

## Walter Carmier's Retirement Plan:

PHOTO BY VICTORIA WOODS



Metro Bus Operator Walter Carmier retires after 36 years.

## Fishin', Fishin', and More Fishin'

By RICH MORALLO

(Aug. 2, 2002) It's been 15 years since Walter Carmier has done any fishing at all - a 10-foot Louisiana catfish was his biggest catch ever - so now the 61-year-old and most senior Arthur Winston Division 5 bus operator plans to make up for lost time.

"I'm going to retire in Texas and just fish," says Carmier, who adds that driving passengers in Los Angeles for the past 36 years has kept him away from his rod.

Come January, if his retirement plan goes as scheduled, Carmier will make his way to some Houston creek and spend his golden years reeling in fish. "I'll enjoy my retirement, that's for sure, but I'll always have my Metro memories with me."

Memories like the time Carmier waited for a lady to cross the street and catch his Line 18 bus at 6th Street and Western Avenue.

"The lady - she was from the Philippines - thanked me, and said I was the first operator to ever wait for her," Carmier recalls. But, the story didn't end there. "Would you believe every day for the next six months, that lady caught my bus and gave me a Filipino home-cooked dish to thank me?"

Then there was the "gun scare" on Line 212 on Hollywood Boulevard.

### 'Hands over our heads'

"The police learned that someone on my bus might be carrying a weapon," Carmier remembers. "So, they ordered me to stop the bus and all of us, fifteen passengers and myself, had to exit the bus single-file, backwards, with our hands over our heads."

These days, Carmier keeps busy driving Line 115 from Manchester to Norwalk in the morning and then Line 207 from Western Avenue to Hollywood Boulevard in the afternoon. He also is making plans to send his 12-year-old son and 14-year-old daughter to college.

The years have gone by fast for Carmier. It seems just yesterday when he was 25 years old and newly arrived from Lake Charles, La. He decided to spend a year driving school buses so he could qualify for the MTA in 1966.

"Why did I stay?" he muses 36 years later. "Simple. The MTA treated me nice."

For today's operators, Carmier advises: "Be at work on time; don't tear up the bus; and if you take care of the MTA, the MTA will take care of you."

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)