're doing our job when we get the communities involved."

During the most intense moments, the former planner for the City of Santa Clarita, finds himself briefly pondering why he entered the field. Credit his grandparents John and Katherine.

"When I was a kid, they used to take me around New York City and Brooklyn on subways, buses, ferry boats and trolley cars," Michel recalls. "My grandfather used to like watching construction projects, which is sort of a New York hobby, and I think from that, I ended up in a profession that helps get things built."

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)



CEO Julian Burke discusses Superior Court's \$29 million award at MTA news conference.

Jury Awards \$29 Million to MTA in Suit against Tutor-Saliba-Perini

(Aug. 1, 2001) A Superior Court jury returned a verdict, Wednesday, awarding the MTA more than \$29 million in its six-year quest to recover damages from the Tutor-Saliba-Perini Corp.

Judge Joseph Kalin earlier ruled that Tutor-Saliba-Perini had intentionally withheld and destroyed documents concerning alleged false payment claims for construction work on the Metro Red Line.

Wednesday's jury award of \$29,567,407 to the MTA stands in sharp contrast to the \$16 million Tutor-Saliba-Perini originally sought from the MTA in 1995 for Metro Red Line work. The company's claims – later reduced to less than \$2.5 million – were denied by the court.

The Board in mid-July rejected a settlement offer by Tutor-Saliba-Perini. No details of the settlement offer were given.

In a statement released Wednesday, MTA Board Chairman John Fasana noted that the court found Tutor-Saliba-Perini responsible as a matter of law for false claims and unfair business practices spanning a decade and said, "...we are gratified that the jury has now agreed that such conduct justified substantial monetary damages."

Reimbursement for legal costs

Assistant County Counsel Steve Carnevale, in a memo to MTA Board members, said the judge also may award a separate amount to reimburse the MTA for certain legal costs. That could add as much as \$7 million to \$10

MTA states reaction to jury verdict at news conference Wednesday afternoon:



MTA lead attorney David Casselman said contractors who engage in illegal practices must be prepared for stiff consequences.



Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky said MTA acted on behalf of all agencies that use private contractors for public projects.



million to the amount awarded by the jury.

Carnevale also told Board members that Tutor-Saliba-Perini is expected to file post-trial motions and an appeal.

Assistant County Counsel Steve Carnevale said the federal government now will look into the case.

In his statement, Fasana said, "...the case against Tutor-Saliba-Perini was not just about money. The MTA hopes to send a strong message to these contractors and all the others that do business with the MTA or any other public agency in Los Angeles County that they must abide by the law or face stiff consequences."

"The MTA works with hundreds of contractors that are legitimate and who play by the rules," Fasana said. "They range from large businesses to small and minority firms. They get paid in full and enjoy a reasonable profit."

"The MTA welcomes their participation as we move forward together on a variety of fronts to improve mobility in Los Angeles County today and into the future," Fasana said.

[Back to MTA Report](#)

Court Decision will Disqualify Tutor-Saliba-Perini from Future MTA Contracts, Burke Says

- **Feds to Investigate**
--May Bar Firm from Contracts, MTA Counsel says

(Aug. 2, 2001) The Superior Court judgment against Tutor-Saliba-Perini Corp. "will certainly disqualify this contractor from bidding" on MTA projects in the future, CEO Julian Burke told a group of reporters gathered, Wednesday, at MTA Headquarters.

The federal government also must investigate charges of illegal activity by the firm with an eye toward possibly barring Tutor-Saliba-Perini from future government contracts, said Assistant County Counsel Steve Carnevale.

A Superior Court jury on Wednesday awarded the MTA \$29.5 million in damages against Tutor-Saliba-Perini. The agency had accused the contractor of unfair and improper business practices during construction of the Metro Red Line.

Carnevale reminded reporters that the subway project – for which the contractor received some \$945 million – was partially funded by the federal government.

"Because of federal involvement, the MTA has an obligation to report the developments in the case, which it has been all along," Carnevale said.

David Casselman, the MTA's lead attorney in the suit against the contractor, said witness testimony and documents obtained during the case showed "that there was a systematic and massive amount of unfair and improper business activity taking place below the surface concealed from the MTA, concealed from its contract management, concealed from its auditors."

A measure of 'deterrence'

Casselmann said the jury awarded almost \$12 million to the MTA as a measure of "deterrence" against future illegal activities by contractors. That sum represents almost all of the profits Tutor-Saliba-Perini reported on its books for the contracts at issue, he said.

Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky said the Board was determined to pursue the case because it "felt so strongly that what was at stake here wasn't just this claim, but the way of business life in this community. If we walked away from this case, we would be inviting fraud to be a daily way of life of doing business in Los Angeles County...."

Asked if he was disappointed that the award of \$29.5 million was less than the \$41 million in damages the MTA had sought, Burke noted that such jury decisions are based on subtle factors. "There's no formula for such decision-making," he said.

Burke said the MTA expects to "recover most, if not all," of the \$19 million the agency spent in legal fees during the suit against Tutor-Saliba-Perini.

Noting that the MTA works with hundreds of contractors, the CEO said, "The great majority of our contractors are honest, hard-working people who are trying to do their job in accordance with the contract." He said

there is only a “handful of cases” that ever go to court.

[Back to MTA Report](#)



From left, Bettye Dixon, wife of the late U.S. Congressman Julian Dixon; MTA Board Chairman John Fasana; the late congressman's son Cary Dixon, and County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky at Thursday's ceremony.

PHOTOS: BILL HEARD

MTA Unveils Plaque Honoring Late Congressman Julian Dixon

• Plaque to be Placed in 7th/Metro Center/Julian Dixon Station

BY RICK JAGER

(Aug. 2, 2001) In a ceremony, Thursday, on Patsaouras Plaza, MTA officials unveiled a plaque honoring the late U.S. Rep. Julian Dixon. The plaque will be placed in the recently renamed 7th/Metro/Julian Dixon Metro Rail station.

Joining in the unveiling of the plaque were the late congressman's widow, Bettye Dixon, and his son Cary, MTA Board Chairman John Fasana, Supervisors Yvonne Brathwaite Burke and Zev Yaroslavsky, City Council President Alex Padilla, City Councilman Nate Holden, CEO Julian Burke and some 100 guests.

Dixon, a member of Congress for 22 years, was a longtime supporter of public transit projects in Los Angeles, including the Metro Rail and Metro Bus systems. He died of an apparent heart attack last December at age 66.

In his remarks, Fasana cited Dixon's experience and credibility as "essential to the success" of the MTA. He noted that the congressman was the leader of a bipartisan coalition that was responsible "for bringing hundreds of millions of dollars to the Los Angeles region, well beyond the MTA."

"Julian Dixon never wavered in his belief that Los Angeles needed a rapid transit system or that Los Angeles would embrace its transit



READ > [Text of Plaque](#)



system when it opened," Fasana said. "Certainly he was our champion of rail, but he also helped us by providing for all the bus operators in this county."

Devoted to the future of Los Angeles

Supervisor Burke, who proposed the motion to name the 7th/Metro station for Dixon, said the congressman "knew that Los Angeles County needed a viable public transportation system. He fought for rail; he fought for subway; he fought for buses. He devoted himself to ensuring the future for Los Angeles County transit."

She said the more than 60,000 passengers that use the station each day will have an opportunity to view the plaque placed in honor of Dixon. "That station, alone, is a vibrant part of this system. It serves a crucial hub of our rail system and is a fitting memorial to the man who worked so hard to bring it about."

"He was 'The Voice' of Los Angeles County transportation in Washington, leading the effort to secure federal funding for Metro Rail and, together with the late Tom Bradley and Kenny Hahn, put together the combination of federal, state and local funding that established this critical component of Los Angeles' mass transit system," Burke said.

"Julian was always at the crossroads of everything when it came to Los Angeles and Southern California," said Yaroslavsky. "Not just in transportation, but in a whole variety of issues. He was a man for all reasons, all seasons, all issues."

Text of plaque

Above, Cary Dixon, MTA CEO Julian Burke and Bettye Dixon. Below, County Supervisor and MTA Board Member Yvonne Brathwaite Burke leads unveiling ceremony.



Supervisor Burke and Mrs. Dixon, above, and awaiting the ceremony with other dignitaries that include Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, foreground, left, and City Councilman Nate Holden, back row, second from left.



Julian C. Dixon

1934 – 2000

United States House of Representatives,
1978 – 2000

Seeing beyond the boundaries of his own congressional district, Julian Dixon knew the importance of viable transportation alternatives for all of Los Angeles County. He was a voice for Los Angeles County in Washington, D.C., and the effort to secure federal funding for Metro Rail. This station is dedicated to him.

"We have built the subway to the Valley, to Hollywood, to Wilshire and to downtown LA. A subway that links other modes of transportation and lies in wait for future projects. We did not get all that we wanted and our system did not come without cost, but significant accomplishments seldom do. Today, we come together to acknowledge the significance of this accomplishment and pledge to continue our great partnership to meet the transit needs of all Angelenos."
-- Julian Dixon at the opening of the Metro Red Line to North Hollywood on June 23, 2000.



More than 100 guests attended. Below, Rick Hittinger, at right, and the Long Beach City College Saxophone Quartet.





From left, Bettye Dixon, wife of the late U.S. Congressman Julian Dixon; MTA Board Chairman John Fasana; the late congressman's son Cary Dixon, and County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky at Thursday's ceremony.

PHOTOS: BILL HEARD

MTA Unveils Plaque Honoring Late Congressman Julian Dixon

- **Plaque to be Placed in 7th/Metro Center/Julian Dixon Station**

BY RICK JAGER

(Aug. 2, 2001) In a ceremony, Thursday, on Patsaouras Plaza, MTA officials unveiled a plaque honoring the late U.S. Rep. Julian Dixon. The plaque will be placed in the recently renamed 7th/Metro/Julian Dixon Metro Rail station.

Joining in the unveiling of the plaque were the late congressman's widow, Bettye Dixon, and his son Cary, MTA Board Chairman John Fasana, Supervisors Yvonne Brathwaite Burke and Zev Yaroslavsky, City Council President Alex Padilla, City Councilman Nate Holden, CEO Julian Burke and some 100 guests.

Dixon, a member of Congress for 22 years, was a longtime supporter of public transit projects in Los Angeles, including the Metro Rail and Metro Bus systems. He died of an apparent heart attack last December at age 66.

In his remarks, Fasana cited Dixon's experience and credibility as "essential to the success" of the MTA. He noted that the congressman was the leader of a bipartisan coalition that was responsible "for bringing hundreds of millions of dollars to the Los Angeles region, well beyond the MTA."

"Julian Dixon never wavered in his belief that Los Angeles needed a rapid transit system or that Los Angeles would embrace its transit system when it opened," Fasana said. "Certainly he was our champion of rail, but he also helped us by providing for all the bus operators in this county."

Devoted to the future of Los Angeles

Supervisor Burke, who proposed the motion to name the 7th/Metro station for Dixon, said the



READ> [Text of Plaque](#)



Above, Cary Dixon, MTA CEO Julian Burke and Bettye Dixon. Below, County Supervisor and MTA Board Member Yvonne Brathwaite Burke leads unveiling ceremony.

congressman “knew that Los Angeles County needed a viable public transportation system. He fought for rail; he fought for subway; he fought for buses. He devoted himself to ensuring the future for Los Angeles County transit.”

She said the more than 60,000 passengers that use the station each day will have an opportunity to view the plaque placed in honor of Dixon. “That station, alone, is a vibrant part of this system. It serves a crucial hub of our rail system and is a fitting memorial to the man who worked so hard to bring it about.”

“He was ‘The Voice’ of Los Angeles County transportation in Washington, leading the effort to secure federal funding for Metro Rail and, together with the late Tom Bradley and Kenny Hahn, put together the combination of federal, state and local funding that established this critical component of Los Angeles’ mass transit system,” Burke said.

“Julian was always at the crossroads of everything when it came to Los Angeles and Southern California,” said Yaroslavsky. “Not just in transportation, but in a whole variety of issues. He was a man for all reasons, all seasons, all issues.”

Text of plaque

Julian C. Dixon

1934 – 2000

United States House of Representatives,
1978 – 2000

Seeing beyond the boundaries of his own congressional district, Julian Dixon knew the importance of viable transportation alternatives for all of Los Angeles County. He was a voice for Los Angeles County in Washington, D.C., and the effort to secure federal funding for Metro Rail. This station is dedicated to him.

“We have built the subway to the Valley, to Hollywood, to Wilshire and to downtown LA. A subway that links other modes of transportation and lies in wait for future projects. We did not get all that we wanted and our system did not come



Supervisor Burke and Mrs. Dixon, above, and awaiting the ceremony with other dignitaries that include Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, foreground, left, and City Councilman Nate Holden, back row, second from left.



More than 100 guests attended. Below, Rick Hittinger, at right, and the Long Beach City College Saxophone Quartet.

without cost, but significant accomplishments seldom do. Today, we come together to acknowledge the significance of this accomplishment and pledge to continue our great partnership to meet the transit needs of all Angelenos."

-- Julian Dixon at the opening of the Metro Red Line to North Hollywood on June 23, 2000.



Procurement Housecleaning Reaps Mounds of Paper

By BILL HEARD

(Aug. 7, 2001) When employees in MTA Procurement realized, recently, that they were up to their ears in paper, they cleaned house. By the barrelful.

Their efforts, in fact, rid the department of more than 100 44-gallon barrels crammed with outdated documents, old memos, ancient files, expired contracts...you name it.

The department sponsored a contest and formed teams of employees who competed for a series of prizes: most barrels of paper discarded, oldest document found, most unusual document and the funniest file.

The Contract Administration team, whose members included George Eckert, Tessie Banaag, Fe Alcid-Little and Bruce Feerer, collected a winning 44 barrels of paper.

Connie Williams of Procurement Compliance found the oldest document – a contract record dating back to 1917. Tessie Banaag had the most unusual file, a contract between the defunct Rail Construction Corp. and the LA Clippers. Susan Knott's was judged the funniest file, while Contract Administration had the largest file.

Carted to the Headquarters basement by General Services, the discarded paper will be recycled, perhaps to reappear someday as – it could happen – another Procurement document!

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)



Accepting special awards for the Procurement cleanup were (from left) Jeanne Kinsel, Leyton Morgan, Tessie Banaag and Susan Knott.



The Contract Administration team of George Eckert, Tessie Banaag, Fe Alcid-Little and Bruce Feerer generated 44 barrels of paper.



Susan Knott found this 1969 Santa Monica *Outlook* clipping among her files.



Metro Freeway Service Patrol assists motorist on 405 freeway. PHOTO BY JOSÉ UBALDO

**MTA Board Approves Funding for
Metro Freeway Service Patrol
to Ease Traffic During Freeway Construction**

By JOSÉ UBALDO

(Aug. 13, 2001) Anticipating a heavy schedule of highway construction over the next two years, the MTA will help Caltrans mitigate traffic congestion by providing an additional \$3 million for the Metro Freeway Service Patrol (FSP).

Fact Sheet

[Metro Freeway
Service Patrol](#)

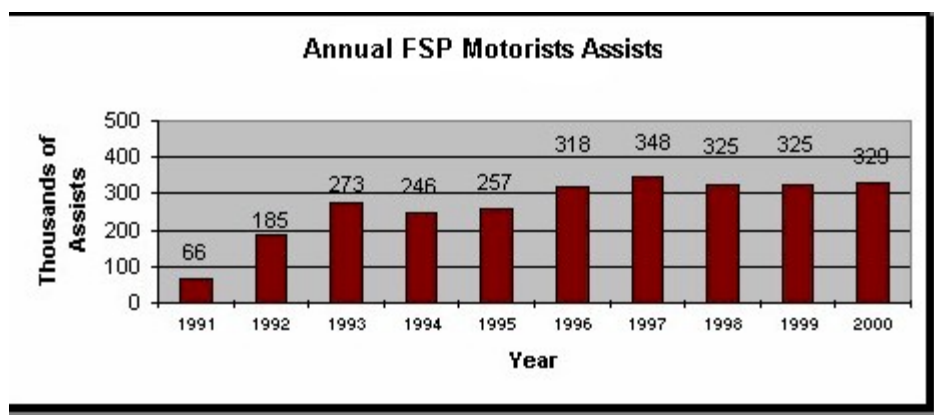
The MTA Board approved a proposal in July that includes extra funding through June 30, 2003. The action came in response to Governor Gray Davis' \$5.3 billion Congestion Relief Plan, which includes funds for highway improvements.

The agreement doesn't specify a specific project or a site but rather provides funding for Metro FSP support when and where it is required on an as needed basis. The MTA will be reimbursed by the state for providing Metro FSP services.

MTA and Caltrans will work together to develop a schedule of Metro FSP deployment outside the normal hours of operation at nights and on weekends. As an example, Caltrans proposes to use Metro FSP on its construction project on I-5 near Santa Clarita along a freeway segment that does not currently have normal Metro FSP service.

Metro FSP is a partnership between Caltrans, California Highway Patrol and the MTA. It operates primarily during commute hours Monday through Friday, with limited mid-day service. Metro FSP also provides weekend service from 10 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

METRO FREEWAY SERVICE PATROL



THE GOAL ... Throughout Los Angeles County, your public dollars are hard at work supporting the operation of the largest fleet of tow and service trucks (145) in the country. Known as the Los Angeles County Metro Freeway Service Patrol (FSP), private tow operators are contracted to patrol designated portions (beats) of freeways during morning and afternoon commute hours. Their goal is to quickly repair or remove disabled vehicles to relieve freeway congestion. Each beat is approximately ten miles in length and contains three to five trucks that continuously patrol a freeway route.

THE PARTNERS ...

The Freeway Service Patrol is a jointly managed program involving the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), California Highway Patrol (CHP) and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). It is funded through local Prop C - 25% sales tax and state highway funds.

THE HISTORY ... The FSP Program was started in LA County in July, 1991. More than 2.6 million motorists have been assisted since its inception (See graph). There are 10 FSP programs located in the major metropolitan areas throughout California.

THE SERVICE ... Over 70 percent of assisted motorists wait less than 5 minutes during FSP hours before an FSP truck arrives to provide assistance. In four out of five assists, FSP drivers are able to repair the problem at the scene within 10 minutes of arriving. FSP drivers will change a flat tire, fill a radiator, tape leaky hoses, provide a jump-start, provide a gallon of gas, or when necessary, will tow the vehicle to a safe location off the freeway.

THE BENEFITS ... According to a 2000 survey conducted by UC Berkeley, the Los Angeles County FSP program has an average cost benefit ratio of more than 14 to 1. This means that for every \$1 spent on FSP, there is a \$14 savings to the motorist.

THE COST ... The FSP service is free to motorists. FSP drivers are not allowed to receive any payment from motorists for freeway assistance.

THE HOURS ... The FSP operates on almost all freeways in Los Angeles County. The typical hours of operation are Monday - Friday 6am-10am and 3pm-7pm. Some of the more congested freeways also have coverage during weekday midday and weekend hours.

[Back to MTA Report](#)



MTA's Brad Balduff fought back from amnesia, paralysis and blindness to regain a productive life

- **Former pro soccer player, injured in auto crash, credits new 'concept of life' for success**

By GARY WOSK

(Aug. 15, 2001) Memory Lane doesn't go back far for Bradford Balduff, the MTA's 32-year-old assistant webmaster – 10 years to be exact. Before that, everything is a blur.

In late January 1991, a car he was riding in swerved off a freeway in Pasadena and slammed into a wall. The accident left Balduff with total amnesia and paralysis. He was also blind and didn't come out of a coma for two months.

The road to recovery for the former LA Aztecs professional soccer player has been tedious and even unexpected.

His doctors held out very little hope, but thanks to a supportive family – plus lots of praying – the former tax accountant has made it back. The paralysis, for the most part has vanished and, except for some peripheral difficulty, his vision has returned to 20/25.

Besides the purely physical hurdles, the biggest obstacle facing Balduff following the accident was the amnesia that wiped out all recollections of his previous life. These included lots of partying, multiple sports, participation in his USC fraternity and interest in computers.

A blank disk

In addition, he could not read, write or do arithmetic. He was forced to leave college for three years. He was a blank disk.

"I had to relearn everything, literally, even two plus two. I had to go from being a baby to a senior in college in as short a time as possible," recalls Balduff.

Occasionally, out of nowhere, a fragment of information flashes in his mind. "I remember some things but they're jumbled up for lack of a better word."

If not for the love and support of his parents, Marilyn and Bill, who arranged for a steady flow of tutors, or the crash course computer lessons taught by his sister, Lisa, Balduff probably would not be where he is today.

A recurrent refrain this reporter heard during the interview was, "the Lord's help."

"There is no way I could have come through this without some divine intervention," Balduff believes. "I think the credit is properly due Him."

Graduated with two degrees

Eventually, he began rekindling relationships with long-lost friends - "They knew more about my life than I did, which is disenchanting, and they still do." He graduated from USC with Bachelor's and Master's degrees and took up bicycling and jogging.

In 1999, Balduff decided to leave the number-crunching accounting field. He taught himself advanced computer skills, which led to becoming a Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer.

A native of Granada Hills who now lives in Glendale, Balduff takes care of his 97-year-old grandmother, Ruby, and looks forward to the future. He doesn't allow a lingering paralysis in one leg or the occasional tremors in his left shoulder get him down.

"I need to go further but I've come a long way," he says, confidently.

Balduff's philosophy of life is a mantra anyone who has come back from the depths of despair can live by.

"You cannot afford to give up and expect to lead a productive life," he declares. "You have to keep fighting. It's kind of a depressing thought, but that's reality. I guess I've taken the concept of life as a fight to a new dimension."

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)

State Auditor Faults MTA in Monitoring Bus Operator Driving Records

- MTA Cites 'Excellent Safety Record'; Agency Outlines Series of Improvements

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Aug. 15, 2001) The California State Auditor, in a report released late Tuesday, criticized the MTA's record-keeping system for preventing Metro Bus operators from violating state and federal restrictions on hours behind the wheel.

The audit says the MTA "does not accurately track or consistently monitor its bus drivers' on-duty hours and cannot ensure that its drivers are obeying the on-duty time restrictions."

In a statement, the MTA emphasized that the agency's "excellent safety record" and asked the auditors to reassure passengers that the "MTA has one of the best safety records in the country."

Summary Report:

[Transit Agencies Rated by
Number of Accidents](#)

Metro Buses log some 300,000 miles per day and have experienced 3.87 accidents of all types per 100,000 road miles over the past 18 months.

"While it's important to note that the Metro Bus system is very safe, the MTA has allocated \$8.2 million toward improvements in record-keeping to ensure that the agency fully complies with all federal and state regulations," said Chief Financial Officer Richard Brumbaugh.

"The auditor's report has been very helpful in pointing us in the right direction," he added. "In fact, we're in substantial agreement with many parts of the auditor's report."

Regulations set driving limits

Federal and state regulations prohibit bus operators from driving for more than 10 hours a day. They may not drive after being on duty for 15 hours or after being on duty for 80 hours in a consecutive eight-day period. Operators also must have at least eight hours off-duty before a driving shift.

Bus operators are required to formally request the MTA's permission before taking an outside job and to submit a "disclosure letter" concerning the job's driving requirements. State regulations require operators who have more than one employer within a 24-hour period to maintain a driving log.

The auditors said MTA records and logs do not accurately account for the time operators might spend on the road for another employer while off-duty from the MTA. The report said "not all bus drivers who have other employers submit the disclosure letters...."

The CHP, in 30 inspections since 1999, has consistently given MTA divisions satisfactory ratings for record-keeping.

"MTA will continue to improve its systems of tracking bus and rail operators' time behind the wheel to ensure the safest possible service for our patrons," the agency's statement concluded.

State Sen. Richard Alarcon (D-LA) requested the audit following last

year's labor negotiations between the MTA and the UTU. Alarcon questioned the safety record of the MTA's part-time operators compared to that of full-time operators.

No conclusion on driving records

Although the audit report notes that some 3,200 full-time and 760 part-time operators currently drive for the MTA, it does not conclude that part-timers have worse driving records.

In its response, printed as part of the audit document, the MTA took issue with many points of the auditor's work, noting that "there is no evident difference in the relative number of accidents for full-time and part-time drivers."

The MTA is taking a number of actions to improve the records it maintains on bus operators. These include upgrading the TOTS computer records of operator service and standardizing procedures, effective in September, that require operators to provide letters disclosing outside employment.

The MTA also will train operators to do a better job of reporting accidents and will retain a consultant to develop an agency-wide safety training program to begin in early 2002. The MTA also has formed a committee, along with leaders of the UTU, ATU, TCU and AFSCME, to address safety issues.

To improve monitoring of DMV citations, MTA Quality Assurance will provide monthly summary reports to division managers beginning in September.

Transit Agency Accident Ratings			
*from 1999 National Transit Database Reports			
Transit Agencies	Vehicle Service Miles	Bus Collisions	Collisions per 100K Revenue Vehicle Service Miles
Los Angeles MTA	74,331,300	872	1.17
Chicago CTA	61,271,400	1,554	2.54
New York MTA	94,346,600	5,587	5.92
Philadelphia SEPTA	34,882,700	908	2.60
Peer Average	63,500,233	2,683	3.69

[Back to MTA Report](#)



Division 10 Storekeeper Pedro Garcia, center, accepts plaque for Storeroom of the Quarter

Division 10 Storeroom Takes Procurement's Top Honors

(Aug. 16, 2001) The Division 10 storeroom took top honors as Procurement's Storeroom of the Quarter for the April – June quarter of FY 2001.

Staff members from all levels of Materiel Management honored fellow department members, July 31, by attending a presentation ceremony at Division 10.

With the storeroom as a backdrop and the maintenance staff serving as audience, the storeroom staff was presented with a plaque listing their achievement, as well as award jackets with their name on them.

Led by 15-year employee, Storekeeper Pedro Garcia, the storeroom at Division 10 is worthy of recognition.

Supported by Stock Clerks Arnold Carpio, Jack Hunter, Tony Prieto and newcomer Richard Lepe, provide almost 40 years of combined storeroom experience.

The staff recently completed an overhaul of the storeroom by completing a new and easily identifiable gasket board, o-ring and fitting board. In addition, Carpio designed a "point and click" computer program that makes finding parts easier. Carpio was recently nominated for Employee of the Quarter.

Division 10 Maintenance Supervisor Jim Fulkerson wrote about the group: "I wanted to personally thank all the stores employees on the professional work ethic they portray on a daily basis. Please accept my heartfelt thanks for having such a great crew at division 10".

Materiel Manager, Jim Montoya commented, "These types of comments from our maintenance customer are really appreciated. Storeroom staffs at all our divisions do a good job, but it's important when our customer recognizes it and says so."

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)

MTA Aids Victims of Deadly Hollywood Hotel Fire

(Aug. 16, 2001) The MTA came to the aid of the displaced residents of a Hollywood hotel heavily damaged by an early morning fire. Two women were killed in the blaze and two children were hospitalized.



PHOTO: KNX Newsradio Online

At least six people were hurt, including the children – ages 3 and 5 – and three firefighters, KNX Radio reported. One woman was killed in a fall after she handed her two children to a firefighter. Another victim was found dead in her apartment.

The Bus Operations Center dispatched two buses – one from Division 7 and one from Division 3 – to assist the residents.

The Division 7 bus, driven by Operator Paul Magallanes, transported 21 people to the Lemon Grove Recreation Center. The Division 3 bus, driven by Operator Harris Johnson, remained at the scene and provided shelter for the residents.

Coordinating the MTA's response from BOCC, under the direction of Senior TOS David Castillo, were controllers Brenda Moore, Juan Soto and Cynthia Saucedo. In the field, Tiger Team members Joe Uresti, Kenny Jones, Houston Campbell, Harvey Brown and Ephraim Abate rerouted buses around the fire scene.

[Back to MTA Report](#)

EDITOR’S NOTE: (Aug. 17, 2001) A native of Los Angeles whose family has long been prominent in the African American business community. A recent arrival to the city who until last month served as an MTA intern. New MTA Board members Paul C. Hudson and Allison Yoh – appointees of Mayor James Hahn – are profiled below by Editor Bill Heard.

Hudson was named to the Finance and Budget Committee and the Construction Committee. Yoh will serve on the Construction Committee and the Planning and Programming Ccommittee.

The mayor also reappointed Los Angeles City Councilman Hal Bernson to serve on the Board. Originally appointed by Mayor Richard Riordan, Bernson has served on the Board since October 1997. He chairs the Operations Committee and serves on the Finance and Budget Committee.

**Mayor Hahn Names LA Native,
former MTA Intern to Serve on Board**



**Board
Member Paul
Hudson Has
Deep
Community
Roots**

Paul C. Hudson, 53, is president and CEO of Broadway Federal Bank, the oldest African American bank west of the Mississippi. Born and reared in LA, he practiced law in Washington, D.C., before following his grandfather and father as head of the bank.

[ENTIRE STORY](#)



**Former MTA
Intern Allison
Yoh Now
Serves on
Board**

Allison Yoh is a confirmed transit rider who doesn’t even own a car. She was chosen by Mayor James Hahn, in fact, as someone who could bring the bus rider’s perspective to the 13-member Board.

[ENTIRE STORY](#)

[Back to MTA Report](#)

POETRY IN MOTION® LA 2001-2002



Poetry lover and Division 18 Bus Operator David Teklehaimanot displays poetry bus card about to be installed in Metro buses.

MTA Metro Art and Poetry Society of America Launch "Poetry In Motion" Series For 2001-2002

By BRENT ZERGER

August 17, 2001 - MTA Metro Art and the Poetry Society of America will continue their co-presentation of *Poetry in Motion*® L.A. for the next 12 months. The literary arts program is aimed at bringing poetry to more than one million Metro Bus riders daily.

Over the life of the 2001-2002 series, more than 26,000 bus cards bearing the works of 24 locally and internationally recognized poets will be mounted on the interiors of Metro buses.

Complementing the bus cards are 12 poems from the series that will be printed as bookmarks and distributed free on Metro Bus, Metro Rail, and through county public libraries. Live reading events are being planned for National Poetry Month in April 2002.

The Poetry Society of America selected the 24 poems for the 2001-2002 series based on several criteria, including diversity of the poets' cultural and historical backgrounds and relevance to the local transit region.

Included are works by well-known authors like Philip Levine and Adrienne Rich, as well as noted Southern California poets David St. John, Carol Muske, and Aleida Rodríguez. Most of the poems are by living writers; several are in Spanish.

Poetry in Motion enlivens the public transit experience by offering Metro Bus riders an opportunity for reflection and inspiration. Responding to previous *Poetry in Motion* selections, a Metro customer of 14 years commented, "Finding a

POETRY IN MOTION® LA 2001-2002



poem on the bus is like a gift. It makes people realize they are not alone. I love the fact that the poems are at eye level because the words capture people."

Begun as a co-production between the Poetry Society of America and MTA New York City Transit in 1992, *Poetry in Motion* currently is active in major

public transit systems throughout the United States, including Baltimore, Philadelphia, Chicago, Atlanta, Dallas and Portland. Metro Art has partnered with the Poetry Society of America to present *Poetry in Motion* since 1998.

[Back to MTA Report](#)

On the way, a muse to soothe your soul.

from **Office Hour**

"We hear the music in the attention of this hour.
What a dream - When I drove home
the 10 East was jammed with trucks and exhaust
and the San Gabriel mountains a vague vision.
That hill will have to stay in a poem
for awhile. But think, without
the blaring horns and broken glass, without
these messages of hope spread across my desk
and the shadow who fills the barrel
of this pen, I could have missed it all."

--Carol Lem

Venice Division 6 Celebrates 100 Years of Service

- **Employees are invited to spend a day at the beach with Division 6 on Saturday, Aug. 25, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.**
- [BE THERE](#): Things to do on Saturday

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(Aug. 20, 2001) MTA Division 6, the Venice Division, is celebrating its centennial on Saturday, Aug. 25, with an open house for employees: a day at the beach with community, transportation and historic displays, family fun, and festivities that include a bus-size barbecue and live music.

For a legion of MTA bus operators and mechanics, being stationed at the Division 6 bus yard in Venice is something akin to pulling Hawaii duty right out of boot camp.



"It's supposed to hit 107 degrees in the Valley today," said Division 6 Bus Operator Richard Maldonado as he prepared to begin his run out of the Venice bus yard. "It'll be 70 degrees here all day," he said not even a bit smugly.

The cool ocean breeze and familiar marine layer keeps Venice cool but there's plenty more reasons to love working here. No weekend runs, no holiday duty, and no late shifts for operators during the week, when the last bus is due back in the yard at 10:30 p.m.

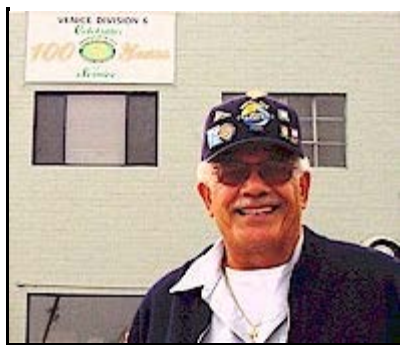
Flanked by the Pacific Ocean, the diminutive Venice Division 6 is a beachtown landmark located right on Main Street at 100 Sunset Avenue. The army green building and mechanic's pit peeks out over a bus yard that rubs elbows with Gold's Gym, the Rose Café, the Pioneer Bakery and the famous binocular entrance to the celebrated design firm of Chiat Day at the end of the trendy stretch of Main Street.

The transportation site occupied by MTA Division 6 was established in 1901 by Los Angeles Pacific, a predecessor to Pacific Electric Railway, said historian and author Jim Walker, who volunteers as an archivist in the MTA's library.

A powerhouse and car yard built that year was named Ocean Park, from where the "Venice Short Line" began rail service to downtown Los Angeles in 1902. The "Short Line" was converted to bus operation by Pacific Electric on Sept. 17, 1950. The familiar route to downtown is still traversed today by Line 33.

The original buildings were demolished in 1954 to make way for the bus yard and garage, said Walker. After a short stint as a Metropolitan Coach Line division, the Ocean Park property was designated MTA Division 6 – the Venice Division – on March 3, 1958.

Veteran Bus Operator Melvin Braxton has worked out of Division 6 during his entire 34-year career with the transportation agency. He stays his course on Line 33 but the twinkle in his eyes recall his days alongside the Pacific blue aboard Line 434 to Malibu.



Division 6 Bus Operator Melvin Braxton is a 34-year veteran of Division 6.

Mechanic Joe Medrano proudly displays the Division 6 logo he designed a few years back. A band of text rings an image that says it all: a bright Metro Bus rides into the California sunset framed by a curl of Pacific Ocean surf. Like Braxton, Medrano has spent all of his 23 years with the transportation agency at Division 6 and wouldn't have it any other way.

Today, a fleet of 68 buses serving 5 busy line operates out of Division 6. The division is home to some 100 bus operators and a small administrative staff under the supervision of Transportation Manager Jim Lukens. Maintenance Manager Ron Whitney oversees a maintenance staff of 35.

Within the past year, the Venice Division has seen something of a renewal with the resurfacing of the bus yard and installation of new garage doors, a new bus washer and new yard lighting. More improvements down the line include construction a sound wall that abuts a residential area.

BE THERE

- **Event:** Centennial Celebration: A Day at the Beach with Venice Division 6
- **Date:** Saturday, August 25
- **Time:** 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

PROGRAM:

- **10: 30 a.m.:** Remarks and cake-cutting ceremony with MTA officials and guests of honor, including: MTA board member Pam O'Connor, Orange County Transportation Agency CEO Art Leahy, former MTA Transit Chief Tom Conner and wife Carol.
- **All day:** Live music, barbecue, children's funfest of games and activities
Displays: Los Angeles Fire Department's Bandwagon Fire Truck and vintage buses from RRC.
- **Music:** Rick Hittinger and the Long Beach City College Sax Quartet, Johnny Harwick's Gospel Music, and tunes from DJ Felipe Espinoza.
- **Prizes:** Remote control car and a scooter from Harley Davidson; 3 scooters, a VCR, CD cassette recorder, a 26" girl's bike and two CD headsets from Division 6; portable CD player from Division 5; a 26" boys bike from Division 7, and gift certificates from Marie Callendar, Starbucks, Ralph's Market, Jamba Juice, Dagwoods, Barnes & Noble, Cheesecake Factory, Coca Cola, Pioneer Bakery, Omelette Parlor and Koo Koo Roo.

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)



'No-Graffiti' Signs Attract – Guess What – Vandals!

- Deputies Make 2 Arrests
- Data Base Lists Vandalism Suspects

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Aug. 21, 2001) It was like tempting a bear with honey. When Sheriff's deputies placed a "No-Graffiti" sign at a bus stop in East LA, recently, two vandals just couldn't resist. They defaced it with a "slap tag."

"It was bait," says Det. Sgt. Paul Becker. "We figured since we are always chasing down these vandals, we should plan an operation where we have them come to us."

The specially made sign was placed at Dozer Avenue and Rowan Street in East LA, a location where Line 30 Metro Buses have frequently been vandalized.

Deputy James Doherty, assigned to the Sheriff's Department bus patrol team, staked out the site and waited.

Within minutes two juveniles approached and took a seat at the bus stop. One stood up and slapped a white label on the sign. The boy's graffiti "moniker" was scrawled on the label.

Arrested and booked

The Sheriff's vandalism team swooped in and detained the boys. A search of their backpacks turned up about 20 indelible markers and a number of the labels normally used as slap tags. They were booked on charges of vandalism and possession of vandalism tools.

Information obtained from graffiti arrests and from the deputies' field interviews of vandalism suspects is entered into the department's LARCIS crime data base.

Deputies can compare the graffiti monikers found at a vandalism scene to those in the data base to help them locate and arrest suspects.

"The LARCIS system is just one tool of many we're using to combat the

vandalism problem on the transit system," says Becker.

The LAPD's anti-graffiti GHOST team also plans to use the "No Graffiti" signs this fall in an effort to thwart vandalism on the Metro Red Line and on bus lines that run near schools, according to Sgt. Helen Lopez, GHOST team supervisor.

[Back to MTA Report](#)

Division 18 Operator Injured in Collision with Trash Truck



Joy Johnson-Sanders

(Aug. 22, 2001) A Metro Bus operator was hospitalized, Tuesday, following a collision with a trash truck in Hawthorne. Six passengers also were injured.

Operator Joy Johnson-Sanders, assigned to Division 18, was admitted to Martin Luther King Hospital with injuries to her right knee, muscle spasms, bruises and cervical strain. She may be released today, pending review of X-rays.

Of the 40 passengers on board at the time of the accident, three were treated at the scene. Three others were transported to area hospitals.

Johnson-Sanders, who joined the MTA in April 2000, was driving a Line 40 bus northbound on Hawthorne Boulevard. At the intersection with Rosecrans Avenue, a southbound trash truck apparently ran a red light and tried to make a left turn in front of the bus. The bus struck the truck.

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)

Intranet Welcomes Engineering/Construction Web Pages

CHECK IT OUT

(Aug. 22, 2001) The MTA Intranet is cutting the electronic ribbon, today, on a bright new addition to metro.net – the Engineering/Construction Division web pages.

Accessed under “Department Home Pages,” the new web site contains a wealth of information about the Engineering and Construction Division. It’s theme line: Engineering Tomorrow’s Mobility Today.

The opening lines under the heading, “Who are We?” notes that the division has built 59.4 miles of light and heavy rail and 50 Metro Rail stations that now serve more than 200,000 passengers each day.

“We hope our new web pages will help employees understand what’s behind the construction projects – the people, the preparation,” says Charles Stark, executive officer. “We also want them to know what transportation improvements are on the way.”

Among the six sections of the web site, developed by Senior Administrative Analyst Richard Andersen, is Construction News. This heading currently carries a story and photos on the Metro Blue Line platform extension project. The Org Chart section reveals the reporting structure of the division.

FAQ – Frequently Asked Questions – puts gee-whiz facts at the reader’s fingertips. Can you guess how much a train car weighs? About 80,000 pounds, empty. Want to know more about the Metro Art program? FAQ has the info.

If you want to know what “design/build” means, or if you’re curious about “not-to-exceed limits,” check out the Glossary. And if you have a comment, you can submit it on the Feedback page.

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)

State Controller Finds MTA Complying with Consent Decree



Kathleen Connell

(Aug. 22, 2001) The MTA is complying with the 1996 federal Consent Decree, State Controller Kathleen Connell said, Tuesday, in releasing an audit of the agency.

"This is good news for the riders of the MTA because the terms of the Consent Decree were directed at improving service and working conditions and keeping fares reasonable," Connell said.

The audit, which covered the period of July 1, 1998, through June 30, 2000, also looked at the MTA's handling of voter-approved funding. Connell said the MTA had properly allocated and spent Proposition A and Proposition C funds.

The audit noted that the Consent Decree compliance was still subject to resolution of how to measure the bus passenger load factor goal set by the federal court.

Potential fiscal impact

The report said the MTA's long-range plans "do not address the potential fiscal impact" should the agency's appeal of the Consent Decree be denied "or... accommodate projected increases in rail and bus service operating costs."

"These two factors could increase projected expenditures by over \$350 million through 2010," said Connell. "The MTA should take action to address them now in its long-range plans."

"We're pleased with the overall findings of the audit and we're committed to completing the necessary changes," said Chief Operating Officer Allan Lipsky. "We have been successful in resolving deficits in the past and we understand the large challenge that represents for the future."

Lipsky also said the MTA has nearly completed an inventory of its assets – bus, rail and non-operating equipment of all types – as suggested by the audit.

"The MTA has been the subject of many audits over the past several years by various offices," Connell said. "I am pleased to find that the MTA was in compliance with the major aspects of the audit and that the findings can be readily remedied by the agency."

[Back to MTA Report](#)

Board Action Update, Aug. 23: Universal Fare System May Simplify Fare Collection, Cut Fare Fraud, Reduce Passenger Hassles

- [Board Action Updates](#)

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Aug. 23, 2001) It could be the wave of the future for LA transit riders. A wallet-sized card that allows passengers to board more quickly and conveniently on any bus or train in the county, prevents fare fraud and provides feedback on ridership.

It's called the Universal Fare System (UFS) and, for the past several years, the Board and MTA staff have been studying a number of alternative technologies. **The item was approved by the full Board at the August meeting.**

UFS has many advantages, the staff believes, over the MTA's current fare collection system with its monthly passes, tokens and paper transfers. The use of electronic equipment has the potential for cost savings, greater efficiency, faster loading at bus stops and greatly reduced exposure to fare fraud and counterfeiting.

The MTA estimates that fare fraud costs the agency between \$5.5 million and \$11.1 million annually.

'Seamless' movement among systems

UFS also could hasten the day when passengers will be able to move easily – "seamlessly" – from one local transit carrier to another without the hassle of coping with a variety of cash fares, passes and fare media. Passengers would carry credit card-style fare media that could be recognized by any local bus company or rail line.

Two types of electronic fare media are being considered: magnetic cards that must be swiped through a fare machine card reader and "Smart Cards" that can be "read" when passed near a fare machine "target." Both can be programmed to accept amounts of money from which the fare is deducted with each use.

Five local transit agencies – Santa Monica, Culver City, Montebello, Foothill Transit and Norwalk – already are using magnetic card systems.

Large transit systems that use Smart Cards, at least to some extent, include Chicago, Hong Kong, Washington, D.C., and Sydney, Australia. These cities, along with transit agencies in London, New York, Paris, San Francisco and Singapore, are planning to switch to full use of Smart Cards.

Fare system flexibility

Countywide Planning's Transit Planning staff will present UFS alternatives to the Board that include the use of both magnetic and Smart Cards, although the staff believes use of Smart Cards alone would provide the most fare system flexibility over the long term.

Called "stored value cards," Smart Cards can be programmed to hold cash amounts equal to an MTA monthly pass, but also can hold additional cash equivalents that would allow the owner to use other transit systems. These fares would be deducted from the card's "stored value."

Low-income riders in Washington, D.C., and Baltimore found that Smart Cards were more convenient than either carrying cash or bus passes. Studies also show that Smart Cards are faster to use when boarding, are more reliable and have fewer instances of failure than magnetic cards.

Studies indicate that the capital cost of a Universal Fare System would range from \$84.1 million for a magnetic card-only system to \$75.6 million for a Smart Card-only system. Estimates to operate the systems over a 11- to 15-year period range from \$369 million for a magnetic card system to \$211.5 million for a Smart Card system.

The MTA has worked with vendors to develop contract proposals for a Universal Fare System. With Board approval, the staff hopes to award a UFS contract in December.

August Board Meeting

- **This item was withdrawn by the motion's author, Supervisor Gloria Molina.** Design/build construction of Eastside Light-Rail Project. Item 24. The motion would direct the MTA to utilize the design/build model as the construction method of choice for the Eastside Light-Rail Project.
- **Approved by the full Board.** Renewal of Medical, Dental, Life and Long-Term Disability Benefits, Item 17. The Committee will consider an expenditure of \$14.5 million for the second-year extension of contracts for medical, dental, life insurance and long-term disability insurance benefits for MTA and PTSC employees.
- **Approved by the full Board.** Landscaping and sound barrier at Universal City station. Item 25. The motion by Supervisor Zev Yaroslavy concerns the development of a plan to provide landscaping and a sound barrier to protect the Island community, a housing development west of the Universal City station, from freeway noise. The motion directs the MTA staff to work with the city Department of Recreation and Parks to develop the sound barrier. The staff is to report in 30 days on a timetable for completion of the barrier.
- **Approved by the full Board.** Modifications to Consent Decree Pilot Program Bus Lines. Item 20. The Committee will consider a plan to continue operating Consent Decree bus lines 218, 305, 522, 550, 601, 602, 603 and 605. The staff recommends modifying lines 58, 167 and 214 to enhance their performance. The changes would be implemented beginning Sept. 1. A public hearing would be scheduled in November concerning proposed route changes to lines 58 and 214.
- **The MTA staff pulled this item from consideration for 60 days.** Modifications to the Downtown LA Route of Line 445. Item 22. The Committee will consider a proposed change in the downtown route of Harbor Transitway Line 445. The staff is recommending a new route via Los Angeles Street, 1st Street, Grand and Olive, effective Dec. 2, 2001. The proposal also calls for a reduction in the Harbor Transitway fare between San Pedro and downtown LA, modifications to lines 446 and 447, and a marketing program to promote Transitway use.

[Back to MTA Report](#)



FIS 11i - Project team members, from back to front, are Catherine Wang, James Eng, Maggie Chen, Jessica Ho, Julie Ellis, Mike Nuyen, Rene Decena, Thu Nguyen, Julie Kung, Nicole Nguyen, Lois Keng and project manager Vincent Tee.

FIS System Due for Overhaul; Dec. 31 Rollout for Major Upgrade

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Aug. 23, 2001) The MTA's Financial Information System (FIS) reached its fifth birthday in March and, although it received a tuneup for Y2K, some felt it was due for a major overhaul.

So, get ready for FIS 11i – a conversion from the current “character-based” system, in which almost all information has to be keyed in, to a user-friendly, information-rich Windows-based system.

“This is a major upgrade,” says Chief Information Officer Elizabeth Bennett. “It’s going to be more than a face lift. It will look different and be different.”

Conversion to FIS 11i will begin at 6 p.m., Dec. 22, and will be available for general use Dec. 31. Training for those who will use FIS 11i on a daily basis – Procurement, Accounting and OMB staff, along with administrative analysts – will begin Aug. 28.

150 training classes

Before year's end, ITS will have conducted 150 half-day classes to train all employees, including managers, who will use the system.

Project manager Vincent Tee agrees that FIS 11i will be different. For one thing, FIS users will be able to access the system from Internet Explorer and will be able to move data into Excel for analysis.

“Our goal was to make it easier to get financial information to the user and then make it easier for the employee to use,” he says.

The new system will allow users to click and drag portions of a document with a mouse instead of keying in all data. A user can obtain expanded information about a requisition, purchase order, invoice or check by using the “drill down” function.

"It allows you to access many different levels of information just by pointing and clicking," explains Bennett.

'Workflow tracking'

Another advantage of FIS 11i will be "workflow tracking." No longer will paper documents, such as invoices, be routed from desk to desk, being delayed for days...or even lost. Instead, invoices will be scanned to become electronic images that can be forwarded through the system to those who need to review and approve them.

The system also will permit departments to electronically attach supporting documents to a requisition. These electronic documents can flow through the system with the requisition, eliminating the need to provide paper copies to Procurement.

A user also can follow the progress of the document through the system to locate it at any time. The system will even issue a "tickler" notice every five days to keep the document moving.

"FIS 11i will help everyone involved by making the process more automated," says Bennett. "It gets us closer to the paperless office."

Working with Tee on the FIS 11i project were senior programmer analysts Catherine Wang, Julie Kung, Lois Keng and Maggie Chen; programmer analysts James Eng and Jessica Ho; and consultants Mike Nuyen, Thu Nguyen, Tai Nuyen and Nicole Nguyen. Chief Financial Officer Richard Brumbaugh is the project's sponsor.

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)

Santa Monica's John Catoe to Join MTA as Deputy CEO

(Aug. 23, 2001) John B. Catoe, director of Santa Monica's Big Blue Bus will join the MTA later this year to serve as deputy chief executive officer to the agency's new CEO, Roger Snoble.



John Catoe

Catoe, 54, whose formal title is Director of Transit Services for the City of Santa Monica, joined the Big Blue Bus in December 1995. Under his leadership, Santa Monica Municipal Bus Lines won the APTA Outstanding Achievement Award for the fourth time since 1983.

Catoe previously had served for five years as director of operations with OCTA. Joining the agency in 1977, he rose through the ranks as transit services analyst, superintendent of operations, general manager of operations and manager of transportation.

A native of Washington, D.C., who now lives in Santa Monica, Catoe earned a Bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Redlands in 1981. He is a member of APTA's legislative committee, the California Transit Association and the American Society for Public Administration.

"John Catoe has tremendous local respect and support," said CEO Julian Burke, who has announced that Sept. 30 will be his last day at the MTA. "He will be a great addition to the MTA's executive leadership team."

Allan Lipsky, currently the MTA's deputy CEO, also will serve as a deputy chief executive officer to Snoble. The various duties that will be assigned to Catoe and Lipsky have not yet been determined, but should be decided sometime after Snoble joins the MTA.

[Back to MTA Report](#)

Non-Rep Employees Will Get 2 Paychecks on Friday

(Aug. 23, 2001) If you're a non-represented employee, you'll get two paychecks on Friday.

Your bi-weekly, Aug. 24, paycheck will reflect the 2.85 percent raise granted non-represented employees, plus any Performance-Based Compensation (PBC) increase you received.

The second paycheck covers the period of July 1 to Aug. 4 and will be a retroactive payment for the raise and a percentage of any PBC increase. If you have direct deposit, this paycheck will be deposited in your primary account.

The PBC increase for employees who are above their maximum salary range will be included in biweekly paychecks over the next 23 paydays, starting Friday. It will be shown as Performance Based Compensation under Taxable Earnings.

Check with your manager if you have a question about PBC, the new pay rates or your performance appraisal.

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)

Board Action Update, Aug. 23: Universal Fare System May Simplify Fare Collection, Cut Fare Fraud, Reduce Passenger Hassles

- [Board Action Updates](#)

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Aug. 23, 2001) It could be the wave of the future for LA transit riders. A wallet-sized card that allows passengers to board more quickly and conveniently on any bus or train in the county, prevents fare fraud and provides feedback on ridership.

It's called the Universal Fare System (UFS) and, for the past several years, the Board and MTA staff have been studying a number of alternative technologies. **The item was approved by the full Board at the August meeting.**

UFS has many advantages, the staff believes, over the MTA's current fare collection system with its monthly passes, tokens and paper transfers. The use of electronic equipment has the potential for cost savings, greater efficiency, faster loading at bus stops and greatly reduced exposure to fare fraud and counterfeiting.

The MTA estimates that fare fraud costs the agency between \$5.5 million and \$11.1 million annually.

'Seamless' movement among systems

UFS also could hasten the day when passengers will be able to move easily – "seamlessly" – from one local transit carrier to another without the hassle of coping with a variety of cash fares, passes and fare media. Passengers would carry credit card-style fare media that could be recognized by any local bus company or rail line.

Two types of electronic fare media are being considered: magnetic cards that must be swiped through a fare machine card reader and "Smart Cards" that can be "read" when passed near a fare machine "target." Both can be programmed to accept amounts of money from which the fare is deducted with each use.

Five local transit agencies – Santa Monica, Culver City, Montebello, Foothill Transit and Norwalk – already are using magnetic card systems.

Large transit systems that use Smart Cards, at least to some extent, include Chicago, Hong Kong, Washington, D.C., and Sydney, Australia. These cities, along with transit agencies in London, New York, Paris, San Francisco and

Singapore, are planning to switch to full use of Smart Cards.

Fare system flexibility

Countywide Planning's Transit Planning staff will present UFS alternatives to the Board that include the use of both magnetic and Smart Cards, although the staff believes use of Smart Cards alone would provide the most fare system flexibility over the long term.

Called "stored value cards," Smart Cards can be programmed to hold cash amounts equal to an MTA monthly pass, but also can hold additional cash equivalents that would allow the owner to use other transit systems. These fares would be deducted from the card's "stored value."

Low-income riders in Washington, D.C., and Baltimore found that Smart Cards were more convenient than either carrying cash or bus passes. Studies also show that Smart Cards are faster to use when boarding, are more reliable and have fewer instances of failure than magnetic cards.

Studies indicate that the capital cost of a Universal Fare System would range from \$84.1 million for a magnetic card-only system to \$75.6 million for a Smart Card-only system. Estimates to operate the systems over a 11- to 15-year period range from \$369 million for a magnetic card system to \$211.5 million for a Smart Card system.

The MTA has worked with vendors to develop contract proposals for a Universal Fare System. With Board approval, the staff hopes to award a UFS contract in December.

August Board Meeting

- **This item was withdrawn by the motion's author, Supervisor Gloria Molina.** Design/build construction of Eastside Light-Rail Project. Item 24. The motion would direct the MTA to utilize the design/build model as the construction method of choice for the Eastside Light-Rail Project.
- **Approved by the full Board.** Renewal of Medical, Dental, Life and Long-Term Disability Benefits, Item 17. The Committee will consider an expenditure of \$14.5 million for the second-year extension of contracts for medical, dental, life insurance and long-term disability insurance benefits for MTA and PTSC employees.
- **Approved by the full Board.** Landscaping and sound barrier at Universal City station. Item 25. The motion by Supervisor Zev

Yaroslavsky concerns the development of a plan to provide landscaping and a sound barrier to protect the Island community, a housing development west of the Universal City station, from freeway noise. The motion directs the MTA staff to work with the city Department of Recreation and Parks to develop the sound barrier. The staff is to report in 30 days on a timetable for completion of the barrier.

- **Approved by the full Board.** Modifications to Consent Decree Pilot Program Bus Lines. Item 20. The Committee will consider a plan to continue operating Consent Decree bus lines 218, 305, 522, 550, 601, 602, 603 and 605. The staff recommends modifying lines 58, 167 and 214 to enhance their performance. The changes would be implemented beginning Sept. 1. A public hearing would be scheduled in November concerning proposed route changes to lines 58 and 214.
- **The MTA staff pulled this item from consideration for 60 days.** Modifications to the Downtown LA Route of Line 445. Item 22. The Committee will consider a proposed change in the downtown route of Harbor Transitway Line 445. The staff is recommending a new route via Los Angeles Street, 1st Street, Grand and Olive, effective Dec. 2, 2001. The proposal also calls for a reduction in the Harbor Transitway fare between San Pedro and downtown LA, modifications to lines 446 and 447, and a marketing program to promote Transitway use.

[Back to MTA Report](#)

Proud of Your Classic Car or Bike?



Sign Up for the Car Show...

(Aug. 24, 2001) Hot rods, Harleys, muscle cars – got a custom car...or a cool bike? You can help raise money for the American Cancer Society.

The MTA and the Rapid Transit Club are inviting employees who own classic autos or motorcycles to participate in a benefit – “Showin’ for a Cure” – Oct. 13, at the Regional Rebuild Center.

Event coordinators Alex DiNuzzo and Harold Torres are hoping to register 250 cars or bikes for the show. Entry fees are \$15 for vehicles registered before Oct. 1 and \$20 for those registered later or on the day of the event.

The car show will be staged in the RRC visitor parking lot and along Lyon Street. There also will be food, refreshments and a raffle for event-goers. The American Cancer Society and the MTA’s Division Advisory Committee will sponsor booths.

For information on registering a vehicle for the “Showin’ for a Cure” classic vehicle show, contact DiNuzzo at 922-6322 or Torres at 922-5802.

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)

FTA Awards MTA \$4.4 Million for CNG Buses

By ED SCANNELL

(Aug. 24, 2001) The MTA will receive more than \$4.4 million in federal funds to purchase compressed natural gas (CNG) buses, U.S. Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta has announced.



MTA operates the largest CNG bus fleet in North America.

The grant of \$4,456,416 in Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds will be used to purchase 14 low-floor, 40-ft., CNG buses.

"We're extremely pleased with the award," said John Fasana, MTA Board chair. "It is a ringing endorsement of MTA's ongoing efforts to make its bus fleet the most modern clean air fleet in the nation."

"The award allows MTA to continue to move full speed ahead with its accelerated bus procurement plan, which is aimed at delivering the most reliable bus service possible to transit riders throughout Los Angeles County," he added.

The MTA's accelerated bus procurement plan calls for the purchase of 2,095 new buses through FY 2004. The MTA operates the largest CNG bus fleet in North America and to date has taken delivery of more than 1,500 new CNG. Within the next three years, virtually the entire fleet will operate on CNG fuel.

[Back to MTA Report](#)



Munis Join with MTA to Promote September's 'Try Transit Week'

(Aug. 24, 2001) Commuters throughout LA County will have a chance to ponder the benefits of giving their cars a day off, thanks to the efforts of MTA's Marketing department.

Marketing has developed a special ad to promote next month's national "Try Transit Week" and has organized a number of the county's municipal operators to display the same message.

The ads, which began appearing on the outsides of 600 Metro Buses this week, show an exhausted automobile resting in an easy chair, accompanied by the suggestion, "Give Your Car A Day Off - Try Transit Week, Sept. 9-15."

"We wanted something that would strike a chord with road-weary drivers in LA," said Warren Morse, Deputy Executive Officer of Marketing and Customer Relations. "But because many trips involve multiple carriers, we also wanted the message to be consistent among operators throughout the county."

As a result, Marketing arranged to have the same ad displayed on the inside and outside of the fleets at Foothill Transit, Santa Clarita Transit, Montebello Bus Lines, LADOT, Long Beach Transit, Torrance Transit and Santa Monica's Big Blue Bus. The ads carry the logos of those operators alongside the Metro logo.

Jeff Ringsrud of Marketing served as project manager. Graphics' Lydia Iacono designed the ad, with an illustration from Cecilia Gonzalez.

[Back to MTA Report](#)

Successful Start for Snoble, Cutting Workers Comp are Top Goals for Board Chairman Fasana



MTA Board Chairman
John Fasana

(Aug. 28, 2001) Getting the MTA's new CEO, Roger Snoble, off to a successful start is one of Board Chairman John Fasana's primary goals for the year ahead. In a short address during the August Board meeting, Fasana also said the agency must target reductions in workers compensation costs.

Fasana asked Board members to work "in a collaborative manner to ensure a successful start" for Snoble who is scheduled to take office, Oct. 1, at the MTA.

Noting that the MTA's workers compensation costs are about 40 percent higher than they were last year, Fasana said claims have risen to \$60 million annually. Claims for MTA bus service alone are almost \$8 per service hour. He asked for a cost-cutting plan to be presented to the Board by November.

"I find it hard to believe that, given...the need to provide additional bus, rail and highway capabilities," he said, "that the taxpayers would support an \$8 per service hour workers compensation cost."

Fasana outlined these goals for his term as Board chairman:

- To work with the Board in a collaborative manner to ensure a successful start for Roger Snoble when he comes on board Oct. 1.
- To work with Mayor Hahn and our new board members to provide background and develop their support and understanding for new programs.
- To work with the CEO and the Board to move forward and implement the recently adopted Long-Range Transportation Plan by developing an action plan for the next five years.
- To work with the new CEO to immediately seek ways, including incentives and shared savings, to reduce our spiraling Workers Compensation costs that threaten our ability to implement the MTA's Long-Range Transportation Plan.
- To work with the MTA and our state and federal legislators to seek increased funding for our adopted high-priority projects and for operating assistance. This includes adopting a strategy for increased federal funding in next year's Transportation Equity Act.
- To strengthen the MTA's partnership with the cities. The MTA can do a better job of working with all parties and certainly can benefit from their united support.
- To find ways to increase media awareness of the myriad MTA projects that have been successfully implemented. There are many things the MTA does and does quite well that are quite innovative. We need to get that word out.
- To find ways to increase the business community partnership in supporting MTA's programs and legislative agenda.

Fasana said his specific project goals for the year are:

- To support the CEO's efforts, using the new construction model, to begin construction of the eastern Metro Rail extension.
- To support the CEO's implementation of the Universal Fare System by December 2001.
- To prepare for transfer of the Pasadena Blue Line to the MTA for revenue operation by creating an activation committee of Board members.
- To work collaboratively with officials from the San Fernando and San Gabriel valleys and the MTA on resolving and moving forward the Transportation Zone applications.

"I will continue to advocate multi-modal transportation programs to improve mobility for all residents, and for the movement of goods, within our county," Fasana concluded. "And in all our deliberations, solutions will be made with the best interest of our customers and the taxpayers of the county in mind."

[Back to MTA Report](#)

'Party of the Century' Marks Division 6 100th Anniversary



• You are there: [Photo Gallery](#)

(Aug. 28, 2001) Everyone who attended the Division 6 100th Anniversary celebration in Venice last Saturday, had so much fun they want to be at the 200th Anniversary party in – 2101!!

Joe Medrano, the Venice division’s mechanic leader, issued an invitation to that far-off event during remarks at the birthday ceremony.

Medrano, who retires Aug. 31 with 23 years’ service, joined the division’s senior bus operator, Melvin Braxton, a 34 year veteran, at the podium. The men – both of whom have spent their entire careers at Division 6 – were honored as the division’s most senior employees.

In his remarks, CEO Julian Burke singled out former Transit Operations Chief Tom Conner and his wife, Carol, for applause. He also welcomed incoming deputy CEO John Catoe – now of Santa Monica Transit – saying, “He knows transportation in this county. He will be a key person in Roger Snoble’s administration.”

Board Member Pam O’Conner had an armful of congratulatory proclamations and resolutions from the MTA Board, the California Assembly, the LA County Board of Supervisors and the LA City Council.

Safe and efficient transportation

The resolution passed by the Board, “recognizes and congratulates Division 6 and the Venice division employees for continuing to provide the public with reliable, safe and efficient transportation services.”

Richard Hunt, executive officer, Transit Operations, outlined a brief history of the division, the second oldest among the MTA’s 13 bus and rail divisions. Opened in 1901 as the Pacific Park Car House, it operated rail service for 48 years until it was switched in 1950 to bus operations.

Whether they expect to be around 100 years for the next party or not, the division’s guests took advantage, Saturday, of a mouth-watering barbecue, plenty of prizes and exhibits by the MTA’s DAC volunteers, the LA Fire Department and the Sheriff’s Department.

Among those involved in arranging the event were Jim Lukens, Helen Ortiz, Linda Wilkerson, Norma Carrasco, Reggie Ables, Gloria Stevens, Manny Guerra, Marissa Yeager and the DAC members.

GALLERY	Click on image to view	PHOTOS BY BILL HEARD



Ready to cut the 100th Anniversary cakes are, from left, Richard Hunt, Julian Burke, Jim Lukens, Pam O'Conner, John Catoe, Tom Conner, Ron Whitney and John Roberts.



Operator Melvin Braxton, (red shirt) with 34 years, and Mechanic Leader Joe Medrano, (grey shirt) with 23 years, are Division 6's most senior people. They're shown here with, from left, John Roberts, Yolanda Medrano, Richard Hunt and Rick Hittinger.



Division 6 Maintenance Manager Ron Whitney, left, and Operations Manager Jim Lukens received 100th Anniversary proclamations from the MTA Board and the County and City of LA. Board Member Pam O'Conner presented the resolutions.



It was a smokey barbecue, but it smelled really good as Darryl Henderson and Leroy Douglas tended the sausages, chicken, and burgers.



Richard Hunt, executive officer, Transit Operations, recounted the 100-year history of Division 6 from its beginnings as the Pacific Park Car House in 1901.



Board Member Pam O'Conner presented several proclamations to former Transit Operations Chief Tom Conner and his wife, Carol.



Julian Burke, Louis Maspero and his grandson, Timothy, 5, take a moment to check out the LA Fire Department's 1931 Seagrave hose wagon with firefighter Phil Weireter.



Staffing the DAC booth were volunteer Vanessa Carasso, Division 2's Robert Rodriguez and the RRC's Gabe Martinez.



CEO Julian Burke greets OCTA CEO Art Leahy.



Division 6 Operator Michael Burke brought his daughters, Briana, 11, and Morgan, 7, to the Anniversary celebration.

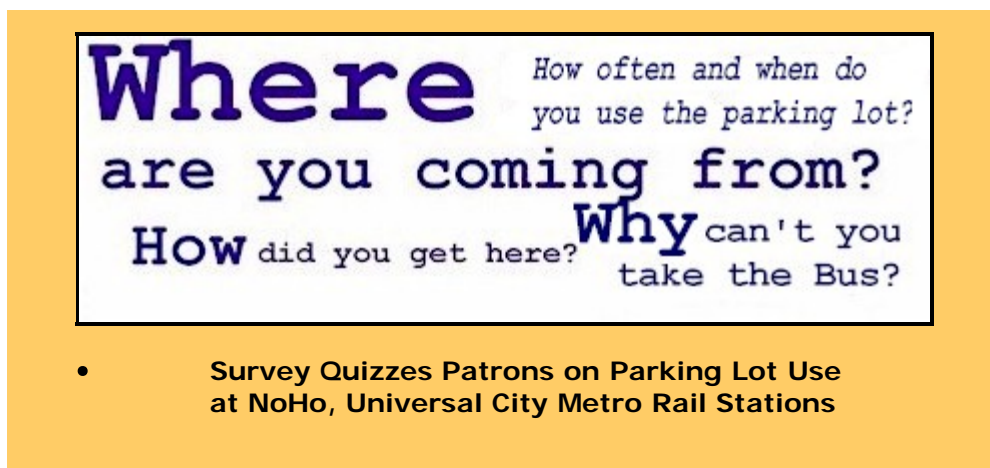


Jeremy Helliwell had something special to tell Gloria Stevens of Division 6.



Emelly Campos, 3, was a lucky girl to win a Raggedy Ann doll during the drawing for kid's toys. Her father, Roger, is a bus operator at Division 6.

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)



(Aug. 29, 2001) When Metro Red Line patrons find the parking lots at the North Hollywood and Universal City stations chockablock with cars by 9 a.m., they're miffed. And some park illegally.

As part of an effort to solve parking problems at the two stations, the MTA first needed some basic information.

[Comment on this article](#)

That's why in early August, some 1,500 motorists who use the parking lots found a survey under their windshield wipers.

Where are you coming from, the survey asked, and how often and when do you use the parking lot?

Patrons also were asked how much they know about available bus service to the stations, possible reasons for not taking the bus, and whether they would support a parking charge if space could be guaranteed.

MTA Transportation Planning Manager Michael Sieckert says approximately 400 surveys were placed on cars parked at the Universal City station. About 1,100 were distributed at North Hollywood station.

'Testing the waters'

"We're kind of testing the water, feeling the pulse of the public," said Sieckert. "If we can identify clusters of people who live in areas where there may be an inadequate bus link to the stations, we may be able to restructure service...or create new service to meet people's needs."

Valet parking also is being considered.

"In the case of North Hollywood, for example, we think we could expand current parking capacity by upwards of 25 to 30 percent by using that type of parking strategy," Sieckert said.

A complete report with recommendations is expected to be submitted to the MTA Board by this fall.

[Back to MTA Report](#)



- 300 pole banners with bilingual safety messages begin appearing at selected rail crossings for 'Metro Blue Line Safety Month.'

MTA Declares September 'Metro Blue Line Safety Month' as Kids Head Back to School

By ED SCANNELL

(Aug. 30, 2001) - As thousands of children living near the Metro Blue Line tracks head back to school, the MTA is moving safety to the head of the class by declaring September 'Metro Blue Line Safety Month.'

The month-long campaign will augment the MTA's ongoing public safety awareness program. The campaign is aimed at promoting safety along the 22-mile-long line and reducing the number of accidents.

Metro Blue Line Safety Month is strategically timed to remind returning students about safety around tracks and trains. The program's key features are:

- 300 pole banners with bilingual safety messages at selected rail crossings
- Safety messages on electronic signs at Metro Rail station platforms
- An origami piece with a safety quiz/messages to be distributed to K-5 students
- A student planner featuring a calendar, anti-graffiti message, Metro Rail map with safety messages to be distributed to junior high and high school students
- Distribution of rail safety brochures on Metro buses and trains
- Distribution of coloring and activity books, safety bookmarks to schools

"This is an excellent opportunity to deliver the safety message to thousands of young people in a short span of time," said Abdul Zohbi, manager, System Safety. "If we can make the connection now, our children will carry those lessons with them into their adult years."

The MTA's ongoing public safety awareness program has resulted in a significant decrease in recent years in the number of train vs. vehicle and train vs. pedestrian accidents.

Door-to-door contact

Staff members have made door-to-door contact with residents living along the Metro Blue Line alignment and conducted safety presentations to numerous schools, community organizations, homeowner groups and safety fairs.

The staff conducts a Metro Rail safety tour program in which students

along the Metro Blue Line alignment are invited to ride the trains and learn about the rail system and how they can be safe near train tracks.

In addition, safety brochures have been distributed to Department of Motor Vehicle offices and public libraries, and signs have been posted on trains to reinforce the safety message.

Technological improvements, law enforcement and MTA-sponsored legislation also have played a large role in reducing the number of Metro Blue Line accidents.

The technological improvements include the use of photo enforcement at selected crossings, swing gates, pedestrian gates, train-activated "No Left Turn" signs, media islands, additional active warning lights at various crossings, and installation of the ARC (Alternating Rail Car) light system on the rail vehicles.

[Back to MTA Report](#)

**STATEMENT BY MTA CEO JULIAN BURKE
CONCERNING THE RULING BY THE
U.S. NINTH CIRCUIT COURT OF APPEALS**

August 31, 2001

I am disappointed by the ruling of the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, but it is not appropriate for me to comment in specifics regarding the ruling pending further review by MTA counsel.

The MTA has greatly improved bus service and continues to do so. Since March 1999, the MTA has taken delivery of more than 1,000 new buses, more than 400 of which have been received this year alone. Moreover, since July 1997, the MTA has added 262 extra buses into service, and I believe the MTA has achieved and maintained substantial compliance with the Consent Decree.

After a full briefing, probably next week, the Board of Directors will determine our next course of action.

[Back to MTA Report](#)



Want a great new MTA screensaver for your computer? To select any of MTA screensavers, go to: www.mta.net/downloads.htm

MTA Screensaver Giveaways Planned as Part of Internet Redesign Launch

By WARREN MORSE

(Aug. 31, 2001) As a way of thanking visitors and increasing traffic to targeted areas of the MTA's Internet web site, Marketing has developed a screensaver giveaway in conjunction with the Sept. 1 launch of the redesigned site.

See related
story

[A New Look
for mta.net](#)

Visitors will be able to download any of five MTA-themed screensavers for free and run them on their workstations.

"We'll give visitors the opportunity to download these screensavers from areas of the website we'd like to emphasize," said Joe Simpson, MTA webmaster. "For example, you'll be able to download a special Stakeholders screensaver."

Other screensavers that will be available beginning this weekend are themed around the "It's Getting Better on the Bus" campaign, Metro Art, Metro Vehicles and Try Transit Week.

The screensavers will be available internally on metro.net, as well as on www.mta.net. Simpson created the animated messages using Flash and Screentime software. Some graphic elements were originally developed by the MTA's Graphics Department.

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)



Beginning today, you can read the letters addressed to Stakeholders Connections on metro.net. Click on 'We Get Letters' under **Viewpoint** in left-hand column of the Intranet home page to access Letters to Stakeholders on a regular basis. [Click here to read Letters to Stakeholders on metro.net.](#)

Letters are Barometer of Public's Regard for MTA, Stakeholders Editor Says

(Aug. 31, 2001) We get letters – and how! At least that's what Gary Wosk, editor of the MTA's Internet Stakeholders web site, discovered when he offered members of the public another way to express their views on transportation issues.

Now, through Stakeholders "Connections," members of the public can ask questions or comment on topics involving the MTA. Their letters – many complimentary, others critical – are displayed on the "We get Mail" and "Ask the MTA" pages.

"We, as MTA employees, need to know how our agency stands with the public," says Wosk. "Reading the letters the public sends to Stakeholders 'Connections' provides employees with a barometer of public sentiment."

The MTA's Customer Relations/Passenger Relations Department also responds throughout the year to the concerns of thousands of Metro riders who phone, write or send e-mail messages. It remains the agency's primary customer-focused department.

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)

A New Look for mta.net Sharpens Focus on Customer Needs

The MTA is introducing a new look for its web site this week that reflects the authority's diverse range of transportation responsibilities and puts customers just a click away from vital information.

"The new design organizes the site's features in a clear, logical and attractive manner, making it even faster and easier for visitors to locate the information they need," said Warren Morse, Deputy Executive Officer of Marketing and Customer Relations.

Set to launch Sept. 1, the revised home page divides information into several main categories including transit information, regional issues, Pressroom/Stakeholder features and Board information.

Each category gives the user a space-saving "fly-out" menu, providing direct links from the home page to virtually every subject on the site.

The home page also features a scrolling banner of the most current or breaking information, allowing visitors to spot items of interest at a glance and link to them directly from the scrolling banner.

See related story

The site will offer [MTA-themed screensavers](#) that visitors can download free (see related story).

[MTA Screensaver Giveaways Planned](#)

The MTA's web site recorded an all-time high of 4.9 million hits during the month of July, or an average of 158,000 hits per day, and has been recommended in the media several times recently including a July 12 LA Times article listing '30 Internet Essential Bookmarks'.

Webmaster Joe Simpson created the new design for the site along with code development from Assistant Webmaster Brad Balduff.

[Back to MTA Report](#)