

## Metro Report Archives

### November 2002 Articles

#### [MTA Report](#)

#### [Bulletin Board](#)

**[Metro Gold Line Carries First Passengers on Test Run](#)** (Nov. 26, 2002) Spectators waved enthusiastically, Nov. 15, as a Metro Gold Line train carried the first passengers on a test run through Pasadena.

**[Metro San Fernando Valley Opens Employment Center](#)** (Nov. 22, 2002) Applicants for positions at MTA now have one more option to make their job-hunting easier. Metro San Fernando Valley has become the first service sector to officially open its Employment Center.

**[MTA's Second Metro Motion Cable TV Show Aired on Saturday](#)** (Nov. 22, 2002) The Metro Gold Line, the Regional Epass and the future San Fernando Valley East-West Transitway are among topics covered in the second installment of *Metro Motion*, a 30-minute show that will air beginning Saturday, Nov. 23, on Santa Monica's CityTV.

**[Gateway Cities Sector to Host Community Meetings](#)** (Nov. 22, 2002) Metro Gateway Cities will hold a series of community meetings beginning Monday, Dec. 2, seeking public comment on how Metro Bus service can be improved in their communities.

**[Mobility 21 Summit Calls for Fair Share of State, Federal Funding](#)** (Nov. 19, 2002) Los Angeles County's first-ever transportation summit wrapped up, Monday, with a call for more state and federal funding for transportation improvements to combat the growing congestion that threatens the region's quality of life and economic vitality.

**PLUS! [Bernson Receives Julian C. Dixon Award](#)**

**[Mobility 21 to Forge Transportation Consensus](#)** (Nov. 15, 2002) In a first for Los Angeles County, MTA and the LA Area Chamber of Commerce are spearheading a summit on transportation, Nov. 18, aimed at forging consensus among leaders in the public and private sectors on workable solutions to the region's crushing traffic congestion.

**[MTA's Maria Guerra Named WTS 'Woman of the Year'](#)** (Nov. 15, 2002) MTA Chief of Staff Maria Guerra has been named the Women's Transportation Seminar's "Woman of the Year" for 2002.

**[MTA and LADOT Share Blue Sky Merit Award](#)** (Nov 14, 2002) Skies were gray and cold last Thursday at the Skirball Cultural Center in Beverly Glen, but it was all "Blue Skies" for MTA and the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT).

**[Metro Rapid is Semi-Finalist in Harvard's 'Innovations' Awards](#)** (Nov. 13, 2002) MTA's Metro Rapid bus program has been selected as a semifinalist in Harvard University's 2002 Innovations in American Government Awards.

**[A Delegation Representing Various Hawaii Government Agencies](#)** Visited MTA Nov. 1

**Photo Op [MTA and bicycling advocates](#)** joined in a news conference Oct. 29 at the Wilshire/Vermont Metro Rail Station to announce a new "bikes on rail" policy.

**[Snoble Asks Special Master for Consent Decree 'Remedy'](#)** (Nov. 1, 2002) In federal court testimony, Tuesday, CEO Roger Snoble asked Special Master Donald Bliss to "remedy the load factor component" of the Consent Decree – a bone of contention that has plagued the six-year-old agreement.

**[Mobility 21: November Event to Examine Transportation in LA](#)** (Nov. 1, 2002) A transportation summit will be jointly presented, Nov. 18, by MTA and the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce. The event will be held at the Wilshire Grand Hotel in downtown LA.

## Bulletin Board

- [MTA Payroll's Top 10](#) **Reasons to Use Direct Deposit**
- [Mannequins Will Model](#) **Proper Uniforms for Bus, Rail Operators** (Nov. 26, 2002) A showcase of mannequins sporting proper MTA uniform attire will be featured at all bus and rail operating divisions by early next year to set an example for MTA operators.
- [MTA's Rodger Maxwell](#) **Promotes Lore of Western Music**
- [Early Bird at](#) **West San Fernando Valley Division 8**
- [South Bay and Gateway Cities Sectors](#) **Move into New Offices** (Nov. 26, 2002) MTA Headquarters said goodbye to two service sectors as they relocated to their new office buildings, closer to the communities they serve.
- [West Valley Division 8 Operator Silvestre Flores](#) **helps provide for the homeless of Mexico.**
- [Gateway Division 10](#) **Aces CHP Inspection**
- [MTA's Ottis Hendricks](#) **Helps Disadvantaged Kids Excel** (Nov. 22, 2002) Teacher, single father and 22-year MTA veteran, West Hollywood Division 7 Transit Operations Supervisor Ottis Hendricks finds his passion in mentoring underprivileged children.
- [CEO Roger Snoble signs up](#) **for the annual Holiday Gift Giving Drive** (Nov. 22, 2002)
- [A Clear View:](#) **Division 9 Finds A Better Way To Clean Bus Windows** (Nov. 20, 2002) A new cleaning product discovered by San Gabriel Valley Division 9's Service Attendant Leader Mike Morris holds a promise of cleaning windows more quickly and efficiently.
- [More Gold](#) **for MTA's Rivers Jacques** (Nov. 20, 2002) The gold stripes and chevrons on the sleeves of Army Reserve Sergeant Major Rivers Jacques' uniform may dazzle the eye, but they also signify that the MTA veteran has achieved the Army's highest enlisted rank.
- [Celebrating 32 Years of Service:](#) **Gerald Clark Retires from MTA**
- [Only 9 More Days to Update Your MTA Benefits](#) (Nov. 19, 2002) There are only nine more working days until the end of this year's Benefits Open Enrollment period for non-contract, AFSCME and Teamster employees.
- [Holiday Gift Signup](#) **It's time to sign up for the MTA's seventh annual Holiday Gift Giving Drive for the Fred Jordan Mission for Skid Row Kids.**
- [Lightning Strikes](#) – **Twice! Division 18 Night Crew Restores Power to Fuel Station**
- [Military Callup:](#) **MTA's Raymond Price Led Unit Protecting Navy Ships in Japan**
- [Metro Bus Operator Wins Emmy](#) **for TV Work** (Nov. 13, 2002) Metro Bus Operator Darnell Williams not only knows how to operate a bus, but also he knows how to operate a video camera – well enough to win a prestigious award.
- [Industrial Hygienist](#) **is 'Silent Protector' of MTA Employees**
- MTA was [Patron Poet's](#) **Inspiration**

- [Film lovers take note:](#) Your MTA employee badge is good for a \$2 discount off the admission price of any regular screening at the AFI Fest 2002
- [Purchasing Names Suzanne Berger](#) 'Buyer of the Quarter'
- [Non-contract, AFSCME, and Teamsters employees](#) can enroll online for 2003 employee benefits
- [Task Force gears up](#) for MTA's 7th annual holiday Gift Giving Drive
- [23 RRC Employees](#) are Experts in Working Accident-Free
- [Halloween Central:](#) Annual MTA Haunts
- [South Bay Sector](#) Takes its Story to the Public
- [Amtrak Assembles](#) September 11 Memorial in Union Station Lobby
- [A Good Sign:](#) **Division 10 Puts Safety's First into Practice** (Nov. 1, 2002)  
"Safety's First" is the top motto and has become the central priority at Gateway Division 10.

[Back to Archives](#)

Gateway Division 10 Aces CHP Inspection

Westside/Central Sector Manager Tracy Daly and Gateway Division 10 Maintenance Manager Rick Hittinger present the division maintenance staff with a brand new 32" television in recognition of their exceptional work in passing a recent CHP inspection with flying colors.



Cooking up a celebration for the Division 10 maintenance crew are, from left, Fernando Saucedo, Jaime Sanchez and Jaime Olivo.

James Lukens, Gateway Division 10 Transportation Manager, is retiring after 29 years at MTA. A farewell luncheon is scheduled, Dec. 9, at the Omni Hotel in downtown LA. For more information, contact Glendora Walker at 922-1210.



PHOTOS: JENNIFER YEH

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)



**Film lovers take note:** Your MTA employee badge is good for a \$2 discount off the admission price of any regular screening of the AFI Fest 2002, now playing at the ArcLight Hollywood through Nov. 17. The ArcLight complex, the site of the world famous Cinerama Dome, is located at Sunset and Vine in Hollywood.

MTA employees interested in attending the AFI film festival can pick up the blue AFI Fest 2002 film guide in the brochure rack at Metro Café or download one from **www.AFIFEST.com**. (Entertainment site can be accessed from home computers.)

The discount is offered to MTA employees as part of a promotion campaign launched by the Communications Dept. The "Ride Metro" logo appears on the AFI Fest 2002 film guide and all other related publications. The film festival is also promoting the Regional Ezpass program. An image of the Regional EZPass appears on the screen at the start of each screening.

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)

Halloween Central: MTA Annual Haunts

- [Central City Division](#) Throws Halloween Party for Para Los Niños Kids
- [Gateway Child Care Center](#) Kids Treat MTA employees to Costume Parade

Gateway Halloween



Diane Delaney-Talton, Alicia Morales-Rodriguez and Gwen Stevens of The Employee Center, above, welcome the hoards of candy seekers at the annual Gateway Parade of costumed children from the Gateway Child Care Center. MTA employees greeted the children with treats.



^ Unidentified fire marshall keeps watch in case things, such as candy, get out of hand.



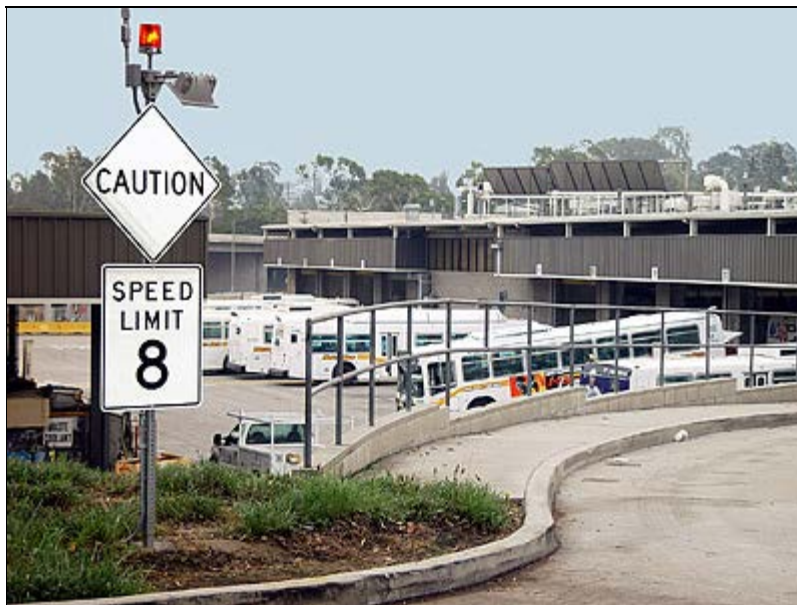
Toriano Hardison, left, and Channon Hooker, right, help BamBam, otherwise known as Toriano Jr., navigate the candy line. At right, costumed children fill the lobby in the quest for candy.

PHOTOS: GAYLE ANDERSON

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)



## A Good Sign



^ Placed at the entrance of the incoming ramp at Division 10, the rotating beacon on top of this sign reminds operators to slow down in the yard.

<The walkways in the Division 10 yard are marked bright yellow to further insure the safety of pedestrians. Shown is Ruben Goytia, senior equipment maintenance supervisor.

PHOTOS: JENNIFER YEH

## Division 10 Puts Safety's First into Practice

By JENNIFER YEH

(Nov. 1, 2002) "Safety's First" is the top motto and has become the central priority at Gateway Division 10.

The Local Safety Committee identified the number one problem at Division 10 as yard speed. As a result, various safety signs are now placed in several areas of the division to serve as a reminder of the importance of safety and to raise the level of awareness.

In past years, Division 10 experienced fatalities in the yard. "We never want to see that again...ever," says Division Maintenance Manager Rick Hittinger.

Shop cleanliness also ties into the matter of industrial safety. "With a clean shop, industrial injuries come way down. We are very proud of the shop now," says Hittinger.

"I always say safety's first, because without that you can't do anything," says Mechanical Leader Max Weilandt.

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)





## **Mobility 21: November Event to Examine Transportation in LA**

(Nov. 1, 2002) How can Los Angeles County move cars, trucks, buses, airplanes, trains, ships – and people – more efficiently? How much will it cost? And where will the money come from?

These and many other issues will be at the center of Mobility 21: LA County Moving Together – a transportation summit to be jointly presented, Nov. 18, by MTA and the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce. The event will be held at the Wilshire Grand Hotel in downtown LA.

“The idea is to build a countywide coalition to band together and decide what are the real issues facing transportation in Los Angeles,” says CEO Roger Snoble. “Their recommendations will be presented in Sacramento in February and in Washington next April.”

At what officials hope will become an annual event, Mobility 21 will draw together transportation and business executives, civic leaders, federal, state and local officials, and community activists. The summit's 600 seats already are being filled.

During the daylong session, summit participants will look for ways to address the county's transportation problems. The formal recommendations they develop will become the basis for action in Washington, D.C. and Sacramento.

### **Executive committee co-chairs**

Executive committee co-chairs are MTA Chairman and LA City Councilman Hal Bernson and Los Angeles Mayor James Hahn; U.S. Representatives David Dreier, Juanita Millender-McDonald and Lucille Roybal-Allard; State Sen. Kevin Murray and Assemblymember Jenny Oropeza; LA County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky and Lancaster Mayor Frank Roberts, both MTA Board members.

Faced with the projection that the county will grow by 30 percent to 13 million people in the next 25 years, Mobility 21 participants will work together in seven breakout groups to consider such issues as:

- Finding more efficient ways to move goods,
- How to secure more transportation funding,
- Land use and smart growth,
- How to develop a transportation coalition,
- How to get people out of their cars,
- Better ground access to airports and the



- Role of streets and highways in mobility.

The results and recommendations from the breakout sessions will be presented at the closing session and to Los Angeles County's federal and state delegations. An evening reception honoring California's U.S. senators will follow.

Mobility 21 is open to members of the public. The registration fee is \$99, if received before Nov. 8, or \$125 thereafter. The summit includes an Expo for transportation-related businesses and organizations.

[Back to MTA Report](#)

## **Snoble Asks Special Master for Consent Decree 'Remedy'**

(Nov. 1, 2002) In federal court testimony, Tuesday, CEO Roger Snoble asked Special Master Donald Bliss to "remedy the load factor component" of the Consent Decree – a bone of contention that has plagued the six-year-old agreement.



CEO Roger Snoble  
to Special Master:  
"Give us a  
methodology that  
clearly guides both  
parties..."

The CEO asked the Special Master to provide guidance to MTA and the Bus Riders Union on how to interpret the decree's load factor requirements.

Bliss visited Los Angeles for several days this week to get a first-hand look at how the six-year-old Consent Decree is being implemented. He also heard formal testimony from both parties on passenger load factors aboard Metro Buses.

In his testimony, Snoble noted that the MTA-BRU Joint Working Group established by the Consent Decree "cannot agree on the methodology for identifying and remedying the load factor standard."

He asked the special master to adopt MTA's load factor methodology or "give us one that clearly guides both parties in how to determine overcrowded trips and what to do about it."

### **'Standard transit practice'**

Snoble said there are a number of ways to eliminate overcrowding, but that MTA needs flexibility beyond adding another bus to its fleet. The process suggested by MTA resembles "standard transit practice" and will "reduce the disagreement between us," he said.

The CEO said the agency has made "tremendous efforts" to develop transit service that "not only meets the spirit of the Consent Decree, but actually exceeds it."

"We are taking steps to reduce overcrowding by buying bigger buses, doing a better job of scheduling and managing service on the street and by going to higher-capacity rail lines and BRT services on a few heavy corridors," Snoble said.

MTA will spend more than \$1.2 billion – 47 percent of its budget – on bus service this year, Snoble said, and expects to spend more than \$1 billion on compliance before the Consent Decree expires in 2006.

The CEO took issue with the BRU's contention that "only white suburbanites ride the rail service...." An MTA survey in 2001 showed that buses and trains had similar percentages of minority riders.

"Anyone with the gift of sight can clearly see," he said, "that (the minority patrons) riding our trains are (in nearly) the same proportions as those riding the buses."

[Back to MTA Report](#)

**Safety Experts:** Recognized for accident-free years were Choon Lee, 28 years; Masamitsu Takata, 22; Gustavo Arguello, 22; Gary Eller, 21; Duc Banh, 21; Gerardo Morales, 20; Rudy Melendez, 19; Freddy Steger, 19; Carlos Morales, 19; Frank Humberstone, 19; Jose Reyes, 10; Lester Powell, 10; Delphin Wong, 8; Arthur Martinez, 8; Robert Kang, 7; Mark Hamasaki, 7; Juan Duenas, 7; Bernetta Bunch, 7; Michael Bennett, 7; and Michael Lee Palmer, 5. Not shown are Chris Haile, 12 years; Tom Yee, 21; and Tom Sintoplertchai, 5. With the group are Equipment Maintenance Manager Harold Peterson and Deputy Executive Officer Milo Victoria. PHOTOS: BILL HEARD



### 23 RRC Employees are Experts in Working Accident-Free

(Nov. 5, 2002) Twenty-three Regional Rebuild Center employees were honored, Nov. 1, for their long years of service – five years to 28 years – without a lost-time accident.

Mechanic “A” Choon Lee of the RRC’s electrical department claimed top honors with 28 years of accident-free service. How did he do it?

“Be alert all the time and move your brain before you move your body,” says Lee. “And love to work.”

Joining Lee in the 20 years-plus category were Masamitsu Takata of the Mechanical Department with 22 years; Gustavo Arguello, Transmission Department, 22 years; Gary Eller, Administration, 21 years; Tom Yee, Systems Department, 21 years; Duc Banh, Body Shop, 21 years; and Gerardo Morales, Body Shop, 20 years.

Each of the 23 honorees received a commemorative certificate and a gift certificate.

“If an employee has worked 20 years without a lost-time accident,” said Equipment Maintenance Manager Harold Peterson, “that means he’s worked 40,000 hours with no injury.”

**Top Guy:** 28 years on the job in the RRC’s electrical shop and Mechanic “A” Choon Lee has yet to experience a lost-time accident.



[Back to Bulletin Board](#)



CLICK ON IMAGE FOR LARGER VIEW  
PHOTO BY ALISHA GOMEZ

**September 12th:** Amtrak has assembled a memorial in the lobby of Union Station to the victims of the September 11 terrorist attack. The monument of twisted steel and debris is in a triangular structure symbolizing faith, family and country as seen by Jim Audley of Amtrak, a volunteer at Ground Zero. No materials from the World Trade Center site are used in the display. A commemorative plaque reads, "Dedicated to the memory of the fire fighters and police officers who gave their lives and the innocent victims who lost their lives on Sept. 11, 2001." The memorial will be open for public viewing for two weeks. (11/5/02)

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)



[<Back](#) to Halloween Central



**Central City Division Throws Annual Halloween Party for Para Los Niños Kids**

By DANIELLE GROSSMAN

(Nov. 5, 2002) More than 100 kids dressed in scary costumes visited Central City Division 1, last Thursday, for the division's traditional Halloween party. Sully, the big blue Monster from Monster's Inc., Sponge Bob Square Pants and other characters helped hand out candy, juice, and ice cream to the children. The children were from Para Los Niños, a nonprofit family service agency. "They enjoyed it a lot," said Sonja Owens, Central City division transportation manager. "It was more than a success, because we didn't expect as many kids as there were." Division employees Yolanda Aguilar, Patricia Bryant, Dorrene Cuomo, Hilda Jimenez, Marco Castenada, Julie Alvarado, Irma Mosley and Connie Velasco formed a committee to organize fundraisers to raise money for the refreshments and candy. The Halloween party for homeless kids has been a Central City Division tradition for the past four years, with the exception of last year when the party was not held because of the Sept. 11 terrorist attack.



Photos:  
José Ubaldo / Danielle Grossman



Para Los Niños, founded in 1980, is a nonprofit family service agency designed to raise at-risk children out of poverty and into brighter futures through positive educational opportunities and support involving families and communities. For more information, visit their web site at [www.paralosninos.org](http://www.paralosninos.org)



## South Bay Sector Takes Its Story to the Public

By RICH MORALLO

(Nov. 5, 2002) Four Metro South Bay team members paired up, Oct. 29, to connect with students at Locke High School and business professionals at the Torrance Chamber Business Expo.

Transportation Operations Supervisor Dallas Evans and Operator Laretta Meadows of South Bay Division 18 manned an information table at the Torrance Marriott where more than 100 area businesses and organizations displayed their services and products.

Throughout the four-hour event, dozens of South Bay residents and Torrance professionals picked up transit schedules, maps and safety checklists.

"Talking to the community and answering their questions on our bus lines is valuable for them and makes me feel great," said Meadows, who is looking forward to other opportunities to represent the agency at public events.

Another Metro South Bay pair - Maintenance Supervisor Marco Pedemonte and Mechanic Terry Owens - visited Locke High School on Oct. 30 during the campus annual career day.

"I'm from MTA and I'm proud to be with the agency," said 19-year veteran Owens as she described her career to a roomful of sophomores.

Owens and Pedemonte shared with the audience stories of how they were promoted up the ranks from service attendant to mechanic and supervisor through hard work and ambition.

Pedemonte, who has 23 years with MTA, said he grew up in the company and likes talking to students about the agency's services.

"We just don't deal with buses, " Pedemonte said, "we deal with people and people's lives."

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)



Division 18 TOS Dallas Evans, left, and Operator Laretta Meadows provided literature at the Torrance Chamber Business Expo.



Division 5 Equipment Maintenance Supervisor Marco Pedemonte and Mechanic "A" Terry Owens shared their stories with Locke High School students.

**Buyer of the Quarter Suzanne Berger** with her commemorative plaque. From left are Director of Purchasing Ron Dupuis, Procurement Executive Officer Lonnie Mitchell, Berger, Purchase Contract Manager Al Mitchell and Purchase Contract Manager Richard Bachman.



### **Purchasing Names Suzanne Berger 'Buyer of the Quarter'**

By AL MITCHELL

(Nov. 6, 2002) Suzanne Berger was recently awarded "Buyer of the Quarter" for her commitment and dedication to providing outstanding service to her customers.

Berger, a buyer in the Purchasing Department, is responsible for purchasing material and supplies for the bus fleet such as air conditioning parts, bus batteries, bus air filters and bus electrical components.

Due to her efforts over the last year, the MTA realized savings on these commodities of more than \$150,000 over previous pricing.

Berger approaches all of her assignments with a positive and professional attitude. Her communication style and friendly personality has worked effectively in dealing with all of her internal and external clients and suppliers.

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

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)

## **Non-contract, AFSCME and Teamster Employees Can Enroll Online for 2003 Employee Benefits**

- [Schedule](#): Meetings to explain new procedures, demonstrate the online system, and review changes to the benefit plans will be held Nov 7, 8 and 14.

(Nov. 6, 2002) When the Annual Benefits Open Enrollment for non-contract, AFSCME and Teamster employees begins this Thursday, enrollment will be just a few clicks away.

Links to the "2003 Employee Benefits" and the "Employee Benefits Enrollment Instructions" will appear in the upper right-hand column of the metro.net home page. Non-contract, AFSCME and Teamsters employees can review 2003 benefit packages and enroll online from the home page of the MTA intranet.

### **Start Here**

To begin the enrollment process, click on the link that reads "Employee Benefits Enrollment Instructions." This document offers step-by-step instructions on how to access the system and enroll online.

The open enrollment period for 2003 benefits begins Nov. 7 and continues through Nov. 30.

### **Informational meetings are scheduled**

Meetings to explain new procedures, demonstrate the online system, and review changes to the benefit plans will be held in the Gateway building as follows:

- **Thursday, Nov. 7, 2002**, 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. in the Board Room,
- **Friday, Nov. 8, 2002**, 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. in the University Conference Room, 4<sup>th</sup> floor, and
- **Thursday, Nov. 14, 2002**, 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. in the Board Room.

Those who cannot attend the meetings will find a comprehensive guide in the online "Employee Benefits Enrollment Instructions." The enrollment system is available online only on the MTA intranet. The system currently cannot be accessed from home computers.

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)

## The Gift that Keeps on Giving

- **Holiday Gift Drive Seeks 8,000 Gifts for Skid Row Kids**

- **Mark your calendar:** Deliver gifts to coordinators on 14th floor of Gateway building by Thursday, Dec. 12, at 12:30 p.m.

[Gift Drive Chronology](#)

(Nov. 6, 2002) With the holidays are just around the corner, it's time to start working on the 7th annual holiday Gift Giving Drive for the Fred Jordan Mission for Skid Row Kids. This year's goal: 8,000 gifts.

"Every year since the Gift Drive began in 1996, generous employees have given more and more gifts," says Bessie Rush-Johnson, Gift Giving Task Force coordinator. "It's a big goal – 8,000 gifts – and we'll continue to raise the stakes!"

The Task Force will conduct an informational meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 12, from 9:30 until 10:30 a.m. in the Los Feliz Conference Room, 13th floor, for employees who would like to be involved with the Gift Drive. For more information, contact Rush-Johnson at 922-2629.

Headquarters employees can pick up holiday gift tags beginning Monday, Nov. 18, during an open house in the Diversity and Economic Opportunity Department, 13th floor. The Gift Giving Task Force will host an information table in the 3rd floor lobby from 11:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m., from Tuesday, Nov. 19, to Friday, Nov. 22.

The Task Force seeks donations of unwrapped gifts that can include an abundance of suitable items such as blankets, toy cars and dolls, games, pencils and paper, stuffed animals, footballs, soccer balls and basketballs, rain gear, back packs and even canned goods.

Gift Drive coordinators will visit MTA operating divisions that don't conduct their own toy drives beginning Nov. 25 to distribute gift tags. The gift tags must be attached to the unwrapped gifts, which should be delivered to coordinators by 12:30 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 12.

The gifts will be delivered to the Fred Jordan Mission on Friday, Dec. 13, at 10:30 a.m. MTA employees and family members over 16 years of age will help distribute the gifts to kids at the Mission on Sunday, Dec. 22, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.



Fred Jordan Mission Director Willie Jordan expresses appreciation to Santa Claus for the 2001 MTA gift drive that filled the plaza with toys and gifts for Skid Row children.

### Gift Drive Chronology:

- Nov. 12: Volunteer informational Meeting - Los Feliz Conference Room, 13th floor - 9:30 to 10:30 a.m.
- Nov. 18: Gift Drive open house
- Dec. 12: Gift Drive deadline
- Dec. 22: Gift distribution at Fred Jordan

Mission



[Back to Bulletin Board](#)

Metro San Gabriel Valley Veterans Day Honors














photos by gayle anderson

November 8, 2002

< [back to Bulletin Board](#)



Click on **image 1** to begin slide show. Use arrows to advance or return.

					
<a href="#">^ 1</a>	<a href="#">^ 2</a>	<a href="#">^ 3</a>	<a href="#">^ 4</a>	<a href="#">^ 5</a>	<a href="#">^ 6</a>
					
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[< back to Bulletin Board](#)



**MTA was Patron Poet’s Inspiration**

(Nov. 8, 2002) Jorge Gonzales regularly takes Metro Bus Line 111 from Downey to his home in Bell Gardens. Without MTA, he says he’d be walking.

One evening while waiting for the bus, Gonzales was inspired to show his appreciation for MTA by writing a poem.

He pulled out his notebook and, in just five minutes, he was finished. As the Line 111 bus pulled up, Gonzales tore out the page and handed it to operator Glenn Rougeau.

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)

MTA and Me
At Lakewood and Florence, Awaiting my ride home, We were four on the bench, But now two are long gone. The 460 rolled up, Which was going downtown. Now it's two of us stuck waiting, For the 111's next round. You might say that I'm silly, Writing all of this down, And it's a wee bit chilly, Sitting out in midtown. The bypassing traffic, Stirs up more wind. As I look up to my left, I see my trusty old friend. One whom I can always depend on, To get me from point A to point B, From dusk till dawn, MTA is for me. -- Jorge Gonzales

Some days after rain soaked a carpet at her office, an MTA employee became ill with a respiratory infection. A doctor traced her bronchitis to a specific airborne fungus. Using high-tech air monitoring equipment at the worksite, MTA Industrial Hygienist Collins Kalu found traces of the toxic aspergillus fungus. He ordered the carpet cleaned and disinfected. The employee was treated for the ailment and soon recovered.

**Industrial Hygienist is ‘Silent Protector’ of MTA Employees**

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Nov. 12, 2002) At the very top of MTA’s Headquarters building, in a room lined with cabinets crammed with scientific instruments, the rare visitor gets a glimpse of one of the agency’s most important health and safety programs.

Presiding over the laboratory is Collins Kalu, 45, a native of Nigeria and a respected professional who joined MTA in 1988 following two years as an industrial hygienist and hazardous materials specialist for the state.

“This is the pulse, the heartbeat of MTA’s industrial hygiene program,” Kalu says of the 26th floor lab, where he can analyze air, water and soil samples and test chemicals for toxicity.

His work in the lab backs up the field tests he performs in his role of helping minimize hazards for MTA employees and customers. He frequently responds to requests from operating divisions, construction sites and other MTA facilities.

Kalu can evaluate, for example, the engineering design of a ventilation system or the environmental conditions in a workplace or aboard Metro Buses and Metro Rail trains. He is heavily involved in ensuring that MTA complies with federal, state and local environmental regulations.

**The ‘silent protector’**

“Collins has a critical responsibility for protecting the health of our



Industrial Hygienist Collins Kalu calibrates an air sampling machine in his laboratory atop MTA Headquarters.

**Snapshot**



Senior Industrial Hygienist Collins Kalu

Native of Nigeria  
**Degrees:** BS and MS, Environmental and Occupational Health and Safety, Cal State Northridge.  
Post-graduate work, Engineering, USC  
**Certifications:** Registered Environmental Assessor, Certified Professional Environmental Auditor, Underground Tunnel Gas Tester and Safety Representative, EPA Asbestos Project Designer, State of California Hazardous Material First Responder  
**Family:** He and his wife, Paulina, a chemistry teacher, have three children, Uzoma, 14, Michelle, 6, and Michael, 5.



Collins Kalu describes his lab work to Deputy CEO John Catoe.

employees by being what I call the 'silent protector' of the agency," says Michael Koss, executive officer, Risk Management.

So convinced is Koss of the importance of MTA's industrial hygiene and environmental safety program that he plans to add at least one, and probably two, hygienists to the staff by the end of next year.

One focus of the expanded staff will be reducing repetitive motion injuries, such as carpal tunnel syndrome, by improving the ergonomics of employees' workstations.

MTA is a leader among transit and governmental agencies that have industrial hygiene programs, says Koss. Kalu has worked with LADOT, NYC Transit, Cal OSHA and the California Air Resources Board. His primary focus, however, remains MTA.

"We want a work environment in which employees can feel assured that the air we breathe, the water we drink and the chemicals we use are safe," says Deputy CEO John Catoe. "Collins is the one who makes sure that happens."

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)

## Hawaii Delegation



A delegation representing various Hawaii government agencies visited MTA, Nov. 1, to gather information about the Metro Freeway Service Patrol. Led by State Sen. Cal Kawamoto and Honolulu City Council Member Ann Kobayashi, the visitors – including representatives of the fire, police, traffic and transportation agencies – are researching the possibility of forming a similar freeway service for the Island of Oahu. MTA Director of Congestion Relief Byron Lee, center, yellow shirt, hosted the visitors along with Operations Staff Director Cynthia Gibson, far left. Also providing information were representatives of the California Highway Patrol and Caltrans. (11/12/02)

[Back to MTA Report](#)

## **Metro Rapid is Semi-Finalist in Harvard's 'Innovations' Awards**

By ED SCANNELL

(Nov. 13, 2002) MTA's Metro Rapid bus program has been selected as a semifinalist in Harvard University's 2002 Innovations in American Government Awards.

The awards, presented annually by the John F. Kennedy School of Government, recognize outstanding examples of creative problem solving in the public sector.



Metro Rapid bus at Patsaouras Plaza.

"We are honored to have been chosen as a semifinalist for this prestigious award," said CEO Roger Snoble. "Metro Rapid has succeeded beyond anyone's expectations at meeting the needs of our existing passengers and generating new transit ridership on two busy L.A. corridors by producing an increase in bus speed unheard of in a major U.S. city."

The Metro Rapid program was selected as one of 98 semi-finalists from among a pool of nearly 1,000 applicants. The five winning entries will be announced next May in Washington, D.C. Each will receive a grant of \$100,000.

Metro Rapid was launched in June 2000 with a 26-mile line on the Wilshire/Whittier corridor and a 16-mile line that operates on Ventura Boulevard.

Metro Rapid has succeeded in reducing travel times by nearly 30 percent and increasing total bus ridership in the two corridors by nearly 40 percent. One third of the ridership increase is patrons new to transit.

Buoyed by this success, the MTA Board earlier this year approved a 24-line expansion of Metro Rapid beginning this December with the startup of lines on Vermont Avenue and South Broadway. The expansion will be completed by 2008.

All levels of government -- federal, state, local, tribal and territorial - within the United States are eligible for Harvard's Innovations in American Government Award. Each program is evaluated according to its novelty, creativity, effectiveness, significance and transferability.

Since it began in 1986, the annual competition has recognized 295 innovative programs and awarded them a total of \$17.9 million in grants.

[Back to MTA Report](#)

## Division 3 Operator Darnell Williams Wins Emmy for TV Work

By LISA HUYNH

(Nov. 13, 2002) Metro Bus Operator Darnell Williams not only knows how to operate a bus, but also he knows how to operate a video camera – well enough to win a prestigious award.

Williams won a local Emmy in June for his work on a cable television public affairs series called “Full Disclosure.”

Williams, who is assigned to North Los Angeles Division 3, was production assistant and floor cameraman for the multi-part series. His duties included directing the cameras and working with the lights, soundboards and tape decks.



PHOTO: LISA HUYNH

Darnell Williams and Emmy award.

“Full Disclosure” won an Emmy from the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences for excellence in the field of Information and Public Affairs Programming – the first independently produced cable series to win an Emmy.

### Beat the competition

“We beat out KNBC, KTLA, PBS and other local stations,” says Williams.

The series, which featured politicians, mayors and local law enforcement officials, was about LA’s war against terrorism. The series investigated local and regional anti-terror measures in the wake of 9/11.



The “Full Disclosure” crew picked up Emmy awards at recognition dinner. Back row, from left: Aaron Wilson, Carlos J. Mendoza, MTA’s Darnell Williams and Russell Herbert. Front, Mark McGuire, Leslie Dutton, Pamala Thomas and Alvinette.

Williams says when he initially found out that he won an Emmy, he was skeptical. It became more real when he received the gold statuette in the mail.

“I felt important because I was recognized for achieving something,” says Williams. “It felt really good.”

He fell into video and directing when he was an employee of AT&T Broadband. Williams studied film when he attended West Los Angeles College and Los Angeles City College.

Although he no longer works with AT&T Broadband, Williams keeps camera skills sharp by shooting weddings and other special events.

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)



## Lightning Strikes – Twice!



- **Division 18 Night Crew Restores Power to Fuel Station**

By DANIELLE GROSSMAN

(Nov. 14, 2002) South Bay Division 18's night crew sprang into action November 7 when lightning struck two transformers, causing a power outage at its fuel station.

"There was a quick response," said Transportation Manager Ken Matsuno, "They got the fuel station up and running sooner than they expected."

The first transformer was hit at 11:55 p.m., creating an explosion of sparks. When emergency back-up systems failed, the night crew had to manually start the back-up system.

The division alerted the electric company, but was told it would take at least four hours to restore power. Equipment Maintenance Supervisors Matthew Dake and Miguel Valdivia went to work sending buses to be fueled at Arthur Winston Division 5.

Just as the South Bay crew got the fuel station's back-up systems started, lightning struck yet another transformer.

They got the fuel station running again shortly afterward, and were able to fuel buses. Only a few buses had to be fueled at Arthur Winston since the crew was able to get the fuel station running in just about three hours.

The electric company was able to get the power back on by about 4:30 a.m.

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)

## MTA and LADOT Share Blue Sky Merit Award

By MARTA MAESTAS-MACK

(Nov 14, 2002) Skies were gray and cold last Thursday at the Skirball Cultural Center in Beverly Glen, but it was all "Blue Skies" for MTA and the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT).

The partner agencies were co-recipients of the prestigious Blue Sky Merit Award presented by the CALSTART division of WestStart at its 10th Anniversary Advanced Transportation Industry Conference.

MTA and LADOT received honors for the implementation of the Metro Rapid

demonstration program. Accepting the award for MTA were David Armijo, general manager of Metro San Fernando Valley. James Okazaki, LADOT assistant general manager, accepted for his agency.

The MTA Board's funding of the Metro Rapid expansion to 23 new lines and its purchase of over 800 new CNG and CNG-hybrid electric buses was acknowledged as making MTA a leader in the use of clean alternative fuel vehicles.

"It is an honor for the MTA to be acknowledged on a national and international level for its leadership in the use of clean fuel buses," said Armijo, "We look forward to continuing our partnership with the City of Los Angeles to bring improved air quality to the citizens of the city and the county."

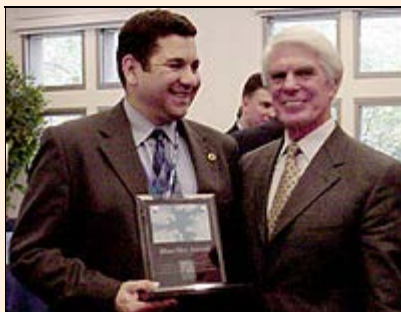
Armijo also was a presenter at the all-day conference and spoke on "Bus Rapid Transit and the Role It Will Play In The Future Of The US Transit Network."

WestStart is a non-profit, fuel-neutral consortium of over 150 participants worldwide. Its goal is to support development of advanced transportation technologies that result in improved air quality and greater energy efficiency worldwide. CALSTART is the California operating division of WestStart.

[Back to MTA Report](#)



^ LADOT's James Okazaki, left, and MTA's David Armijo, right, accepted the Blue Sky Merit Awards on behalf of their agencies from WestStart's John Boesel.



< Congressman Jerry Lewis, right, congratulates GM Armijo and MTA for receiving the Blue Sky Merit Award.

## Military Callup

- **MTA's Raymond Price Led Unit Protecting Navy Ships in Japan**

By ALISHA GOMEZ

(Nov. 14, 2002) After the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, about 10,000 military reservists were called to active duty for operations Enduring Freedom and Noble Eagle.

And out of the many who had to say good-bye to their families, Crossroads Depot Division 2 Operator Raymond Price was one.

"Being separated from my family for almost a year was the hardest part," says Price.

Price was called to duty as a Naval Reservist, spending 11 months and 4 days in Japan. He was stationed at the U.S. Naval Station, [Yokosuka](#), near the entrance to Tokyo Bay.

For Price, a Hull Technician First Class, the job was important – force protection. He was the Leading Petty Officer for 71 reservists from 20 different units. The sailors were tasked with providing security for deployed Navy ships and 42,000 personnel and their families.

"I was among the first 13 to arrive and we were placed in a vehicle inspection area, standing 12-hour watches," says Price. "We had 12 hours on and 12 off, working four days and having two days off."

As the most senior first class petty officer, he was in charge of making sure that assigned posts were manned at all times.

### Inspected for weapons

One of these posts was the vehicle inspection area, where all commercial vehicles and drivers were inspected for weapons, explosives and checked for proper identification.

"We found some weapons during these inspections," says Price. "Small knives, realistic looking .9mm pellet guns and some homemade weapons are a few items we came across."

Price also assisted in police patrols, and conducted random boat patrols in the waters surrounding the base.

"Our team was the first line of defense in case of a waterborne attack against the ships that were in port," he says.



^ Operator Raymond Price of Crossroads Depot Division 2 spent almost a year in Yokosuka, Japan, as a Naval Reservist.



< Price prepares for a night shift on a harbor patrol boat enforcing tight security in Yokosuka, Japan.

The reservists stayed at an old Japanese Naval base that the United States gained control of after World War II.

### **Support of his family**

"Without the support of my wife, Nancy, and my three sons, Chris, Mike, and David, it would have been really difficult to survive the year," he says.

Price came home once in June to watch his eldest son, Chris, graduate from high school and also to celebrate his wife's birthday. The couple has been married for 20 years.

He was deactivated from active duty, Oct. 4, but he is still in the Naval Reserve.

An operator with MTA since 1997, he is glad to be home.

"It feels good to be back at work," says Price, of being an operator. "I was surprised to see a large banner with U.S. flags and 'Best Wishes' signatures from my fellow workers."

Being home has been a bit of a change for Price.

"After being away so long it takes awhile to get back into things and for everybody in my family to get readjusted," says Price.

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)



## **Mobility 21 to Forge Transportation Consensus**

By ED SCANNELL

(Nov. 15, 2002) In a first for Los Angeles County, MTA and the LA Area Chamber of Commerce are spearheading a summit on transportation, Nov. 18, aimed at forging consensus among leaders in the public and private sectors on workable solutions to the region's crushing traffic congestion. [See: metro.net report Nov. 1: Mobility 21](#)

The gathering of elected officials, transportation providers, business, labor, academic and community leaders at the Wilshire Grand Hotel is titled *Mobility 21: LA County Moving Together*.

"We know all too well the source of most of our transportation problems, but, historically, reaching agreement on how best to solve these issues has not been so easy," said MTA Board Chairman Hal Bernson. "Our aim is to break through the barriers that have plagued us in the past and also to create a coalition that will speak with a strong unified voice when it goes to Sacramento and Washington, D.C. in search of much-needed transportation funding."

In addition to MTA and the Chamber of Commerce, participating agencies and companies will include the Federal Transit Administration, United Parcel Service, Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway, California Trucking Association, Surface Transit Project, Caltrans, Air Transport Association, Automobile Club of Southern California, United Western Grocers Association.

"We have arrived at the point where a shared vision about our future is imperative if we are to deal effectively with the projected population growth and demands on our infrastructure," said CEO Roger Snoble. "The population of Los Angeles County, alone, will grow by another 2.7 million people by 2025 which means the actions we take today are critical to sustaining a good quality of life into the future."

[Back to MTA Report](#)

- **MTA's Maria Guerra  
Named WTS  
'Woman of the Year'**



(Nov. 15, 2002) MTA Chief of Staff Maria Guerra has been named the Women's Transportation Seminar's "Woman of the Year" for 2002.

The award was presented, Wednesday, during the WTS annual scholarship and awards dinner at the Millennium Biltmore Hotel. Guerra, who has worked in transportation since 1979, is one of the highest-ranking women in the industry in Southern California.

Guerra was honored for her leadership and "commitment to the development and advancement of women in the industry" and for helping WTS and the transportation industry "develop and advertise opportunities for women and minorities, with an emphasis on scholarships, internships and employment."

As chief of staff to CEO Roger Snoble, Guerra provides policy recommendations and counsel on MTA strategies and community issues. Under her management are the departments of Policy, Research and Library, Labor/Employee Relations, Government and Board Relations, Administration-Human Resources, Diversity and Economic Opportunity, Community Relations, Real Estate and General Services.

Prior to joining MTA, she served as assistant city manager of Bell Gardens, district assistant for Congressman Glenn Anderson, assistant city administrator for Pomona, as a teacher for the Montebello and Pasadena school districts, and as public affairs manager and chief administrative analyst for MTA.

Guerra and her husband, Jim, vice president and manager of building and safety for Willdan, a public service company, live in Monrovia.

Women's Transportation Seminar, founded in 1977, is a national organization dedicated to excellence in public and private transportation through the achievement of women.

[Back to MTA Report](#)



## **Deadline Looms: Update Your MTA Benefits by Dec. 2**

(Nov. 19, 2002) There are only nine more working days until the end of this year's Benefits Open Enrollment period for non-contract, AFSCME and Teamster employees.

By close of business, Dec. 2, eligible employees must have reviewed their benefits selections for 2003. Selections can be made on the Intranet by accessing the 2003 Online Benefits System.

Links to the enrollment instructions and online enrollment pages are located in the Employee Center box on the right side of the metro.net home page. Enrollment instructions explain the employee ID and password and provide helpful reminders.

The system allows employees to review current benefits enrollment choices and to add, delete or update selections. The web pages provide the 2003 guidebooks, brochures and plan enrollment forms. They include links to insurance carrier websites for those who have Internet access.

A copy of the benefits confirmation statement can be printed from the website.

For additional information and assistance with benefits enrollment, contact Jan Olsen at 922-7151, Ann Craver at 922-7186 or Ed Myatt at 922-7185.

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)

[<Back to article>](#)



**Bernson Receives Julian C. Dixon Award**

MTA Board Chairman Hal Bernson was presented the first annual "Julian C. Dixon Award," Nov. 18, during the closing session of Mobility 21. Bernson was chosen as "a leader in transportation (who has) made an outstanding contribution to the transportation community." In addition to serving as chairman of MTA's Board, Bernson chairs the boards of Southern California Regional Rail Authority and the Southern California Association of Governments. On the LA City Council, he is chairman of the Transportation Committee. (11/19/01)

## Mobility 21: A Transportation Summit



Los Angeles County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky addresses conference. Some 400 elected officials along with business, labor, transit and community leaders attended the day-long *Mobility 21* transportation summit meeting in downtown LA.

### In this report:

[Mobility 21 Summit Calls for Fair Share of State, Federal Funding](#)

[Mobility 21: Summary of Adopted Resolution](#)

[Mobility 21 Quotables](#)

[Bernson Receives Julian C. Dixon Award](#)

## Mobility 21 Summit Calls for Fair Share of State, Federal Funding

By ED SCANNELL

(Nov. 19, 2002) Los Angeles County's first-ever transportation summit wrapped up, Monday, with a call for more state and federal funding for transportation improvements to combat the growing congestion that threatens the region's quality of life and economic vitality.

Sponsored by MTA and the LA Area Chamber of Commerce, *Mobility 21: LA County Moving Together* drew some 400 elected officials, business, labor, transit and community leaders for an all-day session at the Wilshire Grand Hotel in downtown LA.

The summit was intended to foster a broad-based coalition that will seek significant increases in transportation funding in Sacramento and Washington, D.C.

"Never before has LA County been so determined to find the most workable solutions to congestion," said MTA Board Chairman Hal Bernson. "*Mobility 21* drove home the point that we all have a stake in keeping this county moving and that we can focus on the greater good while still meeting the needs of the individual."

*Mobility 21* participants adopted a series of resolutions that included endorsement of the State of California and MTA principles for reauthorization of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA 21) and a recommendation for additional federal and state funding for transit needs in Los Angeles County.

### Funds for airport security

Other resolutions included a recommendation to create an advocacy coalition for Los Angeles County; endorsement of new federal programs that promote more coordinated land use; and acknowledgement of the need to secure all available funds for air passenger and cargo safety and security and ground access improvements.

Resolutions also included endorsement of a partnership between the freight industry and the public sector to examine future freight-related needs, strategies and alternatives; and a recommendation to address the adequacy of state and federal gas taxes and ensure that loans to the California general fund are paid back to the Traffic Congestion Relief Program.

"Everyone who attended *Mobility 21* knows well the urgency with which we must act," said CEO Roger Snoble. "We agreed that our most pressing need is to grow the transportation funding pie and to make sure LA County gets a bigger piece of it to pay for the transportation projects that will keep our people and goods moving. Our quality of life depends on it."

Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce CEO Rusty Hammer stressed the importance of the public and private sector acting in concert, something that has not always happened in the past.

"*Mobility 21* underscored the importance of a strong coalition of business, transportation professionals and lawmakers," said Hammer. "The participation of members of Congress demonstrated their strong interest in taking our case to Washington, D.C., and securing the funding we need to solve our very pressing mobility issues."

The opening and closing sessions and the luncheon included addresses by several speakers who included Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard, Assembly Speaker Emeritus Robert Hertzberg, Bernson and Thomas McKernan, CEO of the Automobile Club of Southern California.

### **Mobility 21: Summary of Adopted Resolutions**

**Streets and Freeways :** Supports increased funding and resources to help maximize mobility benefits from Los Angeles County streets and freeways. Endorses a focus on corridor coordination, project development, implementation, and the streamlining of project delivery.

**Land Use and Transportation Planning :** Supports creation of new federal programs to promote more coordinated land use and transportation decision-making through the reauthorization of the Transportation Equity Act for the Twenty-First Century ("TEA-21"). Calls for incentives to strengthen the link between land use and transportation planning in Los Angeles County.

**Aviation :** Acknowledges the need to secure all available funds for air passenger and cargo safety/security and ground access improvements to Southern California's airports to enhance the economic vitality of the Los Angeles region.

**Freight Movement :** Acknowledges that addressing freight infrastructure funding is a national issue that requires national solutions and that freight-related needs should be considered in transportation plans and corridor studies. Also endorses a partnership between the freight industry and public sector in examining future freight needs, strategies and alternatives.

**Transit :** Requests additional federal and state funding for transit needs in Los Angeles County, including funding for buses, new fixed guideway systems and expansions, and transit capital. Advocates more flexibility in the use of federal transportation funds.

**Building Effective Lobbying Coalition** : Endorses the creation of an advocacy coalition comprising transportation stakeholders and their representatives to advocate on behalf of Los Angeles County transportation needs.

**How To Bring More Money To Los Angeles County** : Recommends addressing the adequacy of state and federal gas taxes; support for the preservation of the Traffic Congestion Relief Program by ensuring that loans to the California general fund are paid back and Proposition 42 funds be continued. Proposes a half-cent increase in sales taxes for transportation purposes through a reduced voter threshold for approval of those taxes. [<Back to top](#)

[Back to MTA Report](#)

### **Holiday Gift Signup**

Tashai Smith signs up as a donor in MTA's seventh annual Holiday Gift Giving Drive for the Fred Jordan Mission for Skid Row Kids. The goal of this year's drive is 8,000 gifts. The Gift Giving Task Force will host an information table in the 3rd floor lobby of MTA Headquarters from 11:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m., from Tuesday, Nov. 19, to Friday, Nov. 22. The drive runs through Thursday, Dec. 12.



From left are Task Force members Kathleen Charon-Johnson, Nola Crittenden, Bessie Rush-Johnson and Diane Crum. Members not shown are Darleen Flores, Linda Perryman, Pat Clark, Linda Wang, Mary Nugent, Auset Paia ab ani tu, Phil Waldman, Cedric Collins, Evelina Del Castillo and Eduardo Ramirez. (11/19/02)

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)



## Celebrating 32 Years of Service: Gerald Clark Retires from MTA

By LISA HUYNH

(Nov. 20, 2002) When people retire, they leave something behind – an impression and a story.

After 32 years of service with MTA, Mechanic Gerald Clark, son of the late UTU General Chairman Earl Clark, has retired from San Gabriel Valley Division 9.



SGV Division 9 Maintenance Manager John McBryan, at right, congratulates the retiring Gerald Clark.

"I loved my job," says Clark, 51. "I've seen a lot of positive changes over the years and I am proud to have been a part of this company."

San Gabriel Valley Division 9 celebrated this bittersweet event with a party last Thursday. The Division 9 staff along with the ATU local 1277 President Neil Silver presented Clark with various gifts and memorabilia.

"The retirement party was more than I expected," says Clark.

During his retirement, Clark says he plans to stay involved with the community by working more closely with the Girl's Softball League. He says he would also love to be an umpire.

"I'm very proud to have known him and to be associated with him," says John McBryan, Division 9 maintenance manager. "We will certainly miss him."

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)



Staff Sgt. Maj. Rivers Jacques has achieved Army's highest enlisted rank.

## More Gold for MTA's Rivers Jacques

(Nov. 20, 2002) The gold stripes and chevrons on the sleeves of Army Reserve Sergeant Major Rivers Jacques' uniform may dazzle the eye, but they also signify that the MTA veteran has achieved the Army's highest enlisted rank.

Jacques, 42, an MTA Transit Security lieutenant with 10 years' seniority, also has 24 years' service in the Army and Army Reserve. During eight years on active duty, Jacques served in the U.S., Germany and Korea as a helicopter and tank mechanic.

Promoted recently to staff sergeant major, he is now awaiting assignment as a "command sergeant major." In that post he will be the senior representative of all the enlisted members of a large Army Reserve unit – an intermediary between the unit commanding officer and the troops.

Currently, he is the operations sergeant major of an equipment readiness unit located at the West Los Angeles Army Reserve Center. His group supports the 1st Army Corps of Ft. Lewis, Wash., with supplies and repair parts for helicopters, electronic and ground equipment.

Jacques and his wife, Wendy, a records technician with the Inglewood Police Department, live in Altadena with their dog, Blizzard.



At MTA, Rivers Jacques is a Transit Security lieutenant.

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)

## A Clear View: Division 9 Finds A Better Way To Clean Bus Windows

By JENNIFER YEH

(Nov. 20, 2002) Hard water spots and graffiti on bus windows have long been major problems for MTA.

Now a new cleaning product discovered by San Gabriel Valley Division 9's Service Attendant Leader Mike Morris holds a promise of cleaning windows more quickly and efficiently.



PHOTO BY JENNIFER YEH

A maintenance employee at San Gabriel Valley Division 9 demonstrates how hard water spots are removed using a new window cleaner product.

The new product is a non-abrasive wax-like polish that removes water spots and graffiti on windows. It's applied with a sponge and a pneumatic buffer and rinsed off with a hose.



On the job: Zani Clean

The process saves maintenance staffs a lot of time, says Equipment Maintenance Supervisor, Raul Rodriguez. One application can last up to several months.

"Because the buses are washed every day, hard water spots are usually left on the windows and head signs," says Rodriguez. "Since using this product, bus operators are really happy. They can see more clearly out the windows."

Called Zani Clean, the product is manufactured by High Desert Products, Inc. located in Hesperia, Calif. They have in the past also provided MTA with cleaning materials for bus seat cushions.

Rodriguez says some of the previous approaches used to clean the windows at the division included vinegar and several other home products.

"Other divisions are working on ways to get their windows cleaned, however our way is working for us," he says, adding that MTA could save hundreds of dollars in maintenance costs.

Maintenance Manager John McBryan breaks down the cost to \$36 for every bus. That includes \$3.75 per can and the cost of time and labor compared to \$700, which is about how much it would cost to hire an outside cleaning service.

The product is still on a test basis awaiting approval from quality assurance.

"Once the product is approved, all the divisions will get the product," says Rodriguez. "They've been trying other buffers and polishers to see

which is the easiest to use, but right now we think we have it down.”

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)

## **Gateway Cities Sector to Host Community Meetings**

By RICK JAGER

(Nov. 22, 2002) Metro Gateway Cities will hold a series of community meetings beginning Monday, Dec. 2, seeking public comment on how Metro Bus service can be improved in their communities.

"We encourage the public to attend one of three community meetings and give us their opinions about bus service in the southeast area of Los Angeles County," said General Manager Rich Rogers. "We are specifically looking for public comment and suggestions on how we can improve service to the community."

The community meetings have been scheduled from 6:30 to 8 p.m., Monday, Dec. 2, at Norwalk City Hall; Tuesday, Dec. 3, at Huntington Park Recreation Center; and Wednesday, Dec. 4, at the Barbara J. Riley Community & Senior Center in Downey.

Topics to be discussed will include adding more frequent bus service, changing or adding a bus stop as demand warrants, and other subjects of interest to bus patrons.

[Back to MTA Report](#)

## MTA's Ottis Hendricks Helps Disadvantaged Kids Excel

By JENNIFER YEH

(Nov. 22, 2002) Teacher, single father and 22-year MTA veteran, West Hollywood Division 7 Transit Operations Supervisor Ottis Hendricks finds his passion in mentoring underprivileged children.



TOS Ottis Hendricks

Hendricks is a part-time tutor for Sylvan Learning Systems, a program for students who need extra educational attention. Right now, Sylvan Learning Systems is under contract with Los Angeles Unified School District to work with inner city students.

Each afternoon as Hendricks' shift at MTA ends, he heads over to Roosevelt High School in East Los Angeles to start his tutoring session.

"Some kids don't have the same opportunities as other kids might have," says Hendricks. "Some of these kids come from gang-infested neighborhoods, disadvantaged homes, single parents, or parents who are too busy to tutor their kids."

"Most of those from the inner city go through school without ever getting a solid grasp of reading," he says.

In the last year, Hendricks also started tutoring fourth graders at a local elementary school.

### Most rewarding of all

"Watching these young children who couldn't read at all work their way to understanding and putting together words and sentences is the most rewarding of all," says Hendricks. "Those kids love me, even their parents sometimes sit in my class and watch their kids."

Hendricks' drive for teaching is remarkable. Working fulltime, while raising an 11-year-old son – a straight A student – can be more than a handful, but for Hendricks doing what he loves is quite easy.

"The hardest part is getting established," he says. "But once you develop your lesson plans and materials it's all very simple."

In addition to all he does, when evening rolls around, Hendricks also uses his home computer to teach an online communication class for adults at University of Phoenix Online.

"Many of my students are people of high managerial positions, as well as professionals who just want to move up or simply want to improve on their communication skills in relations to their jobs," he says.

Hendricks holds a master of arts degree in communication management from Pepperdine University and a bachelor of arts degree in urban planning.

Before coming to MTA, he held positions as a part-time teacher and as an Inglewood police officer.

Currently, Hendricks is an assistant minister at Redeemer Baptist Church in Los Angeles where he also teaches adult Bible classes.



Hendricks has done it all and has no plans to stop anytime soon.

"I'm going to get a doctorate in education starting next January," he says, "and when I retire I want to teach as a professor at a University."

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)



**Santa Claus?** CEO Roger Snoble signs up for the annual Holiday Gift Giving Drive for the Fred Jordan Mission for Skid Row Kids. Staffing the table is Phil Waldman. The toy drive runs through Thursday, Dec. 12. For more information, contact Bessie Rush-Johnson at 922-2629. (11/22/02)

See metro.net report: [Holiday Gift Drive Seeks 8,000 Gifts for Skid Row Kids](#)

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)

*Metro Motion* anchor Mark Istook interviews Lancaster Mayor Frank Roberts on cable news program that airs Saturday, Nov. 23, on CityTV, the City of Santa Monica's cable television channel, and Monday, Nov. 25, on cable television channel LA36 in the City of Los Angeles.



### **MTA's Second *Metro Motion* Cable TV Show Aairs on Saturday**

By ED SCANNELL

(Nov. 22, 2002) The Metro Gold Line, the Regional Epass and the future San Fernando Valley East-West Transitway are among topics covered in the second installment of *Metro Motion*, a 30-minute show that will air beginning Saturday, Nov. 23, on Santa Monica's CityTV.

The show, produced by MTA and CityTV, also will be shown Monday, Nov. 25, on cable television channel LA36 in the City of Los Angeles.

All shows in the *Metro Motion* series cover general countywide transportation topics. The second show will spotlight projects in North Los Angeles County, a large portion of which is represented on the MTA Board by Lancaster Mayor Frank Roberts, who is the subject of an interview.

*Metro Motion* will air on CityTV on Saturday, Nov. 23, 6:30 p.m.; Monday, Nov. 25, 7:30 p.m.; and Wednesday, Nov. 27 at 10 p.m.

The show will be shown on cable channel LA36 on Monday, Nov. 25, 8:30 p.m.; Wednesday, Nov. 27, 10 p.m.; and Friday, Nov. 29, 9:30 p.m.

In December, *Metro Motion* will air on CityTV and LA36 on the following dates: Friday, Dec. 13, 10 p.m.; Saturday, Dec. 14, 11 p.m.; and Sunday, Dec. 15, 7:30 p.m.

Patterned after CityTV's *Santa Monica Update*, *Metro Motion* employs a news program format with two anchors, field reporters and an interview segment.

[Back to MTA Report](#)

## **Metro San Fernando Valley Opens Employment Center**

By ERIC RAPP

(Nov. 22, 2002) Applicants for positions at MTA now have one more option to make their job-hunting easier. Metro San Fernando Valley has become the first service sector to officially open its Employment Center.

The Center, located at the sector offices in Chatsworth, performs many of the same functions as the Employment Office at MTA Headquarters.

In addition to providing a Job Posting board with bulletins for all current MTA and PTSC vacancies, applicants can pick up employment applications and other related application materials and drop them off once they are completed.

But the Valley's Employment Center goes one step further – it has two computers which are permanently logged onto MTA's "Employment Opportunities" Internet page. Job seekers can search for jobs online, fill out computerized versions of applications and print out and submit completed applications all in the same trip.

The Employment Center already has been receiving about 50 applications a week, mostly from applicants within the San Fernando Valley or northern Los Angeles County, according to Senior Human Resources Analyst Bruce Moore.

"Our location is much more convenient for local residents, who no longer have to drive downtown if they want to submit an application in person," says Moore. "It's also much closer for the employees at West Valley Division 8 and Sun Valley Division 15."

And, he jokes, "at our Employment Center the parking is free!"

Metro San Fernando Valley's Employment Center is located at 9760 Topanga Canyon Boulevard (at the corner of Topanga Canyon and Marilla Street) in Chatsworth. Hours are from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

[Back to MTA Report](#)

## Early Bird at West San Fernando Valley Division 8



Operator Richard Carter and TOS Santiago Osorio enjoy annual Thanksgiving lunch at Division 8.

By GRANT MYERS

Thanksgiving came a little early, this year, to West San Fernando Valley Division 8.

Division staff, operators, maintenance employees and San Fernando Valley Sector staff gathered Tuesday, Nov. 26 for their second annual Thanksgiving Feast. Employees were treated to a fabulous turkey dinner with all of the trimmings – including a grand total of 30 pies.

Employees who assisted in planning, decorating, cooking and serving for this event were Karen Pedini, Cindy Spadaccini, Jamie Coleman, Tom Impliazzo, Amy Wolf, Dorothea Brown, Charles Terrence, Gloria Dorado, Gwen Henry and Virginia Ruiz.

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)

Media aboard Metro Gold Line train arrive in South Pasadena.



PHOTO BY JENNIFER YEH

## **Metro Gold Line Carries First Passengers on Test Run**

By DANIELLE GROSSMAN

(Nov. 26, 2002) Spectators waved enthusiastically, Nov. 15, as a Metro Gold Line train carried the first passengers on a test run through Pasadena.

"The ride was outstanding," said Deputy CEO John Catoe. "Not only the ride, but the car. The cleanliness sets a standard for our fleet and the way we're going to operate this service."

"I can assure the people that this will be a Class A service," he said. "It will be a flagship for the rest of the services we offer."

Following a news conference, the test train carried press, MTA, Metro Construction Authority and city officials on a 1.5-mile run from Mission Street station in South Pasadena to the Fillmore station and back.

The Metro Gold Line, a 13.7-mile light-rail system, will affect the community of Pasadena in a lot of positive ways, says MTA Board Member Pam O'Connor. Not only will it give people an opportunity to travel between Los Angeles and Pasadena, it also will allow people to travel within Pasadena.

### **Freedom from cars**

"It will increase mobility and give people freedom in a different way, freedom from their cars," said O'Connor.

The Metro Gold Line, expected to be operating in mid-2003, started its testing Nov. 13, with only minor changes needed before it could carry its small group of passengers.

"We had some small glitches," said Jesse Diaz, director of rail operations, "but that's part of testing. That's why it's not open to the public yet."

The testing will continue until the line's opening, giving it more runs through the community.

"We'll get the community more involved, give them a special presentation of what's happening, so they see exactly what's going on," says Diaz.



[Back to MTA Report](#)

## South Bay and Gateway Cities Sectors Move into New Offices

By DANIELLE GROSSMAN

(Nov. 26, 2002) MTA Headquarters said goodbye to two service sectors as they relocated to their new office buildings, closer to the communities they serve.

The South Bay Service Sector moved into its new office in Torrance, Nov. 22, followed by the Gateway Cities Service Sector, which moved into its new office building in Downey, Nov. 26.

"My team, with all of their years of experience and all of the corresponding files, notes, maps, and schedules are in place, and we are now open for business in the South Bay," says Dana Coffey, general manager of the South Bay Sector.

The new Metro South Bay office occupies 6,665 square feet of office space, which will house up to 30 employees. The office is less than two miles from Carson Division 18.

"Our location is ideal—centrally located in the area we serve," says Coffey. "Our move shows that we are becoming part of the community and we will partner with our customers as we work with the public to implement service improvements."

### New Gateway Cities office

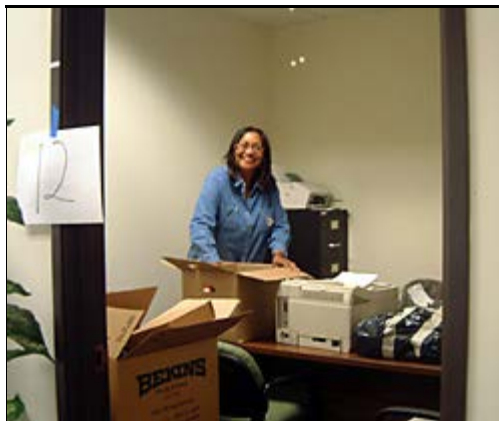
The Gateway Cities Sector moved into an approximately 13,000 square foot building, which will be shared with staff at Non-Revenue Division 4. The interior of the building was torn down and rebuilt to accommodate the approximately 25 employees from the Gateway Cities Sector as well as the Division 4 employees.

"It places us in the community that we serve," says Rich Rogers, general manager of the Gateway Cities Sector. "It means we'll be more accessible to the community. "

The remodeling of the new Gateway Cities Sector office is a huge success for the facilities maintenance personnel, who completed the renovations within three months, says Tim Lindholm, project manager of Strategic Development of Facilities.

"It's the biggest project that facilities maintenance has ever done," he says.

Once settled in, both sectors plan to open their doors to their communities and local officials for an open house. The South Bay Sector open house will be held Dec. 9. The date for the Gateway Cities



Workers Compensation Analyst Jackie Anderson smiles despite having a pile of boxes to sort through. Below, Communications Officer Victoria Woods starts to arrange her new office.



Sector open house has yet to be set.

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)

## Division 8's Silvestre Flores Spreads Holiday Cheer in Mexico

By LISA HUYNH

(Nov. 26, 2002) Metro Bus Operator Silvestre Flores of West Valley Division 8 is not only a father and a church leader, he is a volunteer who feeds the homeless as well.

Flores and his family visit homeless shelters in Mexico once a month to donate food and other necessities.

"There are five homeless shelters all over Mexico, but my family and I visit the shelter in Tijuana more often," says Flores.



West Valley Division 8 Operator Silvestre Flores helps provide for the homeless of Mexico.

That particular shelter serves about 200 men from Mexico, Cuba, South America, the Caribbean Islands, Indonesia and Iraq.

Flores and his family started donating necessities to homeless shelters in Mexico in 1998.

### Idea for volunteers

A year later, he and his friend Hector Nari, who died in September, came up with an idea to get people from their church to become volunteers.

Flores asked the priest at his church, Holy Rosary Church, if they would help donate money and food to the homeless shelter.

Soon after that, Flores formed a group from his church called "Friends of the Migrants." The group raises money by selling authentic Mexican food – tamales, enchiladas and nachos – once a month at the church.

This month, they raised more than \$1,300.

"This wasn't much for us because we usually raise between \$1,600 to \$2,000," says Flores.

### Necessities of life

With the money, they buy canned goods, pastas, grains, fruits, vegetables and other necessities like toilet paper, toothpaste, clothes, sheets and blankets.

Once Flores and his family buy all the supplies, they drive to the homeless shelter in Tijuana and drop off the food. They also stay for the weekend and cook for the migrants.

They plan to visit the shelter this weekend, just in time for Thanksgiving.

"It makes me feel great doing this," says Flores. "Every time I see a person smile, it brings tears to my eyes knowing that I was able to make them happy."

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)



>Demetrius Jones of OCI is arranging for operator uniform displays at each MTA bus and rail division.

## **Mannequins Will Model Proper Uniforms for Bus, Rail Operators**

By DANIELLE GROSSMAN

(Nov. 26, 2002) A showcase of mannequins sporting proper MTA uniform attire will be featured at all bus and rail operating divisions by early next year to set an example for MTA operators.

"We're putting the mannequins into the divisions as examples of what the uniforms should look like," says Demetrius Jones, assistant division transportation manager for Operations Central Instruction. "We also have created large pictures of operators who are in full uniform that meets the minimum standards to comply with the uniform policy."



The purpose of the uniform project is to promote a professional image for all operators. Since some may forget what proper attire is, says Jones, the mannequins will be set up as reminders.

The program is based on Section 6 of the Operator's Handbook. The 6-page section outlines male and female operator uniform requirements. It covers everything from jackets to shoes to accessories.

### **A proper uniform**

The general proper uniform attire consists of a blue shirt with navy blue pants and a black belt. Black work boots or shoes with a polishable surface must be worn as well. If long sleeves are worn, the individual must wear a tie. Operators also may wear a sweater, vest or jacket.

"We're working hard to make sure that our operators are neat in appearance," Jones says about MTA's efforts. "We're trying to promote a good image."

Jones is in the process of finding 14 affordable mannequins and asking uniform companies to donate uniforms to keep costs down. Two companies have donated uniforms so far: Becnells (one uniform) and Uniwear (two uniforms).

"It's all about enhancing the image of the MTA operator," Jones says. "The operator is the individual the public first comes into contact with, so they're representing the MTA on the front line. It's important that they look good. First impressions are everlasting."

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)



## Code o' the West: MTA's Rodger Maxwell Promotes Lore of Western Music

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Nov. 27, 2002) "Riding for the brand. The whole code of the West," says MTA's Rodger Maxwell. "I'm very attracted to that."

Gene Autry's "Back in the Saddle Again" is one of many western songs that appeal strongly to Maxwell, 57, a scheduling system supervisor in Operations Support Services and the recently elected president of the Western Music Association's Southern California chapter.

The organization is dedicated to the preservation of the history, literature and performance of music unique to the American West. Each November, WMA conducts the International Western Music Festival.

A charter member of the organization, founded in 1989, Maxwell plans to expand the audience for western music by increasing the number of concerts given each year by WMA members. A fundraiser is scheduled, Feb. 16, at the Autry Museum of Western Heritage.



On site: Rodger Maxwell

*from Back in the Saddle Again by Gene Autry*

"Back in the saddle again,  
Out where a friend is a friend  
Where the longhorn cattle feed  
On the lowly jimsonweed  
I'm back in the saddle again."



MTA's Rodger Maxwell, a native New Yorker, wants to widen the audience for western music.

*from Home on the Range by Brewster M. Higley*

"Oh, give me a home where the buffalo roam,  
Where the deer and the antelope play.  
Where seldom is heard a discouraging word,  
And the skies are not cloudy all day."

### MTA project manager

At MTA, Maxwell is project manager for the Automatic Passenger Counting system and a member of the ATMS (Smart Bus) steering committee. Prior to joining MTA, he was a school systems planner and a bus driver for several transit agencies.

Employees have heard Maxwell, a 20-year MTA veteran, play and sing a number of times – although the music he and his group have played on the Plaza was rock 'n roll.

Maxwell's love of the Old West is refreshed every time he shoulders a guitar and steps up to a microphone during many performances at the Fireside Theater, Topanga Canyon Festival, Monterey Cowboy Poetry and Music Festival and other venues.

"I'm very attracted to the cowboy way, the cowboy values," he says. "It's straight-forward, open and honest."

### **The 'Bronx Cowboy'**

As a native New Yorker, his attraction to western music was unusual, but not unprecedented in the family. His father, David – known as the “Bronx Cowboy” – was the singing host of a western music radio show in the 1930s.

The family enjoyed Saturday night sing-alongs and the younger Maxwell also loved watching the Red Foley country-western show on New York TV.

Citing as influences such musicians as Burl Ives, Roy Rogers, Bob Wills, the Sons of the Pioneers, Jackson Browne, Django Reinhardt and comics Homer and Jethro, Maxwell is equally at ease on the guitar, harmonica, bass, ukulele and percussion.

He has played in rock ‘n roll bands, folk trios, as a single act and musical sideman.

“Like most musicians,” he says, “I’m interested in all kinds of music.”

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)