

## Metro Report Archives

### October 2002 Articles

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**[MTA Seeking Most Durable, Comfortable Bus Operators' Seat](#)** (Oct. 31, 2002) MTA is on a quest to find bus operator's seats that will be the most comfortable for the largest number of operators and will be the best fit for the various models of Metro Buses in the fleet.

**[New Deal for Bus Riders on Select MTA, OCTA Lines](#)** (Oct. 31, 2002) MTA will accept OCTA monthly bus passes on six selected Metro Bus lines beginning Friday, Nov. 1. In return, OCTA also will accept MTA monthly bus passes on 10 selected OCTA bus routes that travel from Orange County into downtown Los Angeles.

**[Construction Projects, Anti-Graffiti Motions Before MTA Board](#)** (Oct. 23, 2002) The Board will consider three motions concerning MTA transit construction projects at its monthly meeting, Oct. 24. Two other motions are aimed at preventing graffiti from defacing MTA vehicles and facilities.

**[Hollywood Celebrates New Metro Rail Late-Night Hours](#)** (Oct. 18, 2002) Hollywood celebrated MTA's announcement, today, that an extra hour will be added to MTA Red and Blue Line nighttime service beginning Sunday, Oct. 20.

**[International Group Cites MTA for World's Largest CNG Fleet](#)** (Oct. 18, 2002) MTA currently operates the world's largest fleet of CNG buses – a fact that has earned the agency high honors from an international organization.

**[MTA, LADOT to Share 'Blue Sky' award for Metro Rapid Program](#)** (Oct. 16, 2002) A national transportation organization has awarded a "Blue Sky Merit Award" to MTA and LADOT for the Metro Rapid bus demonstration program on Wilshire/Whittier and Ventura boulevards.

**[CEO Roger Snoble's First Year: A Not-So-Quiet Revolution](#)** (Oct. 10, 2002) When Roger Snoble assumed the mantle of leadership at MTA a year ago this month, he had big plans. Plans that amounted to no less than a revolution for an agency whose responsibilities touch virtually every person, business and industry in Los Angeles County.

**[Mobile Theater Would Provide Realistic Rail Safety Training](#)** (Oct. 9, 2002) People who live or work along the Metro Blue and Gold Lines will experience the speed, weight and impact of a moving train – all within the confines of a "multi-media mobile theater" MTA plans to use to enhance rail safety education.

**[First 8 Months Were Busy for Rail GM Gerald Francis](#)** (Oct. 4, 2002) Since joining MTA last January, Metro Rail General Manager Gerald Francis not only has had to learn a new rail system in a new town, he's been working to improve passenger service and upgrade maintenance of the rail cars – all while planning ahead for a startup on the Metro Gold Line.

**[MTA San Gabriel Valley Schedules Community Meetings](#)** (Oct. 4, 2003) MTA San Gabriel Valley will hold a series of community meetings, beginning Oct. 8, to seek public input on how bus service can be improved in their communities.

**[Board Adopts Policy, Bylaws for Sector Governance Councils](#)** (Oct. 1, 2002) The MTA Board approved two motions, Thursday, adopting a policy that describes the responsibilities of service sector governance councils and a set of bylaws to guide their conduct.

### Bulletin Board

- **[A memorial for Gateway muralist James Doolin](#)** will be held in the lobby of MTA Headquarters this Sunday. Employees are invited to attend.
- **[Technical Website](#) Will Better Assist Bus Mechanics and Operators**
- **[MTA.net Search Engine](#) Will Find Stories Quickly**
- **[MTA Opens Memorial Fund](#) for Sniper Victim Conrad Johnson**

- [SGV Sector Plans](#) Veterans Recognition Day for Nov. 8
- [Four MTA Vendors](#) Honored for Outstanding Performance
- [Franklin Willis](#) elected ACCA Board Member
- [New Medical Imaging Program](#) to Expedite Employee Injury Treatment
- [West Valley Division](#) Takes Top *How You Doin'*? Honors
- [SGV Sector Staff](#) Meets with Area Residents
- [Recognition Celebration](#) at Central City Division 1
- [San Gabriel Valley Division](#) is No. 1 in Safety: 272 Days of No Lost-time Injury
- [Three Arthur Winston Division](#) employees were recognized for outstanding achievement in maintenance
- Yet another Rose! [Even without a float](#), MTA is well-represented in the 2003 Tournament of Roses.
- [Arthur Winston Operator Honored](#) as Tuskegee Parent of the Year
- [Reception for Gateway Cities Sector Staff, Snoble and Catoe](#) (Oct. 23, 2002)  
The City of Santa Fe Springs and the Gateway Cities Council of Governments co-hosted a luncheon reception, October 15 to introduce sector General Manager Rich Rogers and his staff to the federal, state and local elected officials from the area.
- [South Bay's Coffey](#) Meets with Carson, Torrance Officials (Oct. 23, 2002) MTA South Bay General Manager Dana Coffey visited with public officials in Carson and Torrance, last week, to acquaint them with MTA's new service sector concept.
- [Director Proo Tours Gateway Cities Divisions](#) (Oct. 23, 2002) MTA Director Beatrice Proo got a behind-the-scenes look at the Gateway Cities sector's two operating divisions during a recent tour conducted by General Manager Rich Rogers.
- [Free Prescriptions for MTA Employees Injured on the Job](#) (Oct. 22, 2002)  
Beginning in November, active, inactive and retired MTA employees who need medication for their on-the-job injuries will be eligible for free prescriptions from a nationwide network of participating pharmacies.
- [New Contract Will Help MTA Save Money on Medical Claims](#) (Oct. 22, 2002) A new contract with a medical services company that processes employee injury claims and assists employees injured on the job also promises cost-saving benefits for MTA.
- [Safety Accountability Earned RRC Machinists 1,000 Accident-Free Days](#) (Oct. 22, 2002) "We keep each other accountable," says Mechanic Machinist Chris Frandberg of the Regional Rebuild Center's machine shop.
- [Central City Division's Alex Pages](#) Keeps 'The King's' Spirit Alive (October 18, 2002) Operating buses 40 hours a week has not stopped the Central City Division Bus Operator Alex Pages from doing what he likes to do best – acting and performing stand-up comedy.
- [Revised Policy Restricts Use of Consultant ID Badges](#)
- [More Roses! Tournament of Roses Royal Court](#) includes not one, but two, daughters of MTA employees.
- [Law and Order](#): Sheriff's Explorer Program gives youths experience in law enforcement.

- [Everything's Coming Up Roses](#) for Engineer's Daughter (Oct. 16, 2002) Daughter of Sudhir Agrawal is one of seven selected for the Tournament of Roses Royal Court.
- [South Bay Adopts Watts School, Donates Books for Kids](#) (Oct. 16, 2002) The South Bay service sector has adopted Ritter Elementary School in Watts – and already is supporting the school's reading program with books contributed by sector employees.
- [One Year and Counting...](#) (Oct. 15, 2002) Much more was accomplished over the past year than he ever had expected, CEO Roger Snoble told staffers, Monday, in a meeting marking his first anniversary with MTA.
- [Everything you need to know - and more - about transit](#) (Oct. 15, 2002) MTA's Dorothy Peyton Gray Transportation Library is the last word in research, transportation, and technical developments. New librarian Matt Barrett is leading the charge to expand the facility and its resources.
- OBITUARY [Louis Maspero, 42-Year MTA Veteran, Has Died](#)
- [Red Cross Commends MTA Employee for Saving a Child's Life](#) (Oct. 8, 2002) Ryan Williams, who works as a Utility "A" in the Logistics Department knows the feeling – he saved the life of a little girl last year.
- [Suzanne Schmutzler Sticks to Her Knitting and Wins Big at LA County Fair](#) (Oct. 8, 2002) When Suzanne Schmutzler isn't on the job at MTA, she's doing what she enjoys the most – spinning fine yarn and knitting beautiful baby garments and other pieces.
- [LASD's MTA Sheriff's Posse](#) was a magnet for kids at the El Monte Bus Terminal on Oct. 5.
- [Arthur Winston Division 5](#) Throws Bash for South Bay Sector
- [New HR Director Brings 30 Years' Experience to MTA](#) (Oct. 2, 2002) During a 30-year career in personnel administration and labor relations, Bill McLeod has sat on both sides of the table. He's been a union representative and a member of management teams.
- [West Hollywood Division Receives Sheriff's 'Good Neighbor' Award](#) (Oct. 2, 2002) The West Hollywood Sheriff's Station presented Transportation Manager Ron Reedy of West Hollywood Division and his staff an award for being a good neighbor.
- [Dark skies and drizzle](#) couldn't deter MTA South Bay volunteers from fanning across its service area, last Saturday, to participate in five community fairs and festivals on the same day - a record number for the sector.
- [B of A Grants MTA Employees a Waiver of \\$5 Check Charge](#) (Oct. 1, 2002) Back in August, Bank of America began charging MTA employees and other non-customers \$5 to cash their paychecks if they didn't have a banking relationship with B of A.
- [Central City Division employees](#) enjoyed live music, great food and good company at MTA Gateway Cities event.
- [A Metro Rapid bus](#) was star of the show at back-to-school event.
- [Leadership Group Tours](#) MTA HQ, Subway

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### High Achievers



Three Arthur Winston Division 5 employees were recognized, Friday, for outstanding achievement in maintenance. From left are Bernice Hardemion, a Utility "A," and equipment records specialists Bernard Noriega and Trudy Sealey. Noriega and Sealey have worked 20 years without an injury.

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## More roses in the MTA family

Tournament of Roses Royal Court includes not one, but *two*, daughters of MTA employees.



Rose Princess Glynn-Helene Joseph is daughter of MTA Mechanic Emil Joseph.

By GAYLE ANDERSON

More than 950 young women in the Pasadena-area vied for the coveted post of princess in the Tournament of Roses Royal Court. One week later, 100 were chosen as semi-finalists and, from there, 38 finalists began yet another round of interviews and tests for presence that would unnerve all but the truly poised.

When the seven princesses were announced last Monday, two of the royal court just happened to be members of the MTA family. Both are daughters of MTA employees.

Glynn-Helene Joseph, daughter of Metro Red Line mechanic Emil Joseph, and Anjali Agrawal, daughter of MTA engineer Sudhir Agrawal, were both selected princesses of the Royal Court. (See [metro.net Oct. 17](#): "Everything's coming up roses for MTA engineer's daughter.")

MTA Mechanic Emil Joseph was at the press conference at Tournament Hall last Monday when his daughter, 17-year-old Glynn-Helene Joseph, was selected.

"She was the last one called, but I wasn't worried; I knew she would win," he said in a telephone interview. "She was smiling the whole time. She is so outgoing; everybody loves her. I knew she would be the one."

Glynn-Helene was a little more apprehensive than her father knew, however. She had asked her mother, Caryl, not to bring a camera, "just in case" she lost, said Joseph. "She didn't want anyone to see a picture of her crying."

Glynn-Helene is a senior at Flintridge Sacred Heart Academy and lives in Altadena. Active in volunteerism, she currently donates her culinary skills at Union Station in Pasadena, helping to prepare breakfast and lunch every Saturday. She has also been a volunteer at Kaiser Permanente hospital.

Her hobbies include reading, dancing, music and serious cooking. She has recently accepted at the California Culinary Academy to study baking and pastry art. Eventually, she plans to open her own restaurant. Her older sister, Camille, 19, is a graduate of the Fashion Institute of Design.

Emil Joseph began working at the MTA in 1983 and is currently

assigned as a mechanic for non-revenue equipment at Metro Red Line Division 20. A long-time high-tech mechanic, Joseph served as an aviation electronics technician aboard the aircraft carrier U.S.S. Constellation during a stint in the U.S. Navy, 1976-1980.

The Royal Court will reign over the 114<sup>th</sup> Rose Parade and the 89<sup>th</sup> Rose Bowl Game on Jan. 1, sharing the spotlight with grand marshals Bill Cosby, Art Linkletter and television's Mr. Rogers, Fred Rogers. The Rose Parade is themed "Children's Dreams, Wishes and Imagination."

Whether atop a float or at the Rose Bowl, the Royal Court will occupy the best seats in the house. The parents and immediate family of each princess also get the royal treatment, said Joseph. Among other duties that befall the entourages is a requisite attendance at the Rose Bowl Parade and football game that follows. VIP seating is a given.

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## **B of A Grants MTA Employees a Waiver of \$5 Check Charge**

(Oct. 1, 2002) Back in August, Bank of America began charging MTA employees and other non-customers \$5 to cash their paychecks if they didn't have a banking relationship with B of A.

Now, Bank of America has granted a waiver through March 31, 2003, for MTA and PTSC employees. The bank will cash employee paychecks without charge during that period, regardless of whether employees have a banking relationship with B of A.

The waiver was confirmed at last week's MTA Board meeting in an exchange between Board Chairman Hal Bernson and B of A Senior Vice President Alec Bigelson. B of A is under contract with MTA to handle payroll funds.

During the waiver period, employees can take steps to avoid the \$5 bank check charge by signing up for direct deposit with the financial institution of their choice, by cashing their checks at their own financial institution, having their pay deposited directly to a financial institution's debit card program, or by establishing a banking relationship with Bank of America.

B of A defines a banking relationship as a mortgage, debit card, loan, checking account, savings account, certificate of deposit, an Individual Retirement Account or military bank account with any Bank of America affiliate or subsidiary.

About 86 percent of MTA employees receive their pay through direct deposit. The other 1,400 to 1,600 employees are paid by check.

MTA staff will distribute information to employees about banking programs, including how to open a direct deposit account.

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## **Board Adopts Policy, Bylaws for Sector Governance Councils**

(Oct. 1, 2002) The MTA Board approved two motions, Thursday, adopting a policy that describes the responsibilities of service sector governance councils and a set of bylaws to guide their conduct.

The policy defines the relationship between the Board and the governance councils of the five service sectors for bus operations service planning and scheduling. The Board will delegate specific authority to the councils for these functions.

The purpose of the governance councils is to improve bus service and localize control by increasing public access to the sectors and ensuring responsiveness to customers. The councils also are charged with maintaining an "employee-supportive work environment."

In addition to helping streamline decision-making and supporting MTA policies, plans and safety initiatives, council responsibilities include approving sector budget proposals for the CEO's consideration.

### **Implement service changes**

They will conduct public hearings for sector bus lines, approve sector programs and implement service changes.

The councils also will ensure compliance with MTA's legal agreements, including collective bargaining agreements. Members will provide input to sector general managers' performance reviews and participate in annual meetings with the CEO and his staff.

The MTA Board will appoint members from "a broad spectrum of interests and geographic areas" to the governance councils based on nominations submitted by a coalition of local government entities.

The by-laws permit governance councils of up to nine members, but at least 50 percent of the membership must be transit consumers who live or work in the area. Members may be elected officials or private citizens, but MTA Board members may not serve on the councils.

### **Members serve three-year terms**

Governance council members will serve three-year terms, staggered among the membership. The members, who will be paid a stipend for their service, will be required to conduct regularly scheduled meetings.

The meetings are to be called, announced to the public and conducted under the rules of the Brown Act, the state's open meetings law.

Under the bylaws, governance councils will have authority to change, add or delete service in conformance with MTA service standards, policies and collective bargaining agreements. They can contract with local transit operators, other firms or consultants.

They also can develop studies on routes and scheduling for Tier 2 and 3 services, call public hearings on proposed route changes, and work with MTA planners and municipal operators to ensure coordination of services, including Tier 1 bus services.

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## Central City Division Employees Celebrate Gateway Cities Sector

By LISA HUYNH

(Oct. 1, 2002) The sun stood high in the sky, Sept. 17; there wasn't a cloud in sight. The heat was offset by a cool breeze – a setting that made it easy to celebrate the opening of the Gateway Cities sector.



Central City Division employees enjoyed live music, great food and good company during the Central Cities sector event.

"Today's barbeque is to show our appreciation to the employees here at Central City Division 1 for their efforts and hard work," says General Manager Rich Rogers. "Without them, we wouldn't be here."

Employees are the ones who do the job and know how to make it happen, the general manager says. The event was the sector staff's way of giving back to the employees for what they do day in and day out.

"To make the sector a success, it will take everyone, including the sector staff and employees, working together as a team," says Rogers. "It also takes being able to communicate openly with one another."

Transportation Manager Sonja Owens says the sector staff visits Central City Division 1 and interacts with the employees almost daily.

"This barbeque is great because it gives us a chance to get to know the staff and for them to get to know us," says Metro Bus Operator Carl Johnson. "This sector allows us to work together."

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## Star of the Show



(Oct. 1, 2002) A Metro Rapid bus was star of the show during a weekend back-to-school event at Warner Avenue Elementary School, near UCLA. Westside/Central Operators Francisco Escobedo and Paul Magallanes, both of West Hollywood Division 7, represented MTA.

MTA had give-aways highlighting bus safety for the 1,500 kids and parents who attended. "We were swamped from before the event began until the very end," says Jody Litvak, an MTA employee and Warner School parent.

Also on hand for the event were representatives from the LAPD, CHP and LA Fire Department, who demonstrated their equipment.

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## Leadership Group Tours MTA HQ, Subway



PHOTO BY RICH MORALLO

Metro South Bay hosted members of the Redondo Beach Leadership Group on a tour of the MTA, Sept. 13. The visitors, part of LA County Supervisor Don Knabe's "Day in the County" program, toured the MTA Headquarters building and the historic entrance of Union Station before riding the Metro Red Line to Civic Center station. Sheriff's Deputy Tom Martin (left) helped escort the group at the east portal of Union Station. (10/1/02)

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New HR Director  
Bill McLeod

## New HR Director Brings 30 Years' Experience to MTA

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Oct. 2, 2002) During a 30-year career in personnel administration and labor relations, Bill McLeod has sat on both sides of the table. He's been a union representative and a member of management teams.

Now, as MTA's new director of Human Resources, McLeod will concentrate on improving his department's service to employees and department managers. And, he brings to the job an appreciation of working in and with a unionized workforce.

McLeod, who reports to Administration Executive Officer Carolyn Flowers, sees three immediate priorities before him. The first is to greatly expand bus operator recruitment.

"That, obviously, is key for this agency," he says, noting that MTA's bus fleet is expanding and that employees who begin as bus operators often move on to become rail operators and transportation operations supervisors, or into jobs in scheduling or division management.

### Better define opportunities

Non-represented jobs also will receive attention. "We're going to study MTA job categories and better define job opportunities for our non-represented employees," says McLeod.

Employee classifications, some of which he believes have too many levels, will be rewritten to better define career paths. Some steps in the recruiting and promotion processes probably can be eliminated or fine-tuned.

McLeod intends to work closely with Organizational Development and Training to ensure that employees understand what education or training they may need for promotion. "We need to do a better job of showing employees that there are jobs they can promote into through a selection and testing process."

Finally, he wants to streamline Human Resources processes for such purposes as requisitioning a new job position. "By improving our processes through some reengineering, we can really be of assistance to the departments."

Overall, says McLeod, "I want to work with the people in HR to provide the very best customer service and to energize the department. Whatever we do in HR has to support the strategic objectives of the organization."

### Native of Los Angeles

A native of Los Angeles who grew up in La Puente, McLeod, 54, began his career with a public sector union, the California State Employees Association. During his nine years with CSEA he served, among other positions, as business agent and operations division administrator, directing field representatives, handling public relations and running bargaining unit elections, among other responsibilities.

Later, he served as employee relations officer for Yolo County, Calif., as human resources manager for the Sacramento County public works agency and for the East Bay Regional Park District in Oakland. He was director of labor relations for San Joaquin County and served as director of personnel for the City of Oceanside before joining MTA.

McLeod earned bachelor's and master's degrees in political science from Cal State LA and holds a Senior Professional in Human Resources certification. He is a graduate of Harvard University's Trade Union Program and of the Executive Management Program at the University of California, Davis.

McLeod's main interests are reading – history and detective novels – and the theater. He

attends theater in Los Angeles and has traveled frequently to London the past 10 years for the theater season. He rides the Metro Red Line to work each day.

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## Bad Weather Doesn't Stop Metro South Bay Volunteers

By RICH MORALLO

(Oct. 2, 2002) Dark skies and drizzle couldn't deter Metro South Bay volunteers from fanning across its service area, last Saturday, to participate in five community fairs and festivals on the same day - a record number for the sector.

A band of bus and train safety volunteers, mechanics, transportation operations and equipment maintenance supervisors, LAPD Transit Service Bureau officers, Division Advisory Committee (DAC) members and service sector staff manned information tables in Watts, South Central Los Angeles, Inglewood and El Segundo.

"We get to interact with people a lot better at these events," said Transportation Operations Supervisor Joe Rodriguez from Carson Division 18.

Rodriguez answered bus schedule and bus line questions at the Richmond Street Fair in El Segundo. Helping him field queries was Marco Pedemonte, an equipment maintenance supervisor from Arthur Winston Division 5, who had two assistants himself - wife Neife and four-year-old son, Daniel.

### Handing out literature

A few minutes northeast of El Segundo, Senior HR Analyst Jeannette Bell passed out bulletins and application forms for operator, mechanic and equipment records specialist positions at the Thoreau and Adath Streets Block Party in Inglewood.

Working side-by-side with Metro South Bay General Manger Dana Coffey in the celebration's most visible booth - a shiny red Metro Rapid Bus on display - Bell said she had a party at the event.

"It was fun talking to the residents and telling them how the service sectors would enhance customer service," she said.

While Bell and other Metro South Bay volunteers worked, train safety presenter Wajeha Bilal distributed bus safety checklists and train safety tips to youngsters as she listened to Aztec drums and music during the 21st annual Day of the Drums festival at the Watts Towers.

Crowds of up to 3,000 attended the festival, held just a couple of blocks from the 103rd Street Metro Blue Line train station.

### 'We have to stay in touch'

A Watts resident for 58 years, Wajeha was busy

PHOTOS BY RICH MORALLO



Seven-year old twins Hector and Jose hoist a Metro bag at Vermont Harbor street fair.



The Metro Rapid Bus was a big attraction at the Thoreau and Ardath Streets block party.



Marco Pedemonte, wife Neife and son Daniel helped man the Metro South Bay table at the Richmond Street Fair in El Segundo.



reminding children to "look, listen and live" around buses and trains. She often volunteers to promote Metro in her neighborhood. "We have to stay in touch with the community and make sure we know their needs."



Wajeha Bilal with Metro Safety's 1st pamphlets at the Watts Towers' drum festival.

Community Relations light-duty operator Tanya Hardson and LAPD Officer Steven Ramos took up positions at the Vermont Harbor 1st Annual Street Conference, which closed down a couple of blocks along 53rd Street east of Vermont Avenue.

They handed out safety coloring books and crayons to neighborhood children. Word processor operator Pat Clark helped them until it was time to take safety materials to Metro South Bay's fifth event for the day - a barbecue dinner and fundraiser for a church on 59th Street.

"We're glad Metro South Bay came out to these events," said Inglewood resident Charlie Walker, 68. "If it weren't for these information tables, I wouldn't have known that seniors pay less for a Metro pass."

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## West Hollywood Division Receives Sheriff's 'Good Neighbor' Award

By LISA HUYNH

(Oct. 2, 2002) It's all about community and teamwork at West Hollywood Division.

The West Hollywood Sheriff's Station presented Transportation Manager Ron Reedy of West Hollywood Division and his staff an award, last Thursday, for being a good neighbor.

The Sheriff's Station, which is next door to West Hollywood Division, held an open house several weeks ago and needed at least 50 parking spaces for their units. Without hesitation, Reedy designated 50 spaces for the station's visitors to use.

"We try to help each other out as much as we can, not only as neighbors, but as a public service," says Reedy.

Captain Lynda Castro spoke on behalf of the Sheriff's Department to thank Reedy "for your support and generous contribution to our open house."

"Receiving this award feels wonderful, but really, the whole staff deserves this award," says Reedy. "It takes the whole staff to make this division work."

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LASD Captain Lynda Castro, left, spoke on behalf of the Sheriff's Department to thank Reedy and West Hollywood Division staff "for your support and generous contribution to our open house."

West Hollywood  
Division  
Transportation  
Manager Ron  
Reedy at the  
West Hollywood  
Sheriff's Station



PHOTOS BY  
LISA HUYNH

## Arthur Winston Division 5 Throws Bash for South Bay Sector

By ALISHA GOMEZ

(Oct. 4, 2002) Despite gloomy and chilly weather, Arthur Winston Division 5 was smokin', last Friday, as employees celebrated the South Bay Sector.

For many employees, including Service Attendant Kathy Vilches, this was the first time to meet the sector staff.

"It's a good idea to have the sector staff come into the division and everyone meet each other," Vilches said. "We have a lot of fun and everybody gets to hang out."

With the sectors now playing a role in MTA's service, Division 5 is looking forward to attaining some of its goals with the sector's help.

### Part of the community

"The sector will help MTA divisions a part of the community," said James Woodson, assistant transportation manager. " Under the centralized structure, patrons could feel that MTA is one big entity and not really in touch with the community. The sector will help us respond to community needs."

And as Woodson notes, South Bay Sector General Manager Dana Coffey is an MTA veteran.

"Dana Coffey will add continuity because she has been an operator, an assistant manager and a transportation manager," he said. "She understands the demographics of the South Bay and the issues that are important to the patrons."

The sector also will be working with maintenance to ensure success.

### Safe, clean, reliable buses

"My direction right now is to provide a safe, clean, reliable bus for transportation," Maintenance Manager Alex Dinuzzo said. "From what I've seen so far, I have total backing from my sector general manager, in the way I feel maintenance should be run."

Coffey took a moment to welcome everyone and talk about what's expected from each employee.

"We have a long road ahead of us," she

## Scenes from a Barbecue

PHOTOS BY ALISHA GOMEZ



Transportation Manager Patsy Goens sings her heart out with Maintenance Manager Alex Dinuzzo and Lorraine Melendez, a Supervisor at RRC.



Mechanic Solomona Moala, Service Attendants Kathy Vilches and Joyce Duffie



said. "We're a very strong team here. There's a lot of heart here, a lot of dedication and loyalty, and it's showing every single day."

Coffey also emphasized teamwork. "In order to meet our goals, each and every one of you has to do your part. We are a team. I envision the South Bay sector as the best, but there's always room for growth and development. With your support, cooperation, positive attitudes and productivity, we are going to see success."

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A welcome from General Manager Dana Coffey



Assistant General Managers James Woodson, Keith Green and Odell Ross.

## **Metro San Gabriel Valley Schedules Community Meetings**

By RICK JAGER

(Oct. 4, 2003) Metro San Gabriel Valley will hold a series of community meetings, beginning Oct. 8, to seek public input on how bus service can be improved in their communities.

"The public is being encouraged to attend one of three community meetings and provide MTA staff with their comments on how bus service should be improved to better fit their needs," said Jack Gabig, general manager, Metro San Gabriel Valley. "We also need their input as my staff develops connections for bus service to and from the Metro Gold Line next year."

Service improvements discussed at the meetings could include adding more frequent bus service or simply changing or adding a bus stop as demand warrants.

As an example, Metro San Gabriel Valley, working with community leaders in Rosemead, established a new bus stop on Garvey Avenue for MTA Line 70 to better serve a newly established Senior Housing Center.

The community meetings are scheduled in Pasadena, Oct. 8; in Highland Park, Oct. 9; and in El Monte, Oct. 10.

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## First 8 Months Were Busy for Rail GM Gerald Francis

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Oct. 4, 2002) Since joining MTA last January, Metro Rail General Manager Gerald Francis not only has had to learn a new rail system in a new town, he's been working to improve passenger service and upgrade maintenance of the rail cars – all while planning ahead for a startup on the Metro Gold Line.



Metro Rail General Manager  
Gerald Francis

With substantial completion of the new LA-to-Pasadena line expected in February, Metro Rail already is in action. Cars have been placed on the rails for testing and, later this month, overhead catenary wires will be energized.

In June, eight rail operators chosen for the pre-revenue period began a training class. They're the first of a total of 40 who will be needed to provide service on the Metro Gold Line when it opens in mid-2003.

With the startup of the line, six more controllers will be needed at the Rail Operations Center and new status boards will be added to keep track of car movement. Other improvements include enhancements to the SCADA system.

Looking back, Francis reflects on several highlights of his months on the job, including early completion of a Metro Green Line track reconstruction project, continued growth in rail ridership, improvements in rail radio communications and a survey of rail employees.

### Francis was impressed

The track reconstruction project at the Harbor Freeway station, last April, particularly impressed Francis.

The reconstruction project was necessary to correct ground settlement of nearly two inches beneath the tracks near the station. Tracks had to be leveled, extra ballast put in and the section restored to its original condition. Planned for 23 days, the project was completed a week early.

Francis credits Facilities Maintenance Manager Keith Kranda, Senior Engineer Wyman Jones, Schedule Manager Bruce Shelburne, Rail Division Transportation Manager Duane Martin and Construction Manager Dave Walker and their staffs for finishing the job ahead of time and on budget.

"They not only implemented the plan, they stayed with it every day," he says. "They made decisions on the spot, readjusting the game plan, and that helped expedite things."

He also gives great credit to MTA Public Affairs, whose staff communicated effectively with passengers before and during the project, and to the passengers, themselves, who remained upbeat and cooperative throughout.

The cooperation of employees in several departments also was key to

the success of a two-month project to improve rail system radio communications. Rail Communications, Construction, ITS Systems, ITS Engineering and Purchasing worked together to switch off a problem-plagued system and shift service to other radio channels.

During his tenure, Francis has seen patronage climb steeply on the Metro Blue Line. Newly lengthened platforms and the scheduling of three-car trains sparked a jump in ridership from 60,000 average daily boardings in January to 73,000 in July.

To keep up with the increase, he usually schedules 49 cars for daily use – 11 three-car trains and eight two-car trains.

Metro Red Line average daily boardings, meanwhile, have hovered between 130,000 and 140,000. On the Metro Green Line, which operates 10 two-car trains each day, boardings have fluctuated between 25,000 and 30,000.

### **Raising the bar**

"What ultimately will determine the success of any transit system is providing quality service," Francis says. "Our rail fleet services section has accepted the challenge of raising the bar to increase vehicle reliability."

Coming up in October: an increase in late-night hours on all three rail lines and a change in policy to extend the hours when bicycle commuters can bring their bikes on board the trains.

With all that's ahead for the future, Francis looks to his rail team as the source of ideas for continued improvements in operations, maintenance and customer service.

He was pleased with the results of a recent employee survey, which received overwhelming participation. The survey was followed in August by employees meetings.

"We have a lot of good people who have great ideas, who are bright and energetic," says Francis. "We're getting to know each other and we're becoming a more cohesive unit. Our commitment to the future is to continue to focus on customer service, innovation and teamwork."

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## Sheriff's Posse:

Deputy Donna Cline of the LASD's Metro Sheriff's Posse was a magnet for kids at the El Monte Bus Terminal, Oct. 5. Members of the posse patrolled the area on horseback and handed out safety coloring books to children. The Sheriff's Posse was formed for crime prevention and community relations.



Deputies Luciano de la Hoya, left, and Donna Cline of the LASD Metro Sheriff's Posse are joined by retired Sheriff's Reserve Deputy John Richardson. The group patrolled on horseback at San Gabriel Division 9 and the El Monte Bus Terminal on Saturday, Oct. 5.



For more information on the LASD Sheriff's Posse reserve deputy and civilian volunteer programs, the web site address is [www.lasdreserve.org](http://www.lasdreserve.org).

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## Red Cross Commends MTA Employee for Saving a Child's Life

By LISA HUYNH

(Oct. 8, 2002) Most of us probably do not know how it feels to save another human being's life.

Ryan Williams, who works as a Utility "A" in the Logistics Department knows the feeling – he saved the life of a little girl last year.

In September, the American Red Cross commended Williams by presenting him the Life Saving Achievement award. National Chairman David McLaughlin presented the award on behalf of President Bush.

Williams also received a certificate signed by the President and a Red Cross medal and ribbon for his achievement.

The incident occurred in April 2001, only two days after he had completed an MTA CPR class. The infant was choking on a hair barrette that had closed her airway.

Williams performed a basic infant choking emergency procedure on the one-year-old girl and was able to dislodge the barrette – allowing her to breathe again.

The child then was transported to a children's hospital where doctors were able to remove the object by surgery.

Although it was unexpected because it was a year after the incident, William says, "It's a definite honor to have received the award."

"It's really the organization that deserves the credit because they offer this kind of training," says Williams. "I was just a recipient. The MTA made it made available."



Ryan Williams, above right, receives the American Red Cross Life Saving Achievement Award, below, for saving an infant from choking.



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EDITOR'S NOTE: Last year, 450 MTA employees took Red Cross classes offered at their work locations by MTA Corporate Safety. With the expansion of Employee Health and Wellness and programs under the Safety's First campaign, the number of classes being offered will significantly increase. In the first quarter of FY 03, 17 CPR/AED and First Aid classes were scheduled and all are filled.

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## Suzanne Schmutzler Sticks to Her Knitting and Wins Big at LA County Fair

By ALISHA GOMEZ

(October 8, 2002) When Suzanne Schmutzler isn't on the job at MTA, she's doing what she enjoys the most – spinning fine yarn and knitting beautiful baby garments and other pieces.

In fact, she's so good at these ancient arts that she won a first place Blue Ribbon and a second place Red Ribbon for two of her projects at the LA County Fair.

"For a couple of years, my husband had been telling me I should enter something in the fair and I kept saying 'no, I don't think so'," says Schmutzler, a construction contract administration manager.

However, this year her husband, Ed, an MTA construction inspector, dared her. So, she entered for the first time – and was absolutely blown away with the competition results.

Schmutzler's baby layette set, which included a sweater, bonnet and baby socks won the Blue Ribbon. Her knitted throw took a Red Ribbon in the afghan category.

"In the spun items, they look for consistency in the production of the yarn as well as the techniques of the knitting," she says.

### Intrigued with spinning

Schmutzler first saw women demonstrating spinning at the fair a year ago. She was so intrigued that she located a class and got started.

"I was very impressed with the tranquility I saw the ladies had while spinning," Schmutzler says. "It seemed like they had found nirvana and I just said, that's for me. I've got to try this."

She bought her first spinning wheel from a gift catalog, knowing nothing about what she was getting.

"It's lovely to look at, but it doesn't spin very well," Schmutzler says. "I

Suzanne Schmutzler won blue and red ribbons at the LA County Fair for her work in spinning and knitting. PHOTO BY ALISHA GOMEZ



Spinning knitting yarn from fleece is a task Suzanne Schmutzler enjoys after a hectic day at the office.



bought my second spinning wheel from a woman in Ramona who sells spinning wheels, fleece and books on spinning and dying."

Schmutzler teaches knitting at noon every Thursday at MTA Headquarters for any interested MTA employee. The group, known as MTA-OK or Mostly Talented Advocates of Knitting, meets at a designated conference room.

For more information, contact Suzanne Schmutzler at [schmutzler@mta.net](mailto:schmutzler@mta.net) or Deloris Douglas at 922-4253 for the weekly conference room location.

And the baby layette set? It's going to be a gift for her 14th grandchild – Cassidy Schmutzler – who was born Sept. 23.

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## **Louis Maspero, 42-Year MTA Veteran, Has Died**

(Oct. 9, 2002) He wore a straw boater, spats and loud ties and, with 42 years' service, Louis Maspero was both a much-loved character and MTA's most senior non-represented employee.

Louis Maspero died Oct. 3 at age 65, hardly a month after learning he had developed lung cancer. His official retirement date was Aug. 17.

A retirement party planned in his honor for Sept. 20 was cancelled due to his illness. Co-workers had prepared a commemorative bus stop, photo album and timetable to be presented to him at the party.



**Louis Maspero**

[See metro.net report Aug. 9, 2000, on Mr. Maspero and his career in transportation.](#)

"Even though we'll miss him, we still want his family to have the items," said Faith Crudup, an MTA schedule maker and friend.

Employees also may sign a retirement scroll that will be given to Maspero's family. The scroll is located in Risk Management on the 8<sup>th</sup> floor of Headquarters.

A public liability and property damage analyst in Risk Management, Maspero joined MTA in August 1960. He frequently represented the agency in small claims court.

Maspero, born May 19, 1937, was a proud native of New Orleans. His family has indicated he preferred no formal services. Friends may send sympathy cards in care of his son, Louis Maspero, at 159 East Electric Ave., Monterey Park, CA 91754.

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### **Mobile Theater Would Provide Realistic Rail Safety Education**

(Oct. 9, 2002) People who live or work along the Metro Blue and Gold Lines will experience the speed, weight and impact of a moving train – all within the confines of a “multi-media mobile theater” MTA plans to use to enhance rail safety education.



Seen here in its configuration as a “Speed Theater,” the multi-media mobile theater would be refurbished for MTA’s rail safety education program.

If the Board approves its purchase, MTA Community Relations will deploy the mobile theater in early 2003 at community events, shopping centers, schools, churches and other venues.

The one-of-a-kind mobile unit, built into an expandable semi-trailer, has interactive production technology in a theater setting. Fitted with moveable seats, it permits realistic three-dimensional presentations that can simulate a train’s speed and movement, braking and even an emergency stop.

“This experience can make a lasting impression on participants while emphasizing safe behavior near operating trains,” according to a report to the Board. “The mobile safety theater trailer will deliver a physical and visual impact...that will have a lasting imprint on how to live safely with our light-rail systems.”

Designed by a Chatsworth company, it has previously toured the United States as an entertainment studio promotion vehicle. The Board will be asked to approve the purchase of the trailer and tractor at \$400,340.

MTA’s rail safety education and outreach program has been recognized as “exemplary” by an American Public Transportation Association peer review group.

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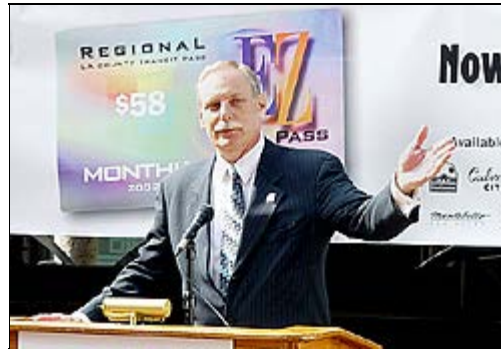
**EDITOR'S NOTE:** A CEO all-staff meeting is scheduled from 10 a.m. until noon, Monday, Oct. 14, in the Board room. TV coverage of the meeting will be provided in the Union Station conference room and the cafeteria. The meeting also will be broadcast on office intercoms.

PHOTO: LISA HUYNH

## CEO Roger Snoble's First Year:

### A Not-So-Quiet Revolution

By BILL HEARD, Editor



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(Oct. 10, 2002) When Roger Snoble assumed the mantle of leadership at MTA a year ago this month, he had big plans. Plans that amounted to no less than a revolution for an agency whose responsibilities touch virtually every person, business and industry in Los Angeles County.

Snoble wanted to bring MTA service closer to the customer. He saw a need to improve bus service, while expanding the types of services offered. He hoped to form constructive partnerships with the area's municipal operators. And he wanted to reduce employee accidents and lower workers' compensation costs. Along the way, he expected to enhance the agency's public image.

The chair in his 25th floor office was barely warm before he and his new deputy CEO, John Catoe, set to work changing things – and making heads spin.

The initiatives included launching five service sectors, an emphasis on better maintenance of buses, cleanliness and on-time rollouts, upgrading rail operations, developing a better relationship with muni operators and strong backing for the Safety's First campaign.

"Overall, I'm very pleased with the past year," Snoble told *metro.net* in an anniversary interview. "We're probably a lot further along in my plan than I dreamed we'd be after the first year. Things have come together so much better than I had anticipated."

#### Support from the Board

He expressed appreciation for the support of the MTA Board whose members "have shown every month since I've been here that they're really focused on providing greater mobility to the Los Angeles area. They're committed to making this agency work."



Among the initiatives that have received Board support has been the development of service sectors. In addition to approving the concept earlier this year, the Board in September approved a policy and a set of bylaws for the governance councils that will give residents of the five geographical areas a strong voice in deciding public transit issues.

"Our challenge for next year," Snoble says, "is to make those councils really effective."

The CEO credited a talented and hard-working MTA staff – from those at Headquarters to those in the operating divisions – with responding "so positively to the things we're trying to do. Much of my challenge has been to give good direction."

He also was quick to give recognition to the "multi-talented, multi-departmental task force" that put the service sector plan together.

"We could have hired a consultant to write a report, but they wouldn't have done as good a job," he says, "and we wouldn't be where we are today."

### **Improving customer service**

Much of the focus of the service sectors is on improving customer service – on-time rollouts, upgrading maintenance and improving the appearance of the buses.

And, although the service sectors have only been in business a very short time, Snoble says they've "done a great job of responding to the goal of providing high-quality customer service. Everyone has said, 'We're ready for this. Let's do it!'"

That's some of the feedback Snoble has received from operating division employees during his monthly safety inspections. The inspections – also performed by John Catoe and Chief Financial Officer Richard Brumbaugh – are an important element of the Safety's First program.

Signing up for the program was one of the very first acts of the CEO's tenure in October 2001. Since that time, the Safety's First program has been introduced at all work locations, more than 2,400 employees have received safety training and local safety committees have been established.

MTA also has begun making headway toward reviving the safety culture that once flourished at SCRTD and is seeing some improvements, Snoble says. "The whole focus on maintaining a safe environment has to be recaptured. Our Safety's First program is a huge initiative and I'm glad we have DuPont with us."

### **Working with the munis**

Perhaps Snoble's greatest coup has been bridging the gap – and overcoming years of mistrust – between MTA and the region's municipal operators. An effort that paid off in August with the introduction of the Regional EZPass.

Twelve munis have joined with MTA to promote the multi-agency monthly pass, a precursor to the Universal Fare System that's now under development and is expected in future years to provide

commuters seamless travel on transit systems across the region.

Snoble downplays his own role in the growing relationship with municipal operators. In fact, he credits San Gabriel Valley General Manager Jack Gabig with breaking the ice when he headed Montebello Transit. After the two agencies agree to recognize each other's monthly passes, things began to fall in line with the other munis.

"We need to use the strengths of the munis and the strengths of MTA to reorient service to our customers," Snoble says.

He cites studies showing that eliminating duplicate service could save as much as \$9 million. "I'm not talking about them growing at our expense, or us growing at their expense," he says. "I'm talking about us all growing to serve our customers."

### **Past year's highlights**

Looking back over the past 12 months, the CEO highlights the following among many staff accomplishments:

- Completing preliminary engineering for the Eastside rail line
- Gaining federal approval of the Eastside line final environmental report
- Completing the final environmental impact report for the East-West Busway in the San Fernando Valley
- Opening HOV lanes on I-405 and State Road 14
- Gaining Board approval for Metro Rapid expansion of 24 lines
- Settling the AFSCME contract
- Taking delivery of 350 new CNG buses

"It's been a great year," Snoble says. "It makes me think we can accomplish even more next year and in the years to come. We've got what it takes in this agency to make a significant difference. We just need to stay focused and understand that our challenge is to create greater mobility for Los Angeles County."

### **CEO Roger Snoble also responded to the following questions during his anniversary interview with *metro.net*:**

*Metro.net*: I think you pointed to settling the AFSCME contract as an accomplishment this past year.

Roger Snoble: We're very excited about bringing the supervisors into a more prominent role. I don't know how we can operate a quality transit system without road supervisors or radio dispatchers. As we expand the Metro Rapid system, it becomes more important because that system is controlled on the ground by the supervisors. They play a very big role and that's why we're glad we have a seven-year contract so we can really begin to develop their role to a much more meaningful level.

### **The AFSCME contract was settled just in time to start another**



## **round of labor negotiations.**

Yes. We're in contract talks now with the ATU – in fact, we have placed an excellent offer on the bargaining table. We hope the union will respond positively. The ATU has given us a notice of contract termination effective Jan. 15, 2003, but we hope we can reach a mutually favorable agreement before the year is out.

Then, in the spring we expect to begin bargaining talks with UTU. There again, we hope those negotiations can be conducted in a manner that will bring about an agreement that is favorable to both parties. And that the agreement can be reached relatively quickly.

## **The past year has been a whirlwind of activity. Do you see things settling down?**

I'm not big on reorganization for reorganization's sake. I have people in whom I have confidence in the right positions and I think we can move forward. I'd rather have our time focused on getting the job done and making MTA an outstanding organization, rather than having people worry about whether they'll be moved around.

## **You've just come back from APTA. How is MTA perceived these days by its peer agencies?**

If you had taken a survey among APTA members a year ago about which are the top transit properties, MTA wouldn't have shown up. Long Beach, Santa Monica, Foothill would have. But, at this APTA meeting, there was a whole different view of MTA. A lot of APTA members are looking at MTA as an agency they can learn from.

## **Looking to the near future. What's coming up?**

In the very near future, we'll be opening two Metro Rapid lines on Vermont and South Broadway. They're going to be instantly successful. We'll be starting construction on the East-West Busway in the Valley. We'll build a pedestrian underpass at Universal City station and start tunnel work on the Eastside line. We're negotiating the federal full-funding grant agreement for that. And we're working like crazy on the federal transportation reauthorization bill, which will be a very high priority for us.

We're also working on Mobility 21, a big conference we're planning in November to draw in people from around the region who are involved in many phases of transportation, from public transit to hauling freight and to air transport. Hopefully, Mobility 21 will result in a task force that will meet annually and will work to improve the total transportation picture here in Los Angeles County.

## **There's talk again about extending the Metro Red Line out past Wilshire/Western. What's the straight word on that?**

From a simple transportation viewpoint, we have a subway that goes only as far down Wilshire as to Western Avenue. We have a rapid bus system that continues on out that corridor and carries more passengers every day than most rail systems and, yet, we're far from providing enough transit for potential users. We need to improve mobility there and the extension in one shape or form of the Metro Red Line is probably something that's going to have to be done.

**You don't see Metro Rapid or dedicated busways as being the final answer?**

No. It's just a Band-Aid. Metro Rapid has been highly successful, but the fact is that if we could provide more capacity and greater speed on that corridor, we could carry lots more people. Having lived and traveled in that area, I can tell you it's miserable to drive there.

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**MTA's Dorothy Peyton Gray Transportation Library** is the last word in research, transportation, and technical developments. New librarian Matt Barrett is leading the charge to expand the facility and its resources.

PHOTOS: GAYLE ANDERSON



Meet the Staff: from left, Alicia Walker, administrative analyst; historian Jim Walker; Matthew Barrett, Policy, Research and Library Services Administrator, and Librarian Glenda Davis Mariner.

## Everything you need to know - and *more* - about transit.

By GAYLE ANDERSON

The paper trail that leads to transportation truths is a well-trodden one, thanks to MTA's perpetually resourceful research library on the 15<sup>th</sup> floor of the Gateway headquarters building in Los Angeles.

But the winds of change are shifting the course of the Dorothy Peyton Gray Transportation Library and Research Center.

Among other things, there's a expansion underway and a new librarian at the helm – Matt Barrett, a 12-year employee of the MTA who made his mark in Transit Operations as the research analyst who delved into performance data and emerged with new management tools for decreasing the overall accident rate.

In 1996, Barrett earned a Master's Degree in Library Science at UCLA. With a professional designation in the field of information access and policy, Barrett was a natural choice to fill in for Dorothy Gray, the much loved librarian who lost her battle with a lung ailment in October 2001.

"I am honored to be heading up the library and research center that bears her name," said

**Heed the Call:** Who among us have transportation icons? There's a [call for collectibles](#).

### PROFILE



Matthew Barrett

**Title:** Policy & Research  
Library Services Administrator

**Education:** Master's Degree in  
Library and Information  
Science (MLIS), UCLA, 1999.  
BA in History and Art History,  
UCLA, 1989.

**Hire date:** 1991

**Professional Memberships:**  
Barrett is an active member of

Barrett. "This library is her legacy. She laid the foundation for one of the most comprehensive transportation libraries in the country."

The Dorothy Peyton Gray Transportation Library, named in honor of the librarian who transformed a collection of planning documents into a transportation resource of national reputation, is today one of the largest and most resourceful transportation libraries in the nation.

### Expansion will increase resources

An expansion into the room next door will increase the size of the library considerably, said Barrett. When the conversion of a former office assigned to engineering is complete, the library will gain an additional 900 square feet of space that will house an exhibition area for treasures from the library's archives, a conference table for researchers, and shelving for a special section of engineering books and current reference materials.

The catalog of transportation materials and technical references contains some 200,000 volumes. That staggering total includes some 20,000 photographs and an estimated 50,000 records stored on microfiche.

"We purchased \$5,000 worth of new books in June," said Barrett, adding some 600 new books, reports and resources to the permanent collection.

"ITS is working on the installation of a new "Cybertools for Libraries" system, an online circulation and public access catalog software, replacing the Brodart system from 1985," said Barrett. Expected to be up and online by the end of this month, Cybertools for Libraries is a web-based system that will allow employees and the general public access through the MTA's web site to search the library collection online.

### Check it out

In the next few months, watch for a series of improvements and new resources that enhance library services, said Barrett. The list includes:

- An online circulation catalog,
- More new books for the permanent collection,
- A new comprehensive library website on mta.net,
- An archive of photographs and records that can be accessed online,
- More research journals to the library's subscription base, and
- An expansion of the library to accommodate research staff, additional shelving, a conference table and display area for historic and educational exhibitions.

the Special Library Association and the American Library Association. The Transportation Division of the Special Library Association is the main network of U.S. transportation librarians with members from the FTA, TRB, National Transit Library, APTA, MTC, CTA, NYMTA, Texas Transportation Institute and the various university transit research centers.

**Quotables:** "The best thing about being a Librarian at the MTA is the ongoing discovery and re-discovery of the incredible treasures we have in the research center, particularly the archives."

**Favorite activities:** Urban myth busting.

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**CALL FOR COLLECTIBLES:** Do you and your family have a history in transportation? If you go way back, perhaps you have an item or two – your grandfather's Pacific Electric operator's cap, a ticket punch or old tokens – that deserve a place of honor in the Dorothy Peyton Gray Transportation Library and Research Center? Information: [barrettm@mta.net](mailto:barrettm@mta.net).

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## One Year and Counting...



CEO Roger Snoble leads all-staff meeting Oct. 14 PHOTO: LUIS INZUNZA

(Oct. 15, 2002) Much more was accomplished over the past year than he ever had expected, CEO Roger Snoble told staffers, Monday, in a meeting marking his first anniversary with MTA.

Teamwork among veteran staff and members of his new management team were key to the agency's progress in the startup of service sectors, the implementation of Safety's First, improvements in bus and rail service, the introduction of the Regional Ezipass and other programs.

The result, Snoble said, is that "our customers are much more satisfied with our service."

Describing his first year as a time spent "getting to know each other," the CEO said the staff will "shift gears" in the coming year and begin to move more quickly to accomplish its goals.

For complete details on Roger Snoble's first year, link here to ["A Not-So-Quiet Revolution."](#)

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## Everything's Coming Up Roses for Engineer's Daughter

- Daughter of Sudhir Agrawal is one of seven selected for the Tournament of Roses Royal Court.

By GAYLE ANDERSON

The first thing that happened when MTA engineer Sudhir Agrawal returned to his Arcadia home last Monday were words spoken in a hushed and royal tone outside his door: "Princess Anjali is home."

When he opened the door, there stood his smiling 17-year-old daughter, Anjali Agrawal, with two official attendants bearing the Tournament of Roses royal crest on their jackets and on the coach (well, ok, van) that delivered the entourage to the now-royal residence.



A ROSE IS A ROSE> MTA engineer Sudhir Agrawal holds up the Pasadena Star News report that announces the selection of his daughter as a member of the Tournament of Roses Royal Court. Anjali Agrawal is pictured on the far left in the newspaper photo.

PHOTO: GAYLE ANDERSON

Princess Anjali, otherwise known as the daughter of Sudhir and Neeta Agrawal, is one of the newly crowned members of the 2003 Pasadena Tournament of Roses Royal Court.



Anjali, pictured left, was one of seven young women from the Pasadena area selected Monday to reign over Pasadena's world-famous Rose Parade and Rose Bowl Game on New Years Day. The Tournament's 85th Rose Queen will be announced Oct. 22. (Photo courtesy of Pasadena Tournament of Roses Association.)

Monday's announcement came three weeks after the process began that attracted more than 950 Pasadena-area young women. Selections were based on an array of qualities, including public speaking ability, poise, academic achievement, community involvement and personality.

As ambassadors of the Tournament of Roses, the Royal Court members will attend more than 150 community and media functions during their reign over the 114th Rose Parade and the 89th Rose Bowl Game.

But royal life won't be all roses for Anjali and the other members of the Royal Court. The rush of duties and appearances all but cancel any previous plans, leave about four hours a day for schoolwork, require wake-up calls at 4 a.m. and demand perfection 24/7.

She can handle it, her father says, who, at the same time, bemoans the demands on her time that will leave precious few moments for home.

A senior at La Salle High School, Anjali's list of accomplishments, activities, and honors reads like a resume of someone with a couple of handlers on constant call.

She is a director of Community Relations at Interact Club of Sierra Madre; president of Older Girl Planning Board of Girl Scouts; a member of the National Honor Society and California Scholarship Federation; a tutor, and a graduate of Mudra Dance Academy of Indian Classical Dance School. She is the recipient of the Girl Scout Gold Award in 2002 and was a runner-up who earned an Honorable Mention in Congressman David Dreir's Volunteer Award for Community Service.

Anjali is also an active member of India Heritage Center in Pasadena and, in her spare time, a junior volunteer at Santa Teresita Hospital in Duarte. Her past accomplishments include being secretary of the Red Cross youth program in 10th and 11th grades. Anjali plans to study occupational therapy at USC and aspires to work in the healthcare field.

Certain that Anjali would be chosen for the honor, her brother, Anubhav Agrawal, 20, flew in from Omaha, Nebraska, to attend the announcement on Monday. He is a senior at Creighton University, studying chemistry.

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## **MTA, LADOT to Share 'Blue Sky' award for Metro Rapid Program**

(Oct. 16, 2002) A national transportation organization has awarded a "Blue Sky Merit Award" to MTA and LADOT for the Metro Rapid bus demonstration program on Wilshire/Whittier and Ventura boulevards.

The 2001-2002 award, to be presented in Los Angeles Nov. 7, recognizes MTA and LADOT for the use of clean-air CNG buses in a program "that has become a success story other major cities are beginning to emulate."

The award notes that MTA will purchase new CNG articulated buses and hybrid-electric buses for use on Metro Rapid lines.

The Blue Sky Merit Award will be presented to MTA and LADOT by Weststart-CALSTART, an organization that promotes advanced transportation technologies, including natural gas, electric and hybrid electric vehicles and fuel-cells.

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## South Bay Adopts Watts School, Donates Books for Kids

(Oct. 16, 2002) The South Bay service sector has adopted Ritter Elementary School in Watts – and already is supporting the school's reading program with books contributed by sector employees.

The partnership with Ritter began following a September visit by General Manager Dana Coffey, who expressed interest in the school's "one-million word" campaign.

Communications Officer Victoria Woods began collecting books from the South Bay staff to donate to the kids, ages 4 to 10 in pre-kindergarten through fifth grade.

Along with Train Safety presenter Walter Gonzalez, Woods visited the Ritter library, last week, to present the first batch of books to the librarian and a group of some 20 children. Gonzalez took the occasion to talk with the kids about safety near the tracks.

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The teachers and kids at Ritter Elementary School are enthusiastic about their reading program. Below, Train Safety presenter Walter Gonzalez reminds the Ritter pupils to be safe around the tracks.



## Law and Order

- **Sheriff's Explorer Program gives youth experience in law enforcement.**

By LISA HUYNH

(October 17, 2002) Many children want to become cops when they grow up – now they have an opportunity to get involved in law enforcement.

The Los Angeles Sheriff's Department Metro Sheriff Explorer program began its 18-week academy in September.

The Sheriff Explorer program, which has been a part of the Boy Scouts of American since 1968, allows boys and girl and young adults to get a first hand look at what law enforcement actually does.

Upon completion of the program, explorers assist the MTA by handing out safety brochures and discussing safety procedures at special events.

Senior Deputy Gary De Bondt is the coordinator of the Metro Sheriff Explorers program.

"I was a deputy explorer myself back in 1973," says De Bondt. "I always felt that I should give back what was given to me."

### A realistic experience

Eric Bloom, who was a deputy explorer years back, now works as a civilian volunteer and runs the program. "The explorers go through a condensed, modified version of what real deputies go through," says Bloom.

Explorers meet every Saturday for 18 weeks, to learn the fundamentals of law enforcement and basic police science. They learn arrest techniques, first aid and CPR. The explorers also go through physical training.

De Bondt says in order to graduate from the academy, which is held in Whittier, explorers must pass both the academic and physical portion of the program.

"The purpose of the program is to build self-discipline and character," says De Bondt.

Although only two percent of explorers go into law enforcement, De Bondt says, "These explorers don't regret going though the program because it helps them become better citizens and it gives them a better appreciation and understanding of law enforcement."

Once an explorer has completed the academy, he or she receives a



Metro Sheriff's Deputy Explorer's front row, from left: Danny Ramirez, De Andre Pugh, Miguel Barajas; Second row: Adrian Avila, Johnny Gallardo and Daniel Castro; Back row: Explorer Advisor Deputy Henry Saenz and Explorer Coordinator Senior Deputy Gary De Bondt. PHOTO:

LISA HUYNH

graduation, diploma, patches, and a badge and may earn 10 high school units or three college units.

### **Community outreach programs**

After graduation, explorers continue to go through training programs, such as patrol procedures, community outreach and crime prevention.

In order to qualify, explorers need to be between the ages of 14 and 21, have at least a 2.0 GPA and have no felonies.

The explorers are set to graduate in January and the next academy will begin in February 2003.

To join the Sheriff Explorers program, candidates may either contact a local Sheriff's station or apply online at [www.lasdreserve.org](http://www.lasdreserve.org)

The Sheriff's Department is also seeking volunteers for the Metro Reserve Deputy and Civilian Volunteer programs. Volunteers need to be at least 21 years old.

"I encourage all MTA employees to allow their children to join the Metro Explorers program," says De Bondt.

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## **Revised Policy Restricts Use of Consultant ID Badges**

(Oct. 17, 2002) A Human Resources policy change that restricts the use of consultant identification badges is intended to tighten security at MTA facilities.

Until recently, consultant ID badges were issued at the request of department heads to vendors and consultants who made frequent visits to MTA facilities or had offices at MTA. With the badges, they were not required to check in with security.

The revised policy, HR 4-5, describes a consultant as one "who frequently utilizes MTA/PTSC facilities and requires telephone and (computer) network access." Vendors no longer will be issued ID badges.

Under new security procedures at MTA Headquarters, vendors and consultants without badges will be required to check in at the security desk where they will be issued visitor passes. Security officers also will closely monitor consultant badges and will confiscate expired badges.

Project managers will be responsible for notifying MTA security and the managers of operating divisions and other field locations when a vendor or consultant visit is planned. The vendor or consultant must check in with the property manager on arrival.

Executive officers or general managers – not department heads – now must authorize the request before an ID badge is issued to a consultant. [Click here](#) for the revised HR 4-5 policy on the MTA Intranet.

"The consultant badges had been used for anything under the sun," says Emily Matias, the senior HR analyst who oversees the policy and issues ID badges. "All kinds of vendors had them because they didn't want the hassle of going through security."

Matias notes that MTA's Ethics Department also must review consultant ID badge requests for possible conflict of interest. Some may be required to complete a Form 700 Conflict of Interest Statement.

Supervisors are responsible for collecting ID badges and notifying the Ethics Department when a consultant's project or employment is completed. MTA will charge a \$25 fee for failure to turn in an ID badge. Consultant ID badges cannot be used as fare media on the Metro system.

Human Resources has provided an on-line form for requesting a consultant ID badge. The form includes sections to be completed by the requesting department, by MTA Ethics and by HR.

[Click here](#) to access the on-line Identification Badge Request for "Non-Employees form" on the Human Resources site on the MTA Intranet.

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## Hollywood Celebrates New Metro Rail Late-Night Hours



^ A cast of characters representing Hollywood businesses and entertainment joined MTA Director Allison Yoh, Deputy CEO John Catoe and Hollywood Chamber President Leron Gubler at the media event.

MTA Director Allison Yoh told a Hollywood crowd that extending Metro Rail hours will provide more travel options.

>

PHOTOS BY JENNIFER YEH



(Oct. 18, 2002) Hollywood celebrated MTA's announcement, today, that an extra hour will be added to Metro Red and Blue Line nighttime service beginning Sunday, Oct. 20.

Representatives from many of the businesses and entertainment venues near subway stations in Hollywood turned out at a media event to hear the announcement from MTA Director Allison Yoh and Deputy CEO John Catoe.

As a transit rider herself, Yoh said extending late-night hours will provide more travel options to Metro Rail patrons. "By extending Metro Rail hours, second-shift workers who work until midnight will be able to get home, while third-shift workers who start work at midnight can get to their jobs."

Catoe said the nighttime hours expansion came in response to requests for service to Hollywood, the Staples Center

and other entertainment venues.

Hollywood Chamber of Commerce President Leron Gubler noted that his organization lobbied for construction of the Metro Red Line. "The extra hours will make a big difference in encouraging people who are coming to Hollywood to consider the subway as a viable option."

Effective Sunday, Oct. 20, a full hour of service will be added to the late night schedules of the last north and southbound trains on the Metro Blue Line between Long Beach Transit Mall and downtown Los Angeles and the last eastbound Metro Red Line subway train from North Hollywood.

The last east and westbound Metro Red Line trains operating between Union Station and Wilshire/Western will leave 40 minutes later than currently scheduled. The last westbound Metro Red Line train from Union Station to North Hollywood departs 40 minutes later than currently scheduled.

On the Metro Green Line between Norwalk and El Segundo, the last eastbound train will leave 20 minutes later from the Marine/Redondo station and the westbound train from Norwalk will operate 10 minutes later.

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MTA's Richard Hunt presents the Natural Gas Coalition trophy to Operations Committee chair Beatrice Proo.



### **International Group Cites MTA for World's Largest CNG Fleet**

(Oct. 18, 2002) MTA currently operates the world's largest fleet of CNG buses – a fact that has earned the agency high honors from an international organization.

The Natural Gas Coalition presented its 10th annual Achievement Award to MTA, Oct. 9, in Washington, D.C.

"MTA presently has almost 1,900 CNG coaches in service, with more coming," says Richard Hunt, deputy executive officer, Vehicle Technology. "The Natural Gas Coalition has recognized this as a significant achievement for clean air and technology advancement."

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## Alex Pages IS Elvis



Oh, well, uh, bless my soul  
What's awrong with me?  
I'm itching like a man on a fuzzy tree  
My friends say I'm acting' queer as a  
bug  
I'm in love  
I'm all shook up.  
-- Elvis Presley

^ move your mouse over image to see the King.

### Central City Division's Alex Pages Keeps 'The King's' Spirit Alive

By JENNIFER YEH

(October 18, 2002) Alex Pages is "all shook up" when it comes to his love for entertaining.

Operating buses 40 hours a week has not stopped the Central City Division 1 bus operator from doing what he likes to do best – acting and performing stand-up comedy.

"I try to do shows when I can," says Pages, who performs occasionally at comedy clubs such as the Comedy Store on Sunset Boulevard, as well as other local clubs.

Due to his close resemblance to the King of Rock and Roll and the great impersonation Pages does of him, his colleagues gave him the nickname "Elvis".

During one of his recent comedy acts he got to perform in front of country 'n western singer Reba McEntire.

#### Reba in the shadows

"I was doing this Elvis bit at the end of my show and I told everybody to sing their favorite Elvis song. Then, all of a sudden, Reba starts to sing 'Heartbreak Hotel' from the shadows," says Pages. "That was a cool moment that kept me going."

He's also known for his impersonations of actors Marlon Brando, Sylvester Stallone and Captain Kirk from Star Trek.

Pages also has participated in a comedy skit on MTV's "Road Rules" and was cast

GALLERY  
Drawings by Alex Pages



as an extra in the movie "Lion Heart" with Jean Claude Van Damme. "I got to play a homeless guy drinking coffee. We had to do take after take, it was so funny."



Other than performing, Pages has a deep passion and a great talent for art. "I just had a spare hour so I had to just draw something," he says of his most recent sketch that currently stands in Division 1. "I like to create stories with my drawing."

Several years ago, Pages drew cartoons for "Headway", SCRTD's monthly employee magazine. His passion for drawing and performance helped him obtain a Bachelor of Arts in Illustration from California State University, Fullerton.



"I want to get into teaching art, in fact I plan to do so the second I get around to it," he says.

### **A life was threatened**

Aside from his great sense of humor, Pages also has a serious side. Last spring, he assisted an elderly woman whose life was being threatened.

While he was making stops on his usual route at Soto and 8th Street in East Los Angeles with a bus full of passengers, Pages saw a man apparently on drugs dragging an elderly woman into traffic.

"He had his arm around her neck like a hostage, and nobody was doing anything," he says.

Despite the oncoming traffic, Pages locked up his bus and intervened by grabbing and restraining the man until the elderly woman was able to get away.

"When the police showed up, it turned out that the guy had a broken bottle to her neck," he says.

Whether performing in real life or on stage, Pages definitely knows how to stir an audience. "My real passion is to be the person behind the camera," says Pages.

Perhaps in the near future his name will appear on blockbuster movie credits.

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## Free Prescriptions for MTA Employees Injured on the Job

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Oct. 22, 2002) Beginning in November, active, inactive and retired MTA employees who need medication for their on-the-job injuries will be eligible for free prescriptions from a nationwide network of participating pharmacies.

See also> [New Contract Will Help MTA Save Money on Medical Claims](#)

The program, which is optional for employees, will cover doctor-prescribed medications to treat injuries sustained at work. These may be one-time prescriptions or prescriptions for medications needed to treat medical conditions that last for months or years.

The prescriptions will be filled without requiring the employee to make an up-front payment or co-payment, or to file a claim for reimbursement as is currently practiced.

A second program now in the planning stage will add orthotics, such as back or wrist braces, and medical appliances, such as wheelchairs or special rehabilitation equipment, to the list of items that will be provided without a required employee payment.

Both programs were initiated by MTA Risk Management to upgrade services offered to employees who have injury-on-duty claims.

### Getting well faster

"MTA's program is designed to help employees get well as quickly as possible with the least amount of cost to them," says Michael Koss, executive officer, Risk Management. "I believe strongly that the employee who is given the resources to get well, up front, gets well faster."

Before he started a similar program during his time with New York's MTA, Koss found that some injured employees couldn't pay in advance for the expensive medications or rehabilitation equipment they needed.

"An employee's treatment shouldn't be held up because he or she doesn't have the money in their pocket," he says.

The agency receives about 3,000 employee injury claims each year. Koss estimates that 1,000 of those employees might participate in the free-prescription program. Perhaps another 75 to 100 may have long-term medication needs.

Here's how the free-prescription program will work:

An employee who sustains an at-work injury reports the injury to his supervisor, who sees that the proper forms are completed. The forms are forwarded to the Workers' Compensation unit of Risk Management where the information about the injury is entered the same day in a database administered by EOS, a medical services company under contract to MTA.

### Hundreds of pharmacies

The employee's injury information is made available to the American Healthcare Network (AHN) whose hundreds of member pharmacies – including major chain stores – will stand ready to fill prescriptions for

any needed medications.

Meanwhile, the injured employee has visited his doctor and has received one or more prescriptions. The employee then may call a toll-free number or check the Internet for the closest AHN participating pharmacy. All MTA locations also will have lists of pharmacy locations.

The employee presents the prescriptions at an AHN participating pharmacy. The pharmacist checks the prescriptions against the data base to ensure accuracy before issuing the medication – free of charge – to the employee.

“Where there’s a question about whether the medication is appropriate to the injury, I’ve authorized the pharmacy to fill it with a seven-day maximum supply so there’s no interruption of care,” says Koss. “That gives MTA time to research it with the employee’s physician. No employee, unless the situation is flagrant, will be denied medication.”

Inactive or retired employees who are on maintenance medications for at-work injuries – no matter where they live in the U.S. – can be included in the new free-prescription program. They also can easily arrange through MTA and AHN to have medications mailed to them at home.

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## New Contract Will Help MTA Save Money on Medical Claims

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Oct. 22, 2002) A new contract with a medical services company that processes employee injury claims and assists employees injured on the job also promises cost-saving benefits for MTA.

See Also> [Free Prescriptions for MTA Employees Injured on the Job](#)

The five-year contract the MTA Board awarded in August to Employers and Occupational Services Group, Inc. (EOS), will give the agency access to a broad range of medical-related services.

One of the most critical, says Risk Management Executive Officer Michael Koss, is medical invoice review.

EOS will review every submitted medical invoice to ensure that the medical services provided the injured employee match the doctor's diagnosis and the treatment prescribed. The company also will check to see that the service was provided within the maximum fees allowed by the state.

And, rather than receiving a percentage of the money saved as its payment, EOS will perform each review for a flat \$15 fee.

### Enormous savings to MTA

"That's an enormous savings to the agency," says Koss. "Third-party administrators are charging up to 30 percent of the savings on each invoice. A hospital invoice, for example, could be many hundreds of dollars."

EOS also will help MTA collect from companies or individuals who are found to be responsible for injuries to MTA employees. An example might be an accident in which a delivery truck runs a stoplight and hits a Metro Bus, injuring the operator.

In addition, EOS is arranging for a network of vocational rehabilitation providers for employees who have suffered a permanent injury and can no longer perform their regular jobs.

Under state statutes, these employees are eligible for retraining for another career. EOS will make employees aware of their entitlement and will help them get into a rehab program.

"Most employees who are injured can be rehabilitated and return to their jobs," says Koss. "But, there's a small group whose injuries may be too severe or permanent. This will give them an opportunity to explore a new career."

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Running a safe RRC machine shop are, from left, Machinist Jose Ramirez, Mechanic Machinist John Mandel, Equipment Maintenance Supervisor Bill Delloso, Mechanic Machinist Chris Frandberg and Machinist Manuel Macias. Not shown, Machine Shop Leader Fred Wenzel.



### **Safety Accountability Earned RRC Machinists 1,000 Accident-Free Days**

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Oct. 22, 2002) "We keep each other accountable," says Mechanic Machinist Chris Frandberg of the Regional Rebuild Center's machine shop.

Frandberg and his four co-workers have just passed their 1,000th day without a lost-time injury. Keeping a watchful eye on each other and enforcing safety rules in the shop is how they accomplished that enviable record.

The 1000th accident-free day was treated as an event by employees at the RRC and was celebrated with cake and ice cream.

Commemorative plaques were presented to the machine shop employees who, in addition to Frandberg, are Machinist Jose Ramirez, Mechanic Machinist John Mandel, Machinist Manuel Macias and Machine Shop Leader Fred Wenzel. Their boss is Equipment Maintenance Supervisor Bill Delloso.

Theirs can be a hazardous trade, Frandberg explains, if machinists don't take safety seriously. The men operate high-speed lathes, mills and grinders – any of which can easily injure a careless worker.



Machinist Jose Ramirez is dressed for safety in short-sleeved coveralls, goggles and safety shoes. His lathe is equipped with a face shield and is properly lit.

#### **'All the precautions we should'**

"We take all the safety precautions we should when we operate our machinery," says Frandberg, who shows the scars on a thumb that once was mangled by a lathe.

John Mandel agrees, noting that the machines have sharp metal cutting edges. "I'm surprised we don't have more injuries."

During a tour of the machine shop, where the concrete floor is spotless and

free of clutter, the men note that each is dressed for safety: goggles for eye protection, safety shoes with steel cap toes and skid-proof soles, short sleeved coveralls to avoid getting caught in the machinery.

No one wears jewelry or gloves that can catch in a machine. The machines, themselves, are properly lighted and those that can throw hot metal shards are equipped with face shields.

"Almost three years without a lost-time accident is an accomplishment for any department," says Milo Victoria, deputy executive officer for Maintenance Administration. "These mechanics are setting the example not just for the RRC, but for the rest of the agency."

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## **Construction Projects, Anti-Graffiti Motions Before MTA Board**

(Oct. 23, 2002) The Board will consider three motions concerning MTA transit construction projects at its monthly meeting, Oct. 24. Two other motions are aimed at preventing graffiti from defacing MTA vehicles and facilities.

The Board will be asked to authorize the CEO to award a \$1.059 million contract to The Design Build Consulting Group of Beaverton, Ore., to manage the Eastside Light Rail project. The project will be an extension of the Metro Gold Line from Union Station into East Los Angeles. (Item 24)

### **East-West Busway**

A second motion would reconfirm the CEO's authority to execute a contract for design and construction of the East-West Busway in the San Fernando Valley. Authorized by the Board last February, the bidding and bid evaluation process should be completed in time for a mid-December notice to proceed with construction. (Item 12)

The \$329.5 million busway will be built along the Burbank/Chandler rail right-of-way to connect the North Hollywood Metro Rail station with Warner Center. The project also is to include an \$11 million bike path.

### **Universal City Underpass**

The third motion calls for Board approval of a \$26.4 million budget for construction of a pedestrian underpass and other site improvements at the Universal City Metro Rail station. (Item 33)

The underpass would connect the station and the entrance to Universal Studios across Lankershim Boulevard. Construction is expected to begin in December.

### **Preventing graffiti damage**

MTA plans more aggressive action to prevent graffiti damage to window glass on Metro Buses and at Metro Rail stations.

For some time now, MTA has used a tough transparent film as a barrier to protect windows from permanent damage by vandals using etching tools. The Board will be asked to approve an amendment to a \$250,000 contract with XLNT Tint that will allow the agency to more frequently replace the film. (Item 30)

More frequent changes are needed to combat increased vandalism attributed to higher ridership and also to meet MTA's goal of improving the appearance of its vehicles and facilities.

Replacing the film is much more cost-effective than replacing window glass. Installing a 42 in. by 42 in. sheet of elevator glass would cost \$665, compared with the \$17 cost of replacing the protective film.

A companion motion would award an amendment to a \$330,000 contract with Acme Glass & Mirror for replacement of damaged glass panels at Metro Rail stations. Many of the panels to be replaced predate the use of protective film. (Item 31)

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## Director Proo Tours Gateway Cities Divisions

By DAVID HERSHENSON

(Oct. 23, 2002) MTA Director Beatrice Proo got a behind-the-scenes look at the Gateway Cities sector's two operating divisions during a recent tour conducted by General Manager Rich Rogers.

In addition to serving as an MTA Board member, Proo is chair of the Gateway Cities Council of Governments Transportation Committee, mayor pro-tem of the City of Pico Rivera, and was formerly the president of the League of California Cities. She also chairs MTA's Operations committee and sits on the Planning and Programming committee.



Maintenance Manager Randy McIntyre shows MTA Director Beatrice Proo a point on a Crossroads Depot Division 2 bus.

The division tour began from MTA's Headquarters with a ride on the Metro Red Line and Metro Blue Line to Crossroads Depot Division 2. The group also visited Central City Division 1.

"With the recent introduction of the sector concept, Board members have become more interested in becoming transit consumers," said Proo. "By using the transportation we are responsible for overseeing, we can gain a better understanding of the needs and challenges of our customers."

Proo was introduced at each division to the transportation and maintenance managers, assistant managers and a number of employees.

She was given a tour of both operations and maintenance areas at each division and received a brief overview of the operations and maintenance of the hundreds of buses that roll in and out of the two divisions.

"I was struck by the pride that employees take in their work and the personal touch that the new General Manager of the sector is showing by greeting people by name," said Proo.

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## Reception for Gateway Cities Sector Staff, Snoble and Catoe

By CATHY MANZO

(Oct. 23, 2002) The City of Santa Fe Springs and the Gateway Cities Council of Governments co-hosted a luncheon reception, October 15 to introduce sector General Manager Rich Rogers and his staff to the federal, state and local elected officials from the area.

"I look forward to working in a partnership with everyone to successfully meet the transportation needs of the communities we serve." -- GM Rich Rogers

The event, attended by some 100 people, was held at the historic and picturesque Clarke Estate in the City of Santa Fe Springs.

Reception guests included CEO Roger Snoble, Deputy CEO John Catoe, MTA Director Beatrice Proo, representing the Gateway Cities COG, and Santa Fe Springs Councilwoman Betty Putnam.

Snoble described the concept and his vision of the sectors and explained how he felt the region would be best served by the new community-based transit operations. Catoe discussed the progress of the sector concept and introduced Rich Rogers.

Rogers outlined his goals for improving service by working with the upcoming Governance Council, municipal operators, elected officials, city staff and community members throughout the Gateway Cities to best serve their needs. He then introduced his sector staff, including division management.

Rogers presented a plaque to representatives from the Gateway Cities COG and City of Santa Fe Springs to thank them for their work in co-hosting the event.

"I was truly impressed with such a strong show of support at this event," said Rogers. "This demonstrates the importance of transportation within the Gateway Cities. I look forward to working in a partnership with everyone to successfully meet the transportation needs of the communities we serve."

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## South Bay's Coffey Meets with Carson, Torrance Officials

By RICH MORALLO

(Oct. 23, 2002) Metro South Bay General Manager Dana Coffey visited with public officials in Carson and Torrance, last week, to acquaint them with MTA's new service sector concept.

Coffey also announced to officials that the South Bay sector staff will move into new quarters in Carson in December.

Besides Carson and Torrance, Coffey's sector will cover 13 other communities in the South Bay, from Inglewood in the north to San Pedro in the South.

Coffey outlined the sector organization, staffing and bus resources during her 30-minute courtesy visit with Torrance Mayor Dan Walker, and then appeared before the Carson City Council to give a similar presentation.

"It was important to meet the civic leaders and the community, introduce myself and the team, and tell them that Metro South Bay would like to join a partnership with their residents," said Coffey, a 26-year MTA veteran.

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General Manager Dana Coffey presents a copy of the South Bay sector plan to Torrance City Mayor Dan Walker. PHOTO: RICH MORALLO

## All in the Family



Whether a princess or an executive, a rose by any other name is still a rose. MTA's Bessie Rush-Johnson, a member of the Pasadena Tournament of Roses executive committee, congratulates Tournament of Roses princesses Anjali Agrawal and Glynn-Helene Joseph, both daughters of MTA employees.

**Even without a float**

### MTA is well-represented in the 2003 Tournament of Roses

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(Oct. 23, 2002) Among the beaming parents, a crush of media, cheering sections of teenagers, the oom-pah-pah of tubas on a rose-lined veranda, and Tournament of Roses officials in impeccable white suits, MTA's Bessie Rush-Johnson was very much at home.

[GO TO >  
GALLERY](#)

Rush-Johnson, an Equal Opportunity representative at the MTA, also is a member of the Pasadena Tournament of Roses executive committee. On Tuesday, she was at the Tournament House for the selection of the 85<sup>th</sup> Rose Queen.

Rush-Johnson, a volunteer organizer for the Tournament of Roses officialdom for eight years now, discovered just last week that two of the princesses of the Tournament of Roses Royal Court are also members of the MTA family. As reported in metro.net, Princess Glynn-Helene is the daughter of Metro Red Line mechanic Emil Joseph, and Princess Anjali is the daughter of MTA engineer Sudhir Agrawal.

The Royal Court was presented one by one, each princess seemingly floating over a red carpet on the arm of a Tournament official, and when the name of the Queen was announced, the Royal Court opened like a rose, unfolding in girlish delight around Rose Queen Alexandra Wucetich.

The girls have spent the week going through interviews with the nine-member Queen and Court Selection Committee, said Rush-Johnson. "It's an excellent opportunity for the girls. The training they get in public

speaking, and community involvement is invaluable,” she said.

Then there’s the wardrobe, donated by Macy’s, the best haircuts in town, college scholarships and more than 150 social events to regally attend.

**One million people will attend**

Queen Alexandra and the Royal Court will reign over the 2003 New Year’s Day festivities, culminating with the 114<sup>th</sup> Rose Parade, and the 89<sup>th</sup> Rose Bowl Game.

More than one million people are anticipated to attend the Rose Parade, which will be broadcast live on all the major networks and in worldwide syndication.

As an official Tournament of Roses ambassador, Bessie Rush-Johnson will also be attending the rush of social events, the first of which is the Coronation luncheon on the lawn of Tournament Hall today.

It’s a busy season for Rush-Johnson, who also organizes the annual holiday Gift Giving Drive for the Fred Jordan Mission of Skid Row Kids. This year’s goal is to gather 8,000 gifts, up by nearly 2,000 from last year. She plans to launch the MTA’s 7<sup>th</sup> annual gift drive in November.

How does she do it? “You’ve got to be organized,” she said, “and, then, it’s easy.”

**GALLERY**

[Click on image to view in full.](#)



Clockwise, from top left, Princess Glynn-Helene with parents Caryl and Emil Joseph. The 2003 Royal Court. Princess Anjali with parents Neeta and Sudhir Agrawal. Bessie Rush-Johnson, background, and the royal parents, the Agrawals, left, the Josephs, right. The Royal Court: a moment. Bessie Rush-Johnson and Tournament President Gary Thomas.

PHOTOS BY GAYLE ANDERSON

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## Arthur Winston Operator Honored as Tuskegee Parent of the Year

By DANIELLE GROSSMAN

(Oct. 24, 2002) At a ceremony in front of more than 2,000 Tuskegee University students and their families, Oct. 13, MTA's Duane Bonner was recognized as 2002 Parent of the Year.

A finishing touch to Tuskegee's Parents Weekend in Tuskegee, Ala., the ceremony honored Bonner — an Arthur Winston Division 5 operator — who was chosen out of 208 applicants.

"I'm overwhelmed," says Bonner, a single father. "I was a proud parent to walk across the stage. They treated me really good. I was excited."

Bonner was surprised to find out he had been accepted, especially since he had just canceled his flight reservations to attend Parents' Weekend so he could save the money. But, an excited phone call from his daughter, Dana, a 21-year-old English major at Tuskegee, informed him he had won.

Bonner decided to apply for Parent of the Year because he believes he is a good parent.

"I'm struggling to get her through school; I pay \$14,000 a year," Bonner says. "I drove her to school personally. I thought this is something I deserve."

Bonner, who has two other children (one a UCLA graduate and the youngest a community college student), wants his children to have a better life than he has had. He believes that being Parent of the Year is achieved by standing behind your child.

"Help them achieve their dream just like it's your own," Bonner says.

Being a good parent also involves listening to your child and what they have to say, he says.

"I sacrifice a lot of my own personal needs," Bonner says, "to help Dana financially and emotionally."

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Arthur Winston Division Bus Operator Duane Bonner, displays his Tuskegee University Parent of the Year 2002 plaque.



Daughter Dana is an English major at Tuskegee University.





## Recognition Celebration at Central City Division

(Oct. 25, 2002) Whenever a co-worker at Central City Division experiences a tragedy – a fire, an accident or a death in the family – Operator Pedro Gomez can be counted on to help by organizing a fundraiser.

Gomez, who was named division Employee of the Month, was one of a number of employees who were individually recognized, this week, during an event celebrating the presentation of the "How You Doin'" program's Most Improved Division award to Central City Division transportation.

To achieve that distinction, said General Manager Rich Rogers, the division scored high in on-time pullouts, service on-time performance, reducing the accident rate, decrease in customer complaint and Workers Compensation claims.

"Division 1 is the model for both transportation and maintenance," he said.

"We work together as a family here," said Division Transportation Manager Sonja Owens. "We talk about issues and what's going on out on the bus lines. We help one another."

### A special bus

As Employee of the Month, Gomez will have a special bus permanently assigned to him for a month. His photo will be posted inside and emblazoned on the back of the bus will be a sign saying "Central City Employee of the Month, Division 1."

Also honored as employees who have received numerous patron commendations were operators Derald Andrews, Ruben Lopez, Benjamin Miles, Ronald McGee, Susana Andrade and Shondra Breland.

Division Maintenance Manager Bob Hogancamp thanked division bus operators for "helping my people keep the buses on the street."

Thanks to the operators' daily reports on the condition of the buses they drive, Hogancamp said Central City Division buses now average 9,905 miles between road calls – up from 5,300 miles two years ago. "We've gone up 4,000 miles between road calls," he said, "and we're right at the top of the entire agency."

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PHOTOS: BILL HEARD



Everyone at Central City Division was on the team and helped win the "How You Doin'" program's Most Improved Division award.



Operator Pedro Gomez was named Central City Division Operator of the Month. Shown here with General Manager Rich Rogers and Division Transportation Manager Sonja Owens.





Safety's First earns San Gabriel Valley Division maintenance top honors:  
From left, Michael Koss, John McBryan, Richard Famighetti, Raul Rodriguez  
and John Glasscock.



## San Gabriel Valley Division is No. 1 in Safety: 272 Days of No Lost-Time Injury

By LISA HUYNH

In this report: [Safety Comparisons](#)

(Oct. 25, 2002) San Gabriel Valley Division 9's maintenance department had a lot to celebrate this week.

The 118-member staff completed nine months without a lost-time injury and won the "How You Doin'?" maintenance Division of the Quarter award.

The San Gabriel Valley Sector celebrated these two achievements, Oct. 22, with an appreciation barbeque. The division received a trophy and a check for \$500. Each employee received a certificate of recognition from CEO Roger Snoble.

"Going for nine months without a lost-time injury is remarkable," Snoble said during a presentation to the group. "I would like to congratulate you on your accomplishment."

General Manager Jack Gabig hopes to extend Division 9's success to other divisions, so "we can achieve that higher level of safety throughout the MTA organization."

### A leader in safety

"Division 9 has always been a leader in safety and we're trying to push that standard up even



CEO Roger Snoble and General Manager Jack Gabig provide service with a smile to Service Attendant Kathy Mendoza during the appreciation barbeque.



CEO Roger Snoble presents Relief Lead Man Barry Ritcher with a certificate of recognition.

### Safety Comparisons

The following statistics will give perspective to

higher," Gabig said. "Our hope is to continue this record of no injuries well into the future."

Lead Mechanic Adolfo Soto, who also is the safety coordinator of Division 9, says the maintenance team conducts safety contact meetings every morning before starting their work.

"During the meetings, we discuss safety issues or concerns," says Soto. "When we do have safety problems we take care of them as soon as possible to prevent accidents."

Soto says Division 9's success can be attributed to employees and management working together. "Everyone here is aware of their environment and of each other."

"I feel very proud to be associated with Division 9 and the employees," says McBryan. "This recognition feels great, but we still have a long way to go."

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San Gabriel Valley Division's achievement of completing nine months without a lost-time injury:

- At an average organization of MTA's size, at least 20 people would have hurt themselves badly enough to miss work.
- Six people would have been hurt in a normal transportation work environment (nationwide average).
- At New York's MTA, more than two people would have been hurt.
- One out of six people would have been hurt at DuPont, MTA's safety training organization.

Photo Op>

"Bikes on Rail" news conference puts a new spin on commuting.



The MTA's Bikes on Rail news conference, staged at the Wilshire/ Vermont Metro Rail Station Oct. 29, featured remarks from MTA Board Member Pam O'Connor, Metro Rail GM Gerald Francis, MTA Countywide Planning Executive Officer Jim De La Loza and the executive director of the L.A. Bike Coalition, Ron Milam. PHOTOS: LISA HUYNH



Below, Ron Milam wheels his bike onto the subway for introductory ride on the Metro Red Line. In second photo, Milam awaits train with LASD bike patrol and Bike Coalition team.

MTA and bicycling advocates joined forces in a news conference Oct. 29 to announce a new MTA Bike on Rail policy on Metro Rail. The new policy aids patrons who use their bicycles in daily commutes. Under the revised policy, patrons using bicycles will no longer need to have a permit to board Metro Rail trains with their bikes. One hour was sliced off peak-hour restriction, which now allows bicyclists on board all but two hours during the morning and evening rush hours – from 6:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. and from 4:30 p.m to 6:30 p.m. MTA also lifted all restrictions that had previously applied to peak-hour reverse commutes on the Metro Blue and Green lines.



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## West Valley Division Takes Top *How You Doin'?* Honors

click on image to view

PHOTOS: ERIC RAPP



Maintenance Team



Transportation Team

By ERIC RAPP

(Oct 29, 2002) West Valley Division 8 in Chatsworth received two awards, last Friday, taking Best Transportation Division as well as Most Improved Maintenance Division for Fiscal Year 2002.

Division 8 is no stranger to awards and accolades. The Chatsworth-based division won Best Transportation Division honors in 2001, as well.

Transportation Manager Grant Myers attributes the division's success to the fact that Division 8 operators "are the best in the system. They take a lot of pride not only in our division, but also in providing great service to our customers."

Maintenance Manager Jim Pachan agrees. "A big part of our success is the motivation of our employees to be the best," he says.

"There's a real family feeling here," says Myers, "and that translates to the best numbers in the MTA."

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## New Medical Imaging Program to Expedite Employee Injury Treatment

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Oct. 29, 2002) Guy goes to the doctor with a terrible backache. The doctor checks him over, does an X-ray, but can't find the problem.



The doctor picks up the phone and requests an MRI. Within four days, the patient has had his MRI, the doctor has the film and a report and starts the patient's treatment. That's four days...not two weeks or more.

Inside information

[MORE](#) <[metro.net report](#) Oct. 22>

If this sounds almost like a doctor joke, it's not. Under a new program to be launched in November, MTA employees who are injured on the job and whose injuries require diagnostic imaging – such as MRIs, CT Scans and EEGs – can expect equally quick service.

That's because MTA has contracted with Medical Diagnostics Associates (MDA), a nationwide network of diagnostic imaging centers. MDA guarantees it will schedule a patient's appointment within 48 hours of a request and will provide the film and a radiologist's report within 48 hours after that – if not sooner.

### Specially trained unit

Backing this up, says Michael Koss, executive officer, Risk Management, will be a unit of specially trained MTA injury claims examiners who will be responsible for quickly assessing medical needs and authorizing the imaging. The unit is planning 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. hours in order to respond to calls from physicians.

"When the doctor feels it is critical to diagnose a condition and treat it appropriately," he says, "it should be done on an expedited basis to get the employee right into therapy."

The current practice for authorizing diagnostic imaging requires the doctor to send MTA a fax or letter request. Documenting and approving the request, notifying the doctor, waiting for the doctor to schedule an appointment for the patient and obtaining the results can take two weeks or longer.

Under the revised procedure, the doctor can phone MTA's claims unit while the patient is still on the examining table. After running through a short checklist of medical criteria with the doctor, the claims examiner can authorize the imaging.

### Toll-free number

With the authorization, the physician then calls a toll-free number to schedule an appointment for the patient at a convenient MDA imaging center.

Participation in the program is voluntary and the patient and the doctor decide which center to use. Like the recently announced medical prescription program, the employee is not obligated to provide a co-payment or any up-front payment for the diagnostic imaging service.

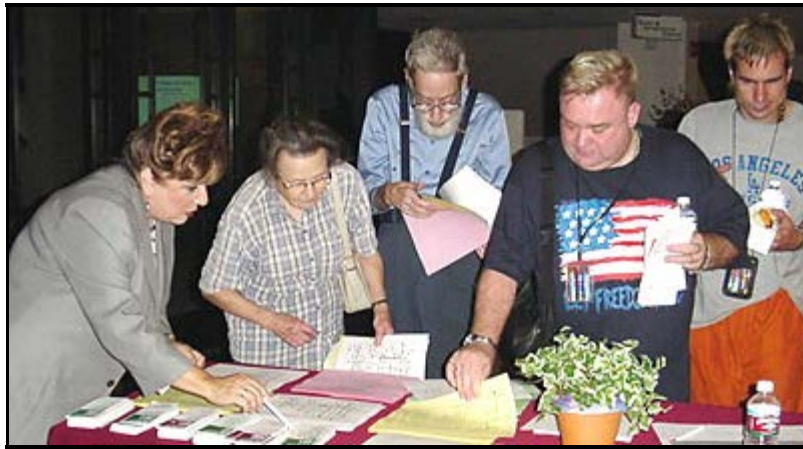


Once the imaging is completed, the MDA radiologist will fax a report to the doctor. MDA also operates a physician-only Internet web site from which the doctor can download the radiologist's report.

"Under this new program," says Koss, "doctors will have the tools to work with more quickly in treating their patients. But, it's also critical that the employee reports the injury in a timely manner."

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Community Relations Manager Helen Ortiz of Metro San Gabriel Valley helps Pasadena residents at the community meeting sign-in table.



### **SGV Sector Staff Meets with Area Residents**

(Oct. 29, 2002) Some 130 residents of three communities turned out earlier this month to hear presentations by Metro San Gabriel Valley staff and to provide input on the proposed bus-rail interface plan for the Metro Gold Line.

"I was pleased with the communities' understanding and knowledge of the new Metro gold Line service," said General Manager Jack Gabig, "along with their recommendations to ensure good transit connections. We're looking forward to continued community participation in the restructuring of transit services in the region."

In preparation for the meetings – which were held in Pasadena, Highland Park and at the El Monte sector offices – the community relations staff distributed take-one notices, developed with MTA Marketing, on buses and at city halls, schools and senior centers within the sector.

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MTA Director of Purchasing Ron Dupuis, center, presents a Supplier Recognition Award to Mike Barnett, president, Valley Detroit Diesel Allison. Attending, from left, are the MTA's Lydie Colonello, Richard Bachman, Al Mitchell, Ted Montoya and Lonnie Mitchell, Dupuis, Barnett and Detroit Diesel's Connie Flores, Laks De Silva and Tim Payne.



### Four MTA Vendors Honored for Outstanding Performance

(Oct. 30, 2002) Four vendors that supply parts for MTA bus and rail fleets were honored, recently, for outstanding performance during FY 2002.

MTA Procurement & Material Management named New Flyer Parts of Winnipeg, Canada; Southern Coach Parts of Birmingham, Ala.; Valley Detroit Diesel Allison of City of Industry, Calif.; and Vehicle Maintenance Program of Boca Raton, Fla., as winners of its first Supplier Recognition Program.

The program is designed to encourage, recognize and reward the work, accomplishments and important contributions suppliers make in supporting the goal of maintaining and continually improving MTA's efficiency and effectiveness.

MTA's Ron Dupuis, center right, presents the Supplier Recognition Award to Vehicle Maintenance Program's President Penny Brooks. From left are Ron Ziegel, Ari Brooks and Barry Friedman of Vehicle Maintenance Program.



The program selected outstanding vendors and provided award recipients with letters of appreciation and plaques recognizing the supplier's support in accomplishing Material Management's key performance objectives.

A key performance objective is to support the continuity of Transit Operations and to minimize MTA vehicle holds for parts to no more than one percent or less.

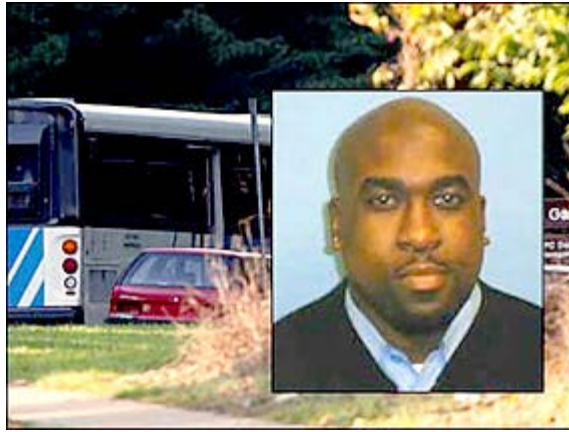
Factors for the award include the volume and duration of the vendor's business relationship with MTA, the responsiveness of the supplier to MTA needs, quality of material, price leadership, delivery on-time performance, delivery/shipping proficiency, and other special considerations "above and beyond" support, such as technical assistance and "critical item" responses.

The program is administered by Purchasing. Selection of vendors was based upon input from all of the affected disciplines in the supply chain,

including buying, receiving, accounting and maintenance staff.

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## MTA Opens Memorial Fund for Sniper Victim Conrad Johnson



NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

Maryland bus operator Conrad Johnson.

(Oct. 30, 2002) MTA has established a memorial fund in memory of Maryland bus operator Conrad Johnson, who was standing in the door of his bus, Oct. 22, when he was gunned down by a sniper.

Two alleged snipers have been arrested and are awaiting trial, but the tragedy they left in their wake will affect the families and loved ones of the victims for years to come.

Johnson, 35, leaves a widow and two sons, ages 15 and 8. His employer, Ride On Transit, says he was a friendly, dependable and dedicated bus operator who will be greatly missed by his co-workers.

A neighbor described Johnson as a fervent football fan, weightlifter and "real family man. He loved his boys. He was always taking care of them, doing things for them."

MTA's Conrad Johnson Memorial Fund, which was initiated by Crossroads Depot Division 2 Operator Florence Henry, Assistant Transportation Manager Joe Brown and Division Transportation Manager Diane Frazier, will benefit his widow and sons.

Employees may make contributions by sending checks made out to the fund to the Northrum Grumman Federal Credit Union at mail stop 99-PL-3 or by making a direct deposit to the fund at the Credit Union office on the Plaza Level at MTA Headquarters or at any operating division.

Donations will be accepted through Dec. 1, 2002, in order to present the check to the family in time for the holidays.

For more information about the memorial fund, contact Florence Henry or Joe Brown at 922-7728 or Sheila Badji at 922-7222, or any operating division manager.

Contributions in memory of any of the sniper victims also can be made to The Victim's Rights Foundation, Attn: Sniper Victims' Fund, 814 West Diamond Ave., Suite 200, Gaithersburg, MD, 20878.

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## **SGV Sector Plans Veterans Recognition Day for Nov. 8**

(Oct. 30, 2002) Military veterans and other MTA employees are invited to a Veterans Recognition Day event on Friday, Nov. 8, at the San Gabriel Valley service sector office.

The one-hour event will begin at 10 a.m. A color guard from Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 113 of Irwindale will render a 21-gun salute and conduct a flag-folding presentation during a program led by MTA employees who are service veterans.

Also invited will be military veterans of the El Monte Fire Department and Police Department.

Employees who plan to attend should RSVP by Nov. 7 to either John McBryan at 922-6360 or to Liz Armijo-Holbrook at 626-454-2841.

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**ACCA Board Member:** Franklin Willis, an MTA Diversity & Economic Opportunity representative, has been elected a member of the American Contract Compliance Association board of directors. Willis, who joined MTA in 1999 after nine years at Federal Express, will represent California, Arizona and Oregon on the board. ACCA members promote equal employment and contracting practices in the public and private sectors. (10/30/02)

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(Oct. 31, 2002) Metro.net has added a new feature to the Intranet website – a search engine.

Want to look up the story about the Metro Rail station named for Lakers' announcer Chick Hearn? Type his name in the box that appears above the left-hand navigation bar and click on "search." You'll get three entries.

The search engine box appears on every website page except the home page.

Need to know something about the new Regional EZPass? Type "Regional EZPass" into the search engine box, click on "search" and you'll get eight entries.

Also, be sure to check out the "Search Help" link for advice on the most convenient and accurate ways to find your subject of interest.

The search engine was developed for metro.net by Software Engineer Bob Dodd of ITS's Network Services.

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## **New Deal for Bus Riders on Select MTA, OCTA Lines**

By RICK JAGER

(Oct. 31, 2002) MTA will accept OCTA monthly bus passes on six selected Metro Bus lines beginning Friday, Nov. 1.

In return, OCTA also will accept MTA monthly bus passes on 10 selected OCTA bus routes that travel from Orange County into downtown Los Angeles.

"This is another step in moving the region closer to providing seamless public transit for our customers by allowing OCTA pass holders to use selected MTA services from Los Angeles into Orange County and vice versa," said CEO Roger Snoble.

Metro Bus lines that will accept OCTA monthly passes are Line 130 (Artesia Blvd.), Line 275 (Cerritos/Santa Fe Springs/Whittier/Pico Rivera), Line 362, Hawaiian Gardens/Cerritos/Norwalk/Los Angeles), Line 460 (Disneyland/Fullerton/Norwalk/Los Angeles Express), Line 271 (Puente Hills Mall/La Brea Mall) and Line 490 (CSU Fullerton/Brea Mall/Cal Poly Pomona/Los Angeles Express).

OCTA bus lines that will accept MTA monthly passes are Line 1 (Long Beach/San Clemente), Line 30 (Cerritos/Anaheim), Line 38 (Lakewood/Anaheim Hills), Line 42 (Orange/Hawaiian Gardens/Seal Beach), Line 46 (Orange/Los Alamitos), Line 50 (Long Beach/Orange), Line 60 (Long Beach/Tustin), Line 701 (Huntington Beach/Los Angeles Express), Line 721 (Fullerton/Los Angeles Express), and Line 757 (Diamond Bar/Santa Ana Express).

"We are excited to be partnering with MTA by offering our customers a more convenient way to travel between Orange and Los Angeles counties using a single bus pass," said OCTA CEO Art Leahy.

MTA and OCTA monthly passes will be applicable for the base fare only. The holders of these passes, depending on distance traveled, must pay express fare increments.

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## MTA Seeking Most Durable, Comfortable Bus Operators' Seat

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Oct. 31, 2002) MTA is on a quest to find bus operator's seats that will be the most comfortable for the largest number of operators and will be the best fit for the various models of Metro Buses in the fleet.

Beginning Nov. 6, Transit Operations will launch a program to test four different models of driver's seats. All four models provide options that include lumbar support, a wider range of seat adjustments and track glide movement, as well as cushion and seat bottoms that can accommodate different body sizes and builds.

All models being tested have specially designed seat belts that provide enhanced operator safety against driving hazards.

The four seat models – built by Recareo, USSC and Bostrom – will be on display in the MTA Headquarters Plaza lobby through noon, Tuesday, Nov. 5.

"Selected operators at each division will have a chance to test each of the four seat models," says Pam Engelke of Corporate Safety, who serves on a five-member team evaluating the seats. Metro Operations Staff Director Cynthia Gibson and Division 15 Maintenance Manager John Roberts head the group.

### Ergonomics evaluation

The project stems from an ergonomics evaluation of Workers' Compensation claims filed by operators who listed the operator's seat as a possible contributing cause. For the past three fiscal years, 10 to 15 percent of all claims filed listed seats as a contributing factor.

The seat-testing program will begin at South Bay Division 18 where nine male and female operators have been selected to drive the nine test buses for two to three weeks under various road conditions. Each selected operator will submit a daily survey on the bus and seat used that day.

After an evaluation period, the test buses will be moved, Dec. 15, to divisions 8 and 15 in the San Fernando Valley. They'll continue to



Operator Beatriz Ibarra of West Valley Division 8 tries out a USSC Model Q90 test seat. Four test seats will be on display in the Plaza lobby through noon, Tuesday, Nov. 5.



Like other seats in the test group, the USSC Model Q90 has adjustments for lumbar support and forward and back movement.

cycle through the service sectors until all divisions have had an opportunity to test them.

The evaluation team expects to report to operations management next spring on the results of the operators' test.

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## **Technical Website Will Better Assist Bus Mechanics and Operators**

By JENNIFER YEH

(October 31, 2002) MTA mechanics and operators now can get access to the latest technical information about the bus fleet through the use of a new Vehicle Technology link on MTA's Intranet.

Among the information included on this website: current service manuals, technical data, news, maintenance practices, parts lists, price lists, help screen, operators' manuals and fleet facts. All the information is controlled centrally and updated frequently.

"When you get a parts and maintenance manual for a new bus, you literally get a thousand pages," says Vehicle Acquisition Manager John Drayton. "It's also difficult to ensure that the latest technical information for maintaining our fleet gets to every operating location in a timely fashion. It's easier to find current information on the website than in the manuals."

Through the use of the website, mechanics and bus operators can improve their ability to maintain buses as well as be updated on the latest safety facts. The site also can provide detailed repair information on individual buses, such as the history of maintenance and warranty expiration dates.

The Vehicle Technology website is available on MTA computers with Intranet access. The longer-term goal is to make all maintenance and repair information available electronically on the shop floor via Technical Information Centers (TICs) that would be linked back to the MTA network.

The link to the Vehicle Technology website can be found on the drop-down menu in the right-hand section of MTA's Intranet home page. The Maintenance Instruction Department also provides periodic training courses on using electronic manuals and diagnostic tools.

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