

Metro Report Archives

March 2003 Articles

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- [Employees on Workers' Comp May Be Assigned Parking Lot Duty](#) (March 28, 2003) Employees drawing Workers' Compensation benefits could be assigned to monitor MTA parking lots, Metro Rail stations and "key stops throughout the city" under a motion approved unanimously, Thursday, by the MTA Board.
- [Employees Can Catch Shuttle Bus to Dodgers Games](#) (March 26, 2003) Employees who plan to attend the LA Dodgers opening day game, April 17, and Friday night games throughout the season will be able to catch a shuttle bus to the stadium direct from Patsaouras Plaza.
- [New High-Tech Trucks Will Make Towing Buses Easier, Safer](#) (March 25, 2003) New high-tech tow trucks destined for the bus operating divisions promise to make retrieving a disabled bus safer and more efficient for MTA maintenance crews.
- [MTA, Local Media Celebrate Arthur Winston's 97th Birthday](#) (March 25, 2003) Surrounded by friends, co-workers and the camera crews of several Los Angeles-area media outlets, Arthur Winston celebrated his 97th year of life, last Thursday – an event that also marked his 73rd year with MTA.
- [Sheriff's Capt. Dan Finkelstein Named Chief of Transit Police](#) (March 21, 2003) Sheriff's Capt. Dan Finkelstein, a 27-year law enforcement veteran, has been named MTA's Chief of Transit Police – a first-of-its-kind arrangement that is expected to consolidate the agency's security forces and improve safety for employees and patrons.
- [Special Master Accepts MTA Plan to Add 125 Buses](#) (March 21, 2003) The special master overseeing the Consent Decree has tentatively accepted an MTA plan to schedule 125 additional coaches on its most crowded Metro Bus lines.
- [SG Valley Governance Council Holds Orientation Session](#) (March 20, 2003) The San Gabriel Valley Governance Council conducted an orientation meeting this week and set the date for its first public meeting.
- [Westside/Central Sets Hearing for Proposed Service Changes](#) (March 20, 2003) MTA will hold a public hearing to discuss proposed service changes planned for implementation in June 2003 or later in the Westside/Central service sector.
- [Snoble Urges Employee Vigilance as U.S. War Prospects Grow](#) (March 19, 2003) With the prospect of war with Iraq now almost a certainty, CEO Roger Snoble says the nation's heightened state of alert will affect MTA.
- [MTA Bus Operator Job Fair a Big Success](#) (March 18, 2003) For many job seekers last Saturday, not even the pouring rain could dampen their desire to drive buses for MTA.
- [MTA's Most Senior Employee Arthur Winston Turns 97 This Week](#) (March 18, 2003) After more than seven decades on the job with only one absence, MTA's Arthur Winston will celebrate his birthday later this week, turning 97 on Saturday, March 22.
- [Bus Operators Work On Making Fare Boxes Fair](#) (March 14, 2003) A group of Metro Bus operators drawn from all operating divisions was given an opportunity,

recently, to critique new farebox technology that will enable passengers to pay for their bus fare with a tap of an electronic "SmartCard."

- **[MTA Board Approves San Gabriel Valley Services Changes](#)** (March 14, 2003) The MTA Board has approved a number of changes aimed at enhancing bus service in the San Gabriel Valley.
- **[M3 Project](#) will 'Bring Our Maintenance System into 21st Century'** (March 11, 2003) It's still months away, but by this time next year MTA will roll out a new computer-based program that "will bring our whole maintenance system into the 21st century," says MTA Chief Information Officer Elizabeth Bennett.
- **Board Approves San Fernando Valley Service Changes** (March 7, 2003) The MTA Board has approved a number of changes aimed at enhancing bus service in the San Fernando Valley.
- **[Rising Costs, Budget Deficits](#) Force MTA to Restructure Fares** (March 7, 2003) It's been more than eight years since MTA restructured its transit fares, and in that time costs – for fuel, for buses, security, Workers' Compensation claims and personnel – have skyrocketed.
- **SG Valley Governance Council Now Has 7 of 9 Members** (March 6, 2003) The MTA Board has now approved seven members of the nine-member San Gabriel Valley Service Sector Governance Council.
- **Small Business Roundtable Provided 'Face-to-Face' Opportunities** (March 5, 2003) One hundred representatives of area small businesses came to MTA, last week, for a seminar focused on increasing small business participation in public agency-sponsored design and construction projects.
- **Jurors Can Trade Mileage Allowance for MTA Weekly Pass** (March 4, 2003) MTA and Los Angeles Superior Court are teaming up to offer MTA weekly transit passes to jurors in exchange for their vehicle mileage reimbursement. The Jury Pass Program gets underway Monday, March 3.

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- **[Rail Activation Team](#) Focused on Readying Metro Gold Line** (March 28, 2003) The Metro Gold Line Rail Activation Team is conducting a series of tests and emergency drills – all in preparation for the Rail Operation Date (ROD), an event that's just a few short months down the track.
- **[MTA's Diversity Staff](#) is Ready for Any Emergency** (March 27, 2003) If an earthquake or other disaster hits Los Angeles, today, disrupting transportation and communications and stranding employees at MTA Headquarters, the Diversity and Economic Opportunity staff is ready for it.
- **UPDATE [New Paychecks](#) to Come in Tamper-Resistant Envelopes** (March 27, 2003) Your next MTA paycheck or pay stub will look different – and will provide better security for confidential information.
- **[West Hollywood Division 7's Ron Reedy](#)** Retires after 30 Years at MTA
- **[Library to host second "ID the Photo" open house.](#)**
- **[They're Doin' Great!](#)** Division 1 Takes Home a Double Win for Outstanding Division
- **[Dana Coffey](#)** is AGA Guest Speaker
- **[Volunteers Needed](#) for MTA Rail Rodeo in May** (March. 21, 2003) Like to play

with trains? Metro Rail is asking for volunteers to help with family activities and some event judging during the 2003 MTA Rail Rodeo, Saturday, May 3.

- [San Gabriel Valley Division's Mike Morris](#), a service attendant leader, teamed up with chemist Mickey Walker from High Desert Products to create a biodegradable and organic product that removes ink, gum, paint and stickers.
- **MTA BASKETBALL** [Division 18 Lakers](#) Slay Gateway Gladiators, 41 – 28
- [Venice Division 6 Scores Points for On-Time Pull Outs, Zero New Workers Comp Claims](#) (March 18, 2003) Tying with Gateway Division 1, Venice Division 6 received a trophy for winning the "How You Doin'?" award for Outstanding Maintenance Division for January 2003.
- [MTA's Medal Winners](#) in the 2003 L.A. Marathon
- [First Class](#) of Metro Sheriff's Explorers Graduates
- [Lt. Mike Herek](#) of the Sheriff's Transit Services Bureau recently took the Metro Rail safety message to a kindergarten class.
- [1,200 Must File Annual Statement of Economic Interest Forms](#) (March 13, 2003) MTA's Ethics Department has scheduled a Form 700 workshop in the Glendale Conference room, 11th floor, at 1 p.m., Tuesday, March 18.
- [Gateway Division's Jack Owens Retires After 28 Years at MTA](#) (March 13, 2003) Since coming to MTA in 1975, Division 10 Assistant Transportation Manager Jack Owens has operated in almost every division.
- [Gateway Gladiators](#) Down Div. 2 8-Ballers, 45 – 13
- [Division 15](#) Receives 'How You Doin'?' Honors for 'Most Improved'
- [Metro South Bay Meetings](#) Keep Community Aware of Service Improvements
- OBITUARY [Funeral Services](#) Set for RRC's Shimarko Pope
- [Season Opener:](#) Bruins Crush Raiders, 84 – 30
- [Division 7 Service Attendants](#) Find Better Way to Clean Buses
- [BOCC](#) Marks 6 Accident-Free Months
- [Gateway Division](#) Celebrates Black History Month
- [Division 9](#) Wins 2 More 'How You Doin'?' Awards
- [Transportation Manager Mace Bethel](#) Retires From MTA
- [Funeral Services](#) Set for Division 15's Marcel London
- [Night of Excellence for MTA's Top Performing 'Stars'](#) (March 4, 2003) A moonlight cruise, a dinner cruise – it was "A Night of Stars" aboard the Queen Mary in Long Beach Harbor, last Saturday, for 256 MTA employees who were honored for their excellent performance over the past five years.

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AGA Civic Center Chapter Luncheon



Dana Coffey, General Manager for Metro South Bay Service Sector, speaks at the Los Angeles Civic Center Chapter of the Association of Governmental Accountants Luncheon on March 12. Coffey spoke to over 40 accountants, auditors and operation representatives from the City of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works and MTA. Her discussion topic was "Women in Management."

-- from Deborah Harrell

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Rail Safety Training



Lt. Mike Herek of the Sheriff's Transit Services Bureau recently took the Metro Rail safety message to the kindergarten class at St. Luke Elementary School in Temple City. Herek, who has visited the school annually for the past 12 years, also talked to the kids about law enforcement and traffic safety.

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CEO Roger Snoble, left, and Deputy CEO John Catoe congratulate Equipment Maintenance Specialist John Tena, center, at "Night of Stars" awards ceremony aboard the Queen Mary. Tena is one of 256 Transit Operations staff honored for excellence in performance.



PHOTOS: CHRIS LOVDAHL

Night of Excellence for MTA's Top Performing 'Stars'

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(March 4, 2003) A moonlight cruise, a dinner cruise – it was “A Night of Stars” aboard the Queen Mary in Long Beach Harbor, last Saturday, for 256 MTA employees who were honored for their excellent performance over the past five years.

Accompanied by their spouses and guests, Metro Bus and Metro Rail operators, mechanics, equipment maintenance specialists and service attendants from all five service sectors were treated to dinner, an awards presentation and dancing.

Each honoree walked away with a bronze medallion and a 2002 Metro Gold Star Award lapel pin presented by CEO Roger Snoble and Deputy CEO John Catoe.

“You are the reason we have steady customers who feel good about coming on board our trains and buses every day,” Snoble declared in welcoming remarks. “You are the friendly faces, the

[Go to: Complete list of Five-year Honorees](#)

We are – on this great Night of Stars -
Gathered here –
'cause it's you we should cheer
It's your night – and we'll do it up right
To celebrate you! -- Ronnie Jayne, MC

MC Ronnie Jayne opens up the night with a show-stopper tribute sung to the tune of "That's Entertainment!"

steady hands. You keep the buses and trains clean; you make sure they're in top working order."

To qualify for the 2002 Metro Gold Star Award, the operators and maintenance employees could have no lost work time injuries, no disciplinary actions and no more than 30 days absent. In addition, operators could have zero preventable traffic collisions and no more than three customer complaints over the award period.

Lead by example

"Many of our employees have worked hard throughout the year to maintain a very good performance record of attendance, free of accidents and missouts," said South Bay General Manger Dana Coffey. "They are leaders and lead by example."

Among the award winners was the legendary Arthur Winston, who joined MTA in 1934 and will celebrate his 97th birthday, March 22.

"As a service attendant leader, Arthur runs circles around the younger folk," Snoble said. "He never misses a day of work – never takes a sick day. Like that rabbit, he just keeps going...and going...and going!"

"I don't feel like staying home and doing nothing," Winston told *metro.net* in an interview. "If you're used to getting up every morning for almost 70 years to go to work, like I am, you can't think about lying in bed."



Among the award winners was the legendary Arthur Winston, who joined MTA in 1934 and will celebrate his 97th birthday, March 22.



CEO Roger Snoble: "You are the reason we have steady customers who feel good about coming on board our trains and buses every day."



Roll Credits: Members of the "A Night of Stars" committee were Danielle Boutier, Larry Cosner, Fran Curbello, Carolyn Drummond, Pam Engelke, Michael Lambeth, Maria Lasco, Rita Malone, John McDonnell, Chuck Milam, Gary Shiroishi, Gary Spivack, Robert H. Torres, Rosyln Townsend and Intern Danielle Grossman.

Other honorees included Clarence Pearson, a South Bay Division 18 operator, who said he puts "a lot of emphasis on safety, control and courtesy toward the passengers. If it weren't for them we wouldn't be here."

First time qualifier Justo Rogel, an Arthur Winston Division 5 mechanic, has been with MTA for six years. "I do things the best I can. I'm not the best, but," he emphasizes, "I'm good."

Drives like a rookie

Operator Rudolfo Cortez of West Hollywood Division 7 has qualified four times for similar awards. How? "I still drive the way they taught me to drive. I try to do my best. I always drive like a rookie."

Equipment Maintenance Specialist John Tena has worked both sides of maintenance. A frequent award winner, he recently switched to Metro Rail after 15 years as a bus mechanic. He and his team members represented MTA at the APTA International Bus Roadeo in 1999.

In the 29 years of operating a bus on some tough lines, Bacilio Cortez of San Gabriel Division 9 has never had an accident. "You've got to be aware of bad drivers on the street at all times. I've been pretty lucky and I keep praying all the time."

Mechanic Leader Ike Alison takes care of the West Valley Division 8 buses as if they were his own. "We try to make the buses look good because our patrons deserve good, clean and safe buses."

Alison credits the support of his division maintenance manager and his crew's teamwork and pride. He stresses attention to detail. "When a bus comes in, we take care of everything down to the curb feeler. You can't park your bus until I come and check it."

Top three percent

Metro Rail General Manager Gerald Francis was impressed to learn that the honorees represent less than four percent of MTA's 6,452 operators and mechanics.

"We have a great group of individuals here," said Francis. "This is a validation of their commitment to themselves, to their departments and to MTA."

"It's important to focus on performance and part of that ends in a night like this," said San Fernando Valley General Manager David Armijo. "If we're going to become the nation's best transit system, we need a lot more people working at this level. It's great we have a good foundation to build on."

Closing the evening's presentation, Deputy CEO John Catoe thanked the honorees on behalf of those who rely on Metro service.

"We carry over 400 million people a year to jobs, to schools, to health care and to recreation," he said. "The only reason we can do that is because of the efforts and hard work of the people in this room."

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Congratulations to the Five-year Honorees



Metro South Bay	Metro San Fernando Valley
Metro Westside/Central	Metro San Gabriel Valley
Metro Rail Operations	Metro Gateway Cities

San Fernando Valley Maintenance

Alison, Ike
Bustos, Angel Carlos
Cash, C. H.
Diaz, Henry
Duong, Lam
Gonzalez, Jose
Greer, Michael
Kimp, Lawrence
Lacanilao, Paul
Johnson, Matthew
Ly, Van
Martinez, Cuauhtemoc
Najera, Henry
Ngo, En
Nonn, Frank
Pardo, Brad
Reynoso, Frank
Soto, Octavio
Velasco, Oscar
Vo, Johnny
Walters, Oneil

San Fernando Valley Operators

Glaser, Stephen W.
Liddell, Betty J.
Lozano, Louis G.
Lutz, Robert W.

Westside/Central Maintenance

Flores, Fausto
Guerra, Manuel
Liu, Noi
Loyo, Ted
Ramirez, Jose
Ross, Robert
Saldana, Frank
Shaw, George
Sosa, Ildefonso
Subillaga, Renato
Villa fuerte, Elder
Williams, Timothy
Wong, Jason
Yoshimoto, Wayne

San Gabriel Valley Maintenance

Ambos III, Russell
Amizquita, Fermin
Anderson, Duane
Baeza, Pedro
Beltran, Gilbert
Bernard, William
Boctor, Carmen
Bricker, David
Brown, Alan
Cabrera, Steve
Carrillo, Frederick
Castro, Javier
Chan, Peter
Chavez, Enrique
Chavez, Manuel
Choy, Gee
Considine, Robert
Coscarelli, Frank
Covarrubias, John
Cowans, Robert
Cruz, Paul
Curiel, Carlos
Dang, Sonny
Duboise, Lester
Duff, Richard
Eguia, Raul
Estrada, Pedro
Ferrero, Thomas
Fussell, Jonathan
Gallegos, Gabriel
Garcia, Mark
Gardner, John
Garrisi, Nga
Gates, Robert
Gomez, Jose
Gomez, Sergio
Gonzalez, Jesus
Gonzalez, Oswaldo
Gutierrez, Ramon
Guzman, Francisco
Haile, Christopher
Hamasaki, Mark
Hendricks, Richard

Westside/Central Operators

Arriola, Jose R.
Avila, Pete
Castile, Darryl R.
Chavez, Sergio F.
Cortez, Rodolfo U.
Gessesse, Samson
Lopez, Miguel A.
Munoz, Richard S.
Osongco, Arnulfo P.
Toor, Surinder M.
Valenzuela-Martinez, Angel

Rail Maintenance

Adams, Joseph
Lance, Ricky L.
Nguyen, Quynh T.
Serrano, Roger
Tena, John E.
Tomikoshi, Wesley M.

Rail Operators

Chacon, Rogelio
Dominguez, Albert
Jarvis, William R.
Nidetz, Robert
Phan, Tu
Watts, Kaiser L.

South Bay Maintenance

Anaya, Jaime
Burns, Linda
Clay, Steve
Climaco, Romulo
De Alba, Alfonso
Dorsey, William
Hua, Cuong
Hummel, Thomas
Lee, Cheol
Legazpi, Lorenz
Lerit, Felix
Lillard, Preston
Long, Leroy
Luu, Wayne
Mai, Quan
Marquez, Juan
McClendon, Almeria
Mori, Rogelio
Mukhalian, Krikor
Newson, Christopher
Nguyen, David
Popoff, John
Roberts, Jr., Henry
Rogel, Justo
Shaihor, Meng
Soria, Javier
Sweet, John
Tran, Khanh
Vargas, Rommel
Walters, Charles
Winston, Arthur

South Bay Operators

Brinson, William R.
Brooks, Tommie
Burnett, Milton C.
Coar, Lawrence A.
Farrington, David E.
Fox, Thomas E.
Gladden, Emmanuel A.
Huerta, Ronnie L.
Jenkins, Jerry

Hernandez, Ricardo
Hodges, Randy
Kang, Robert
La, Hue
Leung, Joe
Lindsey, Crescentia
Macabagdal, Fernando
Magdaleno, Javier
Martinez, Armando
Medina, Francisco
Monreal, Francisco
Muro, Fermin
Navarro, Ismael
Nguyen, Van
Noggle, Joe
Nomura, Omar
Pereyda, Rolando
Pfile, Robert
Purcell, Rick
Quach, Tam
Ramirez, Ruben
Ray, James
Reyes, Jose
Robles, Harvey
Rodriguez, Ivan
Rodriguez, Nelson
Rubio, Yezid
Saggese, Salvador
Sanchez, Antonio
Sankar, Tommy
Satitsupamongko, Thanapon
Sauceda, Jose
Tadena, Manuel
Tovar, Enrique
Trudeau II, Stephen
Villegas-Robles, Nicanor
Villumsen, Lars
Vu, Bach
Wenzel, Fred
White, Michael
Wong, Timothy
Yee, Thomas

San Gabriel Valley Operators

Cervantes, David
Cortez, Bacilio A.
Guzman, Manuel
Padilla , William
Perez, Pedro L.
Perteet, George M.
Ramos, Arturo
Reynoso, Oscar A.
Singer , David I.
Underhill, Billie C.
Villarreal, Francisco C.
Winkelmaier, John G.

Gateway Cities Maintenance

Barbosa, Jose
Carillo, Juan
Chau, To
Cilindro, Amado
Coromac, George
Drouin, Jocelyn
Fernandez, Braulio
Hong, Sieu
Lam, Calvin
Licea, Leopoldo
Magruder, Curtis
Moreno, Jesus
Morris, Robert
Moss, Gwendolyn
Peguero, Tomas
Perez, Antonio

Jones, Shelton E.
Lloyd, Floyd
Mann, Tejpratap S.
Mitchell, John R.
Orselli, Costantino
Park, Douglas Y.
Pearson, Clarence J.
Poblano, Edmundo
Portillo, Cain
Pouliot, Thomas P.
Ralph, Jeffrey W.
Sang, Hun
Scott, Cassell D.
Staves, Bobby L.
Sulub, Mauro
Williams, Wordrow
York, Edward V.

Ramos, Miguel
Rounds, Rudy
Sanchez, Anselmo
Sanchez, Gustavo
Sanders, Fredericko
Sum, Paul
Tran, Hoang
Uribe, David
Villalobos, Armando
Wilson, Rene
Woller, Steven
Woo, Al

Gateway Cities Operators

Anderson, Karl K.
Arreola, Hugo M.
Ayala, Pedro A.
Bell, Walter R.
Garcia, Jerry R.
Landa, Ignacio
Martin Del Campo, Roberto
Mercado, Hugo
Mitchell, Joann S.
Mota, Ramiro E.
Rogers, Homer
Vasquez, Edward S.

BOCC Marks 6 Accident-Free Months



PHOTO BY BILL HEARD

Celebrating its longest period without an accident – 191 days when this photo was taken last week – the Bus Operations Control Center hopes to extend its six-month record to an injury-free year. That means no slips, trips or falls and no sprained backs or ergonomic injuries. On hand to mark the occasion, front row from left were TOS David Woods, TOS Abraham Abrego, General Manager Tracy Daly and BOCC Manager Ellis Kyles. Back row: TOS Samuel Carter, Deputy Executive Officer Gary Spivack and TOS Patrice Hill. (3/4/03)

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General Manager Jack Gabig, at right, joins the San Gabriel Valley Division 9 maintenance crew and Maintenance Manager John McBryan, at left, to celebrate "How You Doin'?" awards.



Division 9 Wins 2 More 'How You Doin'?' Awards

By JENNIFER YEH

(March 5, 2003) San Gabriel Valley Division 9 has done it again – taking home two more "How You Doin'?" awards for best maintenance division for December 2002 and second quarter FY 2003.

A frequent winner of "How You Doin'?" awards, the division keeps up with the good work through teamwork, integrity, drive and pride of ownership, says Maintenance Manager John McBryan.

The division was presented a trophy and a check for \$500.

Still undecided what the check would be spent on, McBryan proudly says the department's awards now total \$4,000.

"We are like a family here at Division 9," says McBryan. "I am very proud of these people."

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Marcel London

Funeral Services Set for Division 15's Marcel London

(March. 5, 2003) Funeral services have been announced for Marcel London, the East Valley Division 15 service attendant who died, Feb. 24, in an automobile accident.

London's family has scheduled a wake from 9 a.m. until 7:45 p.m., Friday, March 7, at Simpson Family Mortuary, 3443 West Manchester Blvd., Inglewood. London's family will be in attendance beginning at 5 p.m. For directions, call (323) 752-5525.

Church services will be held at 10 a.m., Saturday, March 8, at Mt. Tabor Missionary Baptist Church, 6614 South Western Ave., Los Angeles. Call (323) 753-3189 for directions. A graveside service at Inglewood Cemetery will immediately follow the service.

London, 22, was killed when his car struck a power pole just after midnight at the intersection of Jefferson Boulevard and Potomac Avenue in the Crenshaw District.

A native of Los Angeles, London joined MTA in May, 2001. His survivors include his mother, Yvonne Ray; his father, Lindsay London; and two sisters, Chavone Ray, a MTA Customer Information agent, and Charonne Ray, a Division 4 service attendant who previously worked at Arthur Winston Division 5.

For more information, contact Charonne Ray at (323) 839-9660.

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Transportation Manager Mace Bethel Retires From MTA

By LISA HUYNH

(March 5, 2003) Another chapter has closed in the life of Transportation Manager Mace Bethel.

Bethel, who managed San Gabriel Valley Division 9, has retired after 28 years of service.



Transportation Manager Mace Bethel is retiring after 28 years of service.

Assistant Transportation Manager Yvonne Smith will be the acting manager for the next few weeks until General Manager Jack Gabig finds a replacement.

Bethel first came to MTA when he was 21 years old. Starting as an operator, he rose through the ranks to become an instructor, assistant manager and manager.

After the death of his father last November, he came to realize that life is "too short and too precious."

"I'm retiring because tomorrow is not a promise to anyone," says Bethel. "If I'm blessed to live another 20 years, there's a lot I would like to do."

Future Plans

Bethel plans to spend quality time with his 13-year-old son Aaron, playing basketball, helping with his homework and backpacking at Philmont Scout Reservation in New Mexico.

"In life, we're so busy earning an income that sometimes we don't have time for our children," says Bethel. "I want to spend as much time with him as possible before he gets older."

Bethel would love to write a book about life strategies and entitle it, "You Get What You Demand."

He plans to ride his newly purchased Harley across the country to Milwaukee, Wis. for Harley Davidson's 100th anniversary celebration this summer.

Bethel says he's had a great career and is proud to have been part of Division 9.

"It has been a fun ride," says Bethel. "It has been a safe trip. This bus has come home and now it's time to move on."

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 **MTA Basketball League News**

MTA Basketball League games are scheduled at 8 p.m. and 9 p.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays, at Rancho Cienega Sports Center, 5001 Rodeo Road, Los Angeles.

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Richard Wright

Season Opener

Bruins Crush Raiders, 84 – 30

By RICHARD WRIGHT
(March 6, 2003) The MTA Basketball League season has finally gotten under way!

The “game of the week” had the Bruins playing against the Raiders. Both teams are from Arthur Winston Division 5, but it really wasn’t much of a game.

The Bruins routed the Raiders, 84 – 30. The Bruins were clicking on all cylinders. They were off and running from the start and were leading at the half, 39 – 14.


Chanick Jones led the Bruins with 18 points. Helping him were Demetrius Lamar and Curtis Shelby, with 7 points each.


The Raiders struggled to score points and, after Courtney Brett got tossed out of the game for arguing with the refs, things just went downhill.

The Bruins’ Jones had a game high 47 points, followed by Lamar, with 14, and Shelby, with 12.

Jeff Joseph led the Raiders with 8 points. Robert Waddell had 7 points and Kevin LaFlora, 6 points.

Before closing, I want to give special thanks to Al Cromer for the article he wrote, last week, previewing the season ahead. [See article.](#)

 MTA Basketball League Scores * Week 1 Results			
Gateway Gladiators	62	Division 5 Clippers	30
Division 5 Bruins	84	Division 5 Raiders	30
Division 8 Wildcats	43	Division 2 8- Ballers	42
Division 18 Lakers	2	Division 18 Sonics (forfeit)	0

 MTA Basketball League Team Standings * Standings after Week 1		
Division 5	Bruins	1-0
Division 8	Wildcats	1-0
Division 18	Lakers	1-0
Gateway	Gladiators	1-0
Division 5	Clippers	0-1
Division 5	Raiders	0-1
Division 2	8-Ballers	0-1
Division 18	Sonics	0-1

Richard Wright is a Metro Bus Operator at Venice Division 6.

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Gateway Division Celebrates Black History Month

Division 10 celebrated Black History Month with a massive annual potluck. As a special surprise, Metro Bus Operator James Berry brought in a historical artifact display from his personal collection of African American legends. Among many of the items displayed was classical Harriet Tubman literature and old stamps with photos of leaders such Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall. "We set up this event last minute, but the end result was still very successful," says Division Stenographer Kathryn Winzer. --From Jennifer Yeh. (3/6/03)



^ Metro Bus Operators Desiree Hewitt, Ruby Holmes and TOS Frances Alford.

< Metro Bus Operators Gail Walker, Allen Dade and Hilarie Berry.

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Service Attendants Marilyn Dear and Jose Tacaraya, part of a team of six, work together to get the buses cleaned faster.



PHOTO: JENNIFER YEH

Division 7 Service Attendants Find Better Way to Clean Buses

By JENNIFER YEH

(March 7, 2003) West Hollywood Division 7's service attendants are proving that working together is the most effective way to get things done.

The service attendants have come up with an effective concept – an assembly line to clean buses more rapidly.

The idea was a reaction to Deputy CEO John Catoe's recent challenge to all Metro service sectors to thoroughly clean their entire bus fleets by April 15.

With the new assembly line concept, the service attendants have developed, the interior of the bus is divided into sections. Each individual of a six-member crew is assigned to concentrate on a specific area of the bus before moving on to the next.

"It used to take six to eight hours per person to complete one bus," says Maintenance Manager Ron Whitney. "We now can accomplish two buses in that amount of time."

The concept was created in January at one of the division's weekly meetings between the managers and crew. The service attendants offered their suggestions and ideas for further improvements.

Team work gets the job done

Every morning, Service Attendant Leader Henry Sampson assigns each crewmember the buses that need to be completed for the day. Two people then prepare the buses with cleaning supplies, while the others get ready to start on their sections.

"The reason it has worked for us so far is because we have enough people on the cleaning crews and we work as a team," says Service Attendant Marilyn Dear.

Part of the strategy is to clean the central parts of the bus first, such as

the windows, walls and seats and leave the more difficult sections such as the ceilings and floors for last.

"Productivity has gotten a lot better," says Whitney. "We now get more buses cleaned per shift."

One hundred fifty eight of the division's 256 buses have been cleaned to date. Service Attendant Juliann Watson is confident that they will meet the April 15 deadline.

Service Attendant Gail Blane agrees this new concept for cleaning is an improvement.

"The program makes the job smoother and faster," she says.

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Rising Costs, Budget Deficits Force MTA to Restructure Fares

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(March 7, 2003) It's been more than eight years since MTA restructured its transit fares, and in that time costs – for fuel, for buses, security, Workers' Compensation claims and personnel – have skyrocketed.

Added to the list of MTA's fiscal concerns is a budget crunch at the local, state and federal levels that already has taken funds away from transit. The agency also is spending \$100 million a year to comply with the Consent Decree.

The result is that MTA is facing a \$22 million deficit in its current bus and rail operations budget. Fuels costs will increase by \$6.2 million, security by \$3 million and Workers' Compensation by \$11 million. At the same time, the agency expects to take in \$2.1 million less from the farebox.

Other parts of the \$2.6 billion budget – the capital fund, general fund and special revenue fund – are now at or below budgeted levels.

Plans are to balance the FY 2004 budget by continuing to reduce operating expenses. This includes cutting travel and other optional spending, reducing operations overtime by 15 percent and filling part-time operator vacancies to reduce operating costs.

Fare system must be restructured

Farebox revenues offset less than a third of MTA operating expenses, but management believes the fare system must be restructured to help the agency avoid deep budget deficits in coming years.

"Costs have gone up and we need to figure out ways to meet them," says Deputy CEO John Catoe. "There are two ways to do it: efficiencies and revenue source increases – both are required." Service reductions are not planned at this time.

To begin closing the budget gap, MTA directors voted during a special Board meeting, Wednesday, to conduct a public hearing, April 12, to receive comment on proposed changes in the fare structure. The staff presented two fare restructuring plans during the meeting.

Both plans would lower the cash fare by a dime from \$1.35 to \$1.25, eliminate the use of 90-cent tokens and 25-cent transfers, institute a \$3 day pass and raise the monthly pass from \$42 to \$52. Express fares also would drop from \$1.85-\$3.85 to \$1.75-\$2.25.

One restructuring option would raise senior and disabled fares from \$12 to \$15, student fares from \$20 to \$24 and college/vocational fares from \$30 to \$36. The other option would leave those fares untouched.

During Wednesday's special Board meeting, Chairman Hal Bernson directed the staff to provide additional alternatives to the recommended fare proposals.

Restructuring less of a burden

Restructuring fares will place less of a burden on those who pay cash fares because they can't afford to buy a weekly or monthly pass. Currently, 24 percent of MTA patrons pay the cash fare, but contribute 40 percent of farebox revenues.

Passholders, on the other hand, account for 39 percent of riders, but generate only 30 percent of farebox revenues. The average passholder makes 109 boardings a month, breaking even on the cost of a pass after 31 rides.

"The burden has been on cash riders for too long," says MTA Chief Communications Officer Matt Raymond, whose unit is responsible for marketing programs. "We're trying to realign our fare structure to generate a 20 percent increase in total fare revenues, but also to make the fare system more equitable."

These plans would bring in \$45 million to \$50 million a year and would increase the percentage of operating costs MTA gets from the farebox.

Currently at 28.9 percent, the percentage of farebox revenues would rise to either 33.1 or 32.7 percent. The nation's four other largest transit properties – New York, Chicago, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. – average 47 percent in farebox revenues.

If approved by the Board, the new fares would take effect next January, giving MTA between \$17 million and \$19 million in extra farebox revenue for the remainder of FY 2004.

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East Valley Division 15 Maintenance team earns "How You Doin'?" award.

Division 15 Receives Honors for Improvements

By LISA HUYNH

(March 11, 2003) The East Valley Division 15 Maintenance team has a lot to be happy about.

Division 15 won the "How You Doin!" award for Most Improved Maintenance Division for the first quarter FY 2003.

General Manager David Armijo congratulated the team with a \$500 check.

The maintenance team significantly lowered its new Workers Compensation claims and improved on its on-time pullouts, miles between mechanical failures and attendance.

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Funeral Services Set for RRC's Shimarko Pope

(March 11, 2003) Funeral services have been set for Shimarko Pope, 32, a stock clerk at the Regional Rebuild Center, who was killed March 1.

A viewing is scheduled from 3 p.m. until 8 p.m., Thursday, March 13, at Inglewood Cemetery, 3801 Manchester Blvd., Inglewood. Funeral services will be held at 11 a.m., Friday, March 14, at the cemetery.

Pope joined MTA in July 1996 as a custodian in General Services and transferred to Material Logistics as a stock clerk in June 1999.



Shimarko Pope

"He was one of the kindest people I have ever known," says co-worker Fern Rose. "Always with a smile, never a bad word to say to anyone."

For more information or to make a contribution to the family, contact Olivia Nelson at 922-4372 or Raul Estrada at 922-5090.

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User-friendly Maintenance & Materiel Management System, coordinated by Chief Information Officer Elizabeth Bennett, foreground, will enable users such as, clockwise from left, Tom Lingenfield in Rail Maintenance, Sergio Rubalcava in Bus Maintenance, Jon Lyle in Materiel Management and Melvin Navarro in Facilities Maintenance to automate, streamline and simplify much of the work required to manage equipment maintenance.



PHOTO BY GAYLE ANDERSON

M3 Project Will 'Bring Our Maintenance System into 21st Century'

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(March 11, 2003) It's still months away, but by this time next year MTA will roll out a new computer-based program that "will bring our whole maintenance system into the 21st century," says MTA Chief Information Officer Elizabeth Bennett.



It's called M3 for Maintenance & Materiel Management System and it will replace systems that date back at least two decades to SCRTD days – the Vehicle Maintenance System (VMS), Material Management System (MMS), Rail Incident Management System (RIMS), Facilities Management Information System (FMIS) and Maintenance Manpower Accounting System (MMAS).

M3 will be faster, smarter, more powerful and more reliable than VMS and MMS. It will automate, streamline and simplify much of the work required to manage equipment maintenance of all kinds.

"M3 will give us the opportunity to track our vehicle maintenance and determine when components need to be replaced," says Deputy CEO John Catoe. "Also, by keeping better track

Handheld electronic device will record barcode information from equipment and repair parts, store information keyed into it by the user and then download the information into an M3 computer via a docking station.

of our inventories and managing them better, we will reduce operating costs."

"It will help bus operations by providing more historical information," says Servio Rubalcava, assistant maintenance manager, Arthur Winston Division 5. "The new automated fuel system will provide accurate mileage collection that will make preventive maintenance scheduling more efficient."

During a "campaign," when MTA must replace certain parts on many of its vehicles, M3 can determine how which buses require replacements, where they're located and decide how many parts and associated equipment are required for the campaign.

Support for internal customers

"It will allow us to more efficiently analyze, track and manage inventory to more effectively support our internal customers," says Jon Lyle, materiel supervisor in Inventory Management.

Mechanics, division maintenance managers, warehouse storekeepers, procurement specialists, financial managers and sector general managers – all these and more will use M3.

"M3 will meet the needs of bus operations and the needs of rail operations," says Tom Lingenfield, rail equipment maintenance manager for the Metro Gold Line. He was one of more than 30 staff members who served on the committee that reviewed M3 vendor proposals.

"One of the nice things about the system," he says, "is that an executive can call up an almost instant report on any aspect of operations. It could be miles between failures, hours worked to remove graffiti or how much fuel is being used in the sectors."

The MTA Board approved the \$19 million project in January, awarding a three-year contract to Spear Technologies of Oakland, effective Feb. 1. Work on the first phase of the project already has begun and employee training is expected to begin in November.

Perhaps the element of M3 that will be most visible to employees is a handheld electronic device. The device will record barcode information from equipment and repair parts, can store information keyed into it by the user and then download the information into an M3 computer via a docking station.

400 handheld devices

MTA plans to buy some 400 of the devices for use by maintenance, storeroom and procurement employees, says Bennett, "We'll do away with a lot of paperwork by converting to an electronic system."

"Once M3 is implemented, a technician will have access to information needed to get a job completed," says Facilities Maintenance Supervisor Melvin Navarro. "Work orders, equipment history, manuals, technical data and drawings will be available immediately through M3."

The fuel systems at the operating divisions and Regional Repair Center will be tied in to the M3 program. It will note the vehicle number, mileage, the amount of fuel pumped into a bus and when it was last fueled.

Together with other information available through M3, managers can determine a vehicle's condition, repair status and can decide what maintenance should be performed and when.

The program currently is in use by New York's MTA, by DART in Dallas, by AMTRAK, San Francisco's Muni Railway, the Hudson-Bergen light-rail line and many others in the United States and abroad.

"M3 will make a difference to MTA," says Bennett. "It will make a difference by giving the divisions the ability to manage better. It will make their work easier by giving them access to information they don't have today. It will bring us a new, state-of-the-art technology that will take us into the future."

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General Manager Dana Coffey (center at table) explained Metro bus services in the South Bay at a community meeting held at the Arthur Winston Division.



Metro South Bay Meetings Keep Community Aware of Service Improvements

By RICH MORALLO

(March 11, 2003) Metro South Bay promoted Metro bus services and the new Vermont Avenue Metro Rapid Bus line during two community meetings, recently, at the Crenshaw Christian Center and at Arthur Winston Division 5.



Senior Human Resource Analyst Jeannette Bell talks about bus operator positions with a community members.

About 200 residents and families attended the two evening meetings to hear presentations on Metro South Bay's new Torrance headquarters and organization composition, the bus lines operating out of Carson Division 18 and Division 5, and the Metro Rapid Bus serving Vermont Avenue between Hollywood and the Metro Green Line.

"We told the neighborhood who we are, what transit services we bring to the community, and how we can be responsive to their needs," said General Manager Dana Coffey, who gave briefings at both meetings.

Metro Rapid program manager Rex Gephart gave an overview of the Metro Rapid Bus program, including features of the service that enable passengers to arrive at their destinations faster.

The meetings drew positive comments about bus service improvements in the South Bay from the audience. After each meeting, Metro South Bay staff talked to the families and answered their questions.

"At the Crenshaw Christian Center meeting a couple of residents asked me questions about the process for placing bus stops along Vermont Avenue and how those locations are maintained and kept clean," said Schedule Supervisor Tom Tran.

"After the Arthur Winston Division meeting several attendees showed interest in employment with MTA, specifically bus operator positions," said Senior Human Resource Analyst Jeannette Bell.

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 **MTA Basketball League News**

MTA Basketball League games are scheduled at 8 p.m. and 9 p.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays, at Rancho Cienega Sports Center, 5001 Rodeo Road, Los Angeles.

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Richard Wright

Gateway Gladiators Down Div. 2 8-Ballers, 45 – 13

By RICHARD WRIGHT

(March 13, 2003) The Gateway Gladiators downed the Division 2 8-Ballers, 45 – 31, in the “game of the week” during Week 2 of the 2003 MTA Basketball League season.

The 8-Ballers want to be with the elite teams in the league, but can they play with them? So far, the team has not answered the bell.

As for the Gateway team – are they for real? We’ll see in Week 3 of the season.

The Gladiators-8-Ballers clash was a very physical game from the start. Gateway went into the half with a 22 to 14 lead.


Darren Hanzy opened up the defense with a couple of 3-point baskets and a free throw to make 7 points. Anthony Hoang killed the 8-Ballers with his cross-over and scored 7 points to help the Gateway team to an 8-point lead at halftime.


The 8-Ballers’ David Dotson didn’t come to life until the second half, but the game was over by that time. Dotson had a team-high 10 points, with scoring help from Jesus Wilkins, who scored 8 points and Jeff Wilkes, who chipped in 7.

Hoang’s 17 points and Hanzy’s 13 points led the Gladiators to victory.

Are the 8-Ballers contenders – or pretenders. The season has a long way to go, yet, and there are several other teams on the pretender’s bubble.

Come out to the games and see for yourself.

 MTA Basketball League Scores * Week 2 Results			
Gateway Gladiators	45	Division 2 8- Ballers	31
Division 18 Lakers	36	Division 5 Bruins	35
Division 8 Wildcats	56	Division 5 Clippers	31
Division 18 Sonics	53	Division 5 Raiders	37

 **MTA Basketball League Team Standings**

* Standings after Week 2	
Team	Won-Lost
Gateway Gladiators	2-0
Division 18 Lakers	2-0
Division 8 Wildcats	2-0
Division 5 Bruins	1-1
Division 18 Sonics	1-1
Division 2 8-Ballers	0-2
Division 5 Clippers	0-2
Division 5 Raiders	0-2

Richard Wright is a Metro Bus Operator at Venice Division 6.

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Division 10's Jack Owens Retires After 28 Years at MTA

By JENNIFER YEH

(March 13, 2003) Since coming to MTA in 1975, Gateway Division 10 Assistant Transportation Manager Jack Owens has operated in almost every division.

After twenty-eight rewarding years, Owens is retiring.

Owens started working at MTA as a bus operator at Cypress Park Division 3 and other Los Angeles divisions for two and half years before becoming a division dispatcher for seven years.

In 1995 Owens became the assistant transportation manager at Gateway Division 10 where he has remained ever since.

Some of Owens' memorable highlights at MTA came in 1984 during the Olympics. Owens, alongside Assistant Manager Jim Lukens, hired, housed and managed 500 temporary employees for the international event.

"During that time we worked twelve-hour shifts every days, seven days a week," Owens recalls.

Helped start new division

In 1993, Owens helped put together Crossroads Depot Division 2 from scratch. With no available budget, Owens was able find the funds to furnish the empty division, tear down walls for the train room, replace new tiles and even acquire used computers.

As for his future plans, Owens plans to spend his retirement with his grandchildren and further pursue his hobby of making stained glass windows.

Owens has also looked into applying for other job positions that might be of interest.

"I'm still young and I'm due for a change," he says. " I'm looking forward to a challenge."

"It's been a great twenty-eight years and I've really enjoyed working for MTA. It's a good job and I've never had a dull day out here. That's for sure."

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PHOTOS BY JENNIFER YEH



Metro Bus Operator Phil Derbigny, left, congratulates retiring Assistant Transportation Manager Jack Owens.



Metro Bus Operator Bruce Montgomery helps break out the cake.

1,200 Must File Annual Statement of Economic Interest Forms

- MTA's Ethics Department has scheduled a Form 700 workshop in the Glendale Conference room, 11th floor, at 1 p.m., Tuesday, March 18.

(March 13, 2003) Some 1,200 MTA employees who make or recommend decisions that have financial impact on the agency have until April 1 to complete the annual Form 700 Statement of Economic Interests.

The reporting requirement covers stocks, bonds and other interests employees may hold in companies doing business within LA County. Investments, property, income and business positions, loans, gifts worth \$50 or more and travel reimbursements also are among items that must be reported.

MTA's Ethics Department has scheduled a Form 700 workshop in the Glendale Conference room, 11th floor, at 1 p.m., Tuesday, March 18. A representative of the state's Fair Political Practices group will explain the form and answer questions.

"Filling out this form each year is required by law for public officials who make decisions that have a financial effect or who make recommendations to those decision makers within a public agency," says MTA Chief Ethics Officer Karen Gorman.

The requirement to keep the Statement of Economic Interest forms on file allows members of the public to see whether "a public official is making decisions on items in which they have a financial interest, and promotes the agency's core values of fiscal responsibility and integrity," she says.

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MTA Board Approves San Gabriel Valley Services Changes

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By DAVE SOTERO

(March 14, 2003) The MTA Board has approved a number of changes aimed at enhancing bus service in the San Gabriel Valley.

The changes, effective June 2003 or later, will integrate San Gabriel Valley bus lines with the Metro Gold Line, scheduled to open this summer.

The Board also directed the staff to analyze Bus Line 260 for 30 days to better determine the impact of adding "Limited Service" as an overlay to existing local bus services.

The staff will prepare an analysis of the impact of the changes on the entire Metro Bus system for presentation to the Board at its March meeting. The Board will then determine whether to keep services in place or make additional changes.

All Board-approved changes incorporate feedback from the local community given during public hearings in January. In many cases, proposed route changes were revised as a direct result of public comment.

The changes are:

No.	Line Name	Description of Change
58	Alameda St.-San Pedro St.	Modify route to serve Chinatown Metro Gold Line Station via North Main St., College St and Alameda St.
76	L.A.-Valley Blvd.-El Monte	Modify route to serve Chinatown Metro Gold Line Station via College St. and Alameda St.
84	Cypress Ave.-Eagle Rock Blvd.	Retain service along present route along San Fernando Rd. between Figueroa St. and Pasadena Ave. Service to Ave. 26 Station would be provided by Line 251 and new proposed limited stop Line 350.
85	Cypress Ave.-Verdugo Rd.	Retain service along present route along San Fernando Rd. between Figueroa St. and Pasadena Ave. Service to Ave. 26 Station would be provided by Line 251 and new proposed limited stop Line 350.
176	Glassell Park-Highland Park-Alhambra-El Monte	Modify route to provide direct access to Ave. 57 Station via Figueroa St., Ave. 59 and Monte Vista St. to the regular route of line along Ave. 50. Service levels to be improved to a 30-minute frequency.
177	La Canada-Flintridge- Monrovia-Pasadena-Duarte	Restructure line to serve Del Mar, Allen and Sierra Madre Villa Metro Gold Line Stations. Reroute line from California Ave. to Del Mar Blvd. between Fair Oaks Ave. and Hill Ave. to serve Del Mar Station. Line to serve Allen Station from Walnut St. and Hill St. via Hill St. and the 210 freeway frontage roads and Allen Ave. to Walnut St. and regular route. Line to serve Sierra Madre Villa Station from existing stops on Foothill Blvd.
181	Hollywood-Glendale-Pasadena-Pasadena City College	Extend route from the present terminal at Pasadena City College to the Sierra Madre Villa Metro Gold Line Station via Colorado Blvd., Rosemead Blvd., Foothill Blvd., and Sierra Madre

		Villa Station.
188	North Fair Oaks Ave.-Colorado-Blvd.-Duarte Rd.	Cancel line. Line 181 will provide replacement service along Colorado Blvd. on Fair Oaks Blvd. by Line 260, and from the Sierra Madre Villa Station to City of Hope by a rerouted Line 264.
251	Soto St.-Ave. 26	Restructure route south of Florence Ave. via existing route of Line 252 to Long Beach Blvd. Blue Line Station. Existing Line 251 service south of Florence Ave. to 103 rd St. Blue Line Station to be provided by new Line 681 Shuttle.
252	Soto St.-Long Beach	Shorten route. New shuttle route to replace Line 252 north of Marengo St. Line to operate along Soto St. between Marengo St. and Whittier Blvd.
255	Rowan Ave.-Griffin Ave.	Extend route from existing northern terminal at Figueroa St. and Ave. 43 to the French Ave. Station.
256	Eastern Ave.-Ave. 64- North Hill Ave.	Modify route to serve Ave. 57 Metro Gold Line Station, Monte Vista St., Ave. 61 and Piedmont Ave. Line to serve Allen Metro Gold Line Station from Hill St. and Walnut St. via Walnut St., Allen Ave. and Orange Grove Blvd. to Walnut St. then regular route of line.
260	Atlantic Blvd.-Los Robles Ave.	Modify route north of Huntington Dr. via Huntington Dr. and Fair Oaks Ave. to Loma Alta Dr.
264	Altadena Dr.-San Gabriel Blvd.-Montebello Town Center	Terminate service south of Foothill Blvd. at the Sierra Madre Villa Metro Gold Line Station. New shuttle Line 689 will provide service along route of the present Line 264 and the Montebello Town Center.
266	Lakewood Blvd- Rosemead Blvd.	Restructure line to serve Sierra Madre Villa Metro Gold Line Station and improve service frequency.
267	Temple City Blvd.- Del Mar Blvd.- Lincoln Ave.	Modify route to serve Sierra Madre Villa Metro Gold Line Station.
268	El Monte-Baldwin Ave.- Washington Blvd-JPL	<i>Modify route to serve Sierra Madre Villa Gold Line Station.</i>
350	Soto St. Limited	Limited stop service to be provided along the restructured route of Line 252.
361	Atlantic Blvd.-Fair Oaks Ave. Limited	Limited stop service to be provided along the restricted route of Line 260.
401	L.A.-Pasadena-North Allen Express	Cancel line; alternative service available between proposed Del Mar Metro Gold Line Station and Downtown Los Angeles via the Metro Gold Line.
483	L.A.-Altadena via Fair Oaks	Cancel line. The re-routed Line 260 and new limited stop line 361 will provide high frequency replacement service along Fair Oaks Ave. The new Metro Gold Line will provide transit service to downtown L.A. Augmented Line 485 will provide service to California State University- Los Angeles and subway service into downtown L.A.
489	L.A.-Hastings Ranch Exp.	Cancel route segment north of Huntington Dr.
681	103 rd St. Blue Line Station-Huntington-Pacific Shuttle	Establish new shuttle route to replace Line 251 south of Florence Ave.
686	Allen Ave.-Raymond Ave. Shuttle	Establish new shuttle route to replace local service operated by Line 401 within Pasadena and Altadena.
687	Los Robles Ave. Shuttle	Establish new shuttle route on Los Robles Ave. between Huntington Dr. and Woodbury Rd.
689	Montebello Town Ctr.-Sierra	Establish new Montebello Bus Line shuttle route

	Madre Villa Shuttle	to replace Line 264 south of Sierra Madre Villa Gold Line Station.
260	Atlantic Blvd.-Los Robles Ave.	Restructure route off of Los Robles Ave. onto Fair Oaks Ave. via Huntington Dr.

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Metro Bus operators from various divisions gather to acquaint themselves with the Universal Fare System.



PHOTOS BY ADRIENNE FIGUEROA

Bus Operators Work On Making Fare Boxes Fair

By ADRIENNE FIGUEROA

(March 14, 2003) A group of Metro Bus operators drawn from all operating divisions was given an opportunity, recently, to critique new farebox technology that will enable passengers to pay for their bus fare with a tap of an electronic "SmartCard."

The Universal Fare System (UFS), a regional program that will be implemented at MTA next year and eventually by municipal operators, will incorporate the use of a wallet-sized SmartCard at the fare box.

"All of our bus operators are encouraging simplifying our fare structure," said UFS Project Manager Jane Matsumoto. "They feel that using paper transfers is one of the biggest hurdles they have to overcome on a daily basis."

Following a meeting at Operations Central Instruction (OCI) – which became a forum for the operators to address an assortment of UFS concerns – several models of the new fare boxes were presented for trial runs.

"Since last October, operators have participated in the long-range fare box design process," said Matsumoto. "The UFS project team believes the operators are most familiar with functional needs in the equipment they will be using daily, and can help provide insight on how patrons interface with our transit system."

Metro Bus operators Paul Inocencio from San Gabriel Valley Division 9 and Thomas Scott from Crossroads Depot Division 2 evaluate the functionality and design of the new fare box.

Operators played critical role

The bus operators, who have played a critical role in the design of the machinery, familiarized themselves with the device, provided by Cubic Transportation Systems, Inc. They tested the machines using both SmartCards and currency.



The UFS equipment includes fare inspection devices that are integral to the fare collection system. These new devices are expected to

increase efficiency and customer convenience by introducing "seamless transportation" to riders and potentially to reduce the amount of cash and paper media.

Other elements of the UFS system are rail ticket vending machines, validators, and sales office terminals for retailers and others selling MTA's fare media.

Overall, the introduction of the UFS was well received.

"It's a lot easier to relate to when you've got it in your hand," said Operator John Linton of West Hollywood Division 7. "Once people see how [the system] works, they will probably really appreciate it."

Several other operators shared Linton's enthusiasm.

"I think it will be a good thing," said Operator Paul Inocencio of San Gabriel Valley Division 9. "If we can avoid transfers and eventually most everyone has a SmartCard, I think it would be ideal."

Anticipated the installation

Operator Thomas Scott of Crossroads Depot Division 2, a 16-year veteran of MTA, said he has anticipated the installation of UFS for some time.

"We have had to work with a system that has been outdated for several years," he said.

Scott thinks the UFS concept not only will prove convenient for patrons, but for bus operators as well.

"Basically, I love it," he said. "What I like about it is that when I get ready to get off my shift, I can press three buttons and it allows me to let the next driver come on."

Although bus operators look forward to the start of UFS, some stress the importance of releasing public service announcements to educate passengers on the new fare box.

"We have to put a media blitz out there and let them know how to use it because it's got to be explained," said Operator James Grumbach of East Valley Division 15. "It's got so many different aspects to it."

The aspects he highlighted were how to purchase and use electronic transfers and monthly passes with SmartCards.

"I really look forward to getting the public informed," Grumbach said.

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First Class of Metro Sheriff's Explorers Graduates



The first five members of the Metro Sheriff's Explorers program recently completed 180 hours of training at the LASD Explorer Academy. The young men – front row left, Daniel Castro, Danny Ramirez, Miguel Barajas, Johnny Gallardo and Adrian Avila – received their certificates from Sheriff Lee Baca. The Explorers will assist at MTA community and crime prevention events. Pictured with the graduates, rear row left, are San Gabriel Valley Sector General Manager Jack Gabig; Deputy Amore Smith, Volunteer Gary Goldberger, Capt. Dan Finkelstein, Explorer Capt. Daniel Sanchez, Volunteer Pete Lara, Sgt. Michael Estrada and Deputy Gary De Bondt. (3/14/03)

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MTA's Most Senior Employee Arthur Winston Turns 97 on March 22

By RICK JAGER

(March 18, 2003) After more than seven decades on the job with only one absence, MTA's Arthur Winston will celebrate his birthday later this week, turning 97 on Saturday, March 22.

Winston has been employed at MTA and its predecessor agencies for almost 73 years and was honored for his longevity back in 1997 when the MTA Board named Division 5 in South Central LA for him.

"Arthur inspires us all, not only here in Metro South Bay, but throughout the agency," said General Manager Dana Coffey. KNX Radio recognized Winston, last weekend, as its "Citizen of the Week."

"Earlier this month, MTA recognized the best of the best among our employees at an awards dinner on the Queen Mary," added Coffey. "Arthur was among them and, needless to say, his star shined the brightest. His dedication to work, loyalty to the MTA and his fellow team members, and his remarkable safety record make Arthur the legend, icon and model that he is."

At the Arthur Winston Division, he is a service attendant leader, directing a crew of 11 employees who clean, maintain and refuel MTA buses.

Arthur Winston was born in Oklahoma on March 22, 1906 before Oklahoma was officially recognized as a state. He came west and attended Jefferson High School here in the Southland, graduating in 1922.

Winston was first employed by the agency in December 1924 and worked until mid-1928. He resumed his employment with the agency on January 2, 1934. He has missed only one day of work since then, which occurred when his wife died in 1988.

In 1996, Winston received a Congressional Citation from then President Clinton as "Employee of the Century." In his more than seven decades of MTA service, he has received many honors for his work ethic and longevity on the job.

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PHOTO BY RICH MORALLO



Arthur Winston's career at MTA spans 73 years.

MTA Bus Operator Job Fair a Big Success

By DAVE SOTERO

(March 18, 2003) For many job seekers last Saturday, not even the pouring rain could dampen their desire to drive buses for MTA.

A six-hour job fair at MTA Headquarters drew more than 350 people, all of whom were looking for a ground-floor opportunity to join the agency's army of bus operators who move LA commuters daily through rain, sleet or shine.

By attending the job fair, prospective employees were able to shave one to two weeks off the hiring process.

More 350 applicants showed up to MTA's Bus Operator Job Fair March 15.



MTA recently began a big push to recruit additional bus operators to satisfy the region's growing demand for public transportation, which includes more bus service and additional service hours.

The agency has participated in numerous job fairs recently, including one at Dodger Stadium, where it distributed 700 applications. The effort has included posting the jobs on the EDD web site, announcements in Metro Briefs and direct-mailed announcements to operating divisions and service sectors.

200 candidates tested

Approximately 30-40 volunteers from Human Resources, ITS and General Services were involved in Saturday's job fair, which tested more than 200 candidates through six three-hour testing panels.

Applicants watched a video of incidents on a bus and were asked questions as to how they would react to those situations. They also took a reading comprehension test and wrote a bus operator incident report.

MTA Human Resources will score the tests this week, and will be ready to hire applicants in two to three weeks. MTA accepted another 150 applications for future testing.

"It was a big success," says Scott Lloyd, senior HR analyst and organizer of the event. "We had people who showed up as early as 6 a.m. to get the process done in one day. Those are the kinds of people who will make great MTA bus drivers."

The agency also will attend job fairs in April at the LA Convention Center, in May at Hollywood Park and may conduct another job fair during the summer.

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The Division 6 Maintenance team is proud of its new "How You Doin'?" trophy.



Division 6 Scores Points for On-Time Pull Outs, Zero New Workers Comp Claims

By JENNIFER YEH

(March 18, 2003) Tying with Gateway Division 1, Venice Division 6 received a trophy for winning the "How You Doin'?" award for Outstanding Maintenance Division for January 2003.

The division came in first place with zero claims per 100 employees in new Worker's Compensation claims and first place for on-time pull outs with a score of 99.91 percent.

The division scored third place for the Miles Between Mechanical Failures category and ninth place for attendance.

On winning the award, Assistant Transportation Manager Bruce Buck says, "It's a nice pat on the back for people in the division."

"Everybody's a leader," says General Manager Tracy Daly. " We're all a team and we are all doing this together."

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 **MTA Basketball League News**

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Richard Wright

Division 18 Lakers Slay Gateway Gladiators, 41 – 28

By RICHARD WRIGHT

(March 19, 2003) On paper, the March 13 game with the upstart Gateway Gladiators going against the Division 18 Lakers looked to be a hard-fought match.

The final score, however, told a different story: Lakers 41, Gladiators 28.


Gateway had the perfect time to show if they could play with the big boys and they failed to answer the bell. The team was without two key players – that’s like having two flat tires and only one spare.


The Lakers came into the game ready to play. They used a swarming, smothering defense to confuse the Gladiators, who didn’t have their two primary ball handlers.

The Lakers jumped out to a 24 to 15 lead at halftime behind their leaders, Davion Carter, who scored 6 points, and Derrick Collins and Jeff Houston, with 5 points each.

Darron Daniels led the Gateway team with 7 points. Oscar Anguiano helped by chipping in 4 points.

Leading Lakers scorers at the final whistle were Carter with 8 points and Houston and Alec Gillet with 7 points each. Anguiano led Gateway with 10 points, followed by Daniels with 7.

 MTA Basketball League Scores * Week 3 Results			
Division 18 Lakers	41	Gateway Gladiators	28
Division 18 Sonics	37	Division 2 8- Ballers	30
Division 8 Wildcats	61	Division 5 Raiders	39
Division 5 Bruins	65	Division 5 Clippers	28

 MTA Basketball League Team Standings * Standings after Week 3	
Team	Won-Lost
Division 18 Lakers	3-0
Division 8 Wildcats	3-0
Division 5 Bruins	2-1
Division 18 Sonics	2-1
Gateway Gladiators	2-1

Division 2 8-Ballers	0-3
Division 5 Clippers	0-3
Division 5 Raiders	0-3

Richard Wright is a Metro Bus Operator at Venice Division 6.

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Fed Up With Graffiti

- Division 9's Mike Morris Creates Stain-Fighting Product

By LISA HUYNH

(March 19, 2003) Five years ago, Division 9's Mike Morris got fed up with graffiti-scarred bus seats.

So, Morris, a service attendant leader, teamed up with chemist Mickey Walker from High Desert Products to create a biodegradable and organic product that removes ink, gum, paint and stickers.

Service Attendant Leader Mike Morris removes paint from a bus seat, using a breakthrough product that he co-created.



PHOTOS: LISA HUYNH

"It was important to me to create a product that is safe and friendly to the environment," says Morris, a service attendant leader. "I used to use other cleaning products, but it would give me rashes."

Graffiti is easily removed with a bristle brush after soaking in the product for only a minute.



Morris says his product is easy to use.

When a seat has graffiti on it, it is manually removed and taken to the division's cleaning station. The next step is to pour a generous amount of the solution on the stain.

After a minute of soaking, it can then be removed with a bristle brush without fading the color of the seat.

Nothing it can't remove

"We're the only the division that is currently using the product," says Morris. "The product is great. There's nothing that I've seen that it can't take off."

Before Morris created the cleaning product, Division 9 had to throw away the graffiti-scarred seats, which could cost more than \$100 to replace.

A one-quart bottle of the graffiti-removing product costs about \$6 and is sufficient for 20 cleanings.

Morris says this is a great way to save the agency money because the buses can get hit by graffiti every day.

"We try to keep our buses clean because we want to treat our riders as if they were a part of our family here at Division 9," says Morris.

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During Monday's all-staff Strategic Plan meeting, CEO Roger Snoble led employees in reciting MTA's Vision:



MTA – Leading the nation in safety, mobility and customer satisfaction!

Snoble Urges Employee Vigilance as U.S. War Prospects Grow

- Outlines MTA's new five-year Strategic Plan
- Discusses effects of the budget crisis

IN THIS REPORT:

[Emergency Operations Center Activated](#)

[Employee Emergency Hotline](#)

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(March 19, 2003) With the prospect of war with Iraq now almost a certainty, CEO Roger Snoble says the nation's heightened state of alert will affect MTA.

"We need to be more vigilant," Snoble told employees gathered for Monday's all-staff meeting. "Be vigilant and be very careful...for your families, our customers and your fellow employees."

In the event the U.S. government declares a Red Alert during the first few days of a war, Snoble said MTA would activate its Emergency Operations Center to be prepared for possible incidents.

"The best defense is good intelligence," he said. MTA will cooperate with the Sheriff's Transit Services Bureau, the LAPD's Transit Group and other local law enforcement agencies, as well as the FBI, to counter any anticipated threat to the Metro system.

Noting that the region has a number of high-profile targets, he said, "Los Angeles is better equipped to handle emergencies than other cities."

Presented Strategic Plan

Although Snoble's opening remarks addressed the world situation, the state's budget crisis and MTA's own budget squeeze, the balance of the all-staff meeting was devoted to a presentation of the agency's five-year Strategic Plan.

The Strategic Plan will provide direction for the agency and guidance for its decisions and activities. Especially in these times, the CEO emphasized, it is importance to move forward with a plan that all employees participate in.

He outlined the Strategic Plan's vision, mission and seven goals, describing the significance of each employee's contribution to achieving those goals.

The goals call for developing a safety-conscious culture; improving transit systems; attracting, developing and retaining employees; creating a positive MTA image; delivering quality capital projects on time and within budget; providing leadership for regional mobility; and improving agency efficiency and effectiveness. ([Click](#)

Emergency Operations Center Activated

In anticipation of an outbreak of hostilities in Iraq, MTA activated its Emergency Operations Center, Wednesday morning. Along with its law enforcement agencies, MTA will remain on a heightened state of alert until further notice.

Employee Emergency Hotline

Employees can call the Employee Emergency Hotline at **(213) 680-1531** about MTA work schedules and contingency plans in the event of an emergency

[here](#) to read the full Strategic Plan document.)

that involves agency property or that disrupts the Metro system.

State budget crisis

Turning to the state's budget crisis, Snoble said healthcare, education, prisons and many other agencies that rely on state funding – including MTA – will be affected.

MTA has asked the California Transportation Commission to approve expenditures of state-provided funding for the San Fernando Valley Metro Rapid Transitway, the Eastside Light Rail Project and the purchase of 200 articulated buses.

Snoble expects CTC approval of this request in April. "The state's budget problems may delay these projects," he said, but MTA won't cancel them.

Meanwhile, MTA's credit rating recently was increased – making it easier for the agency to borrow money for capital projects. Paying back the loans, however, "will affect our ability to grow the (transit) system."

Tighten MTA's fiscal belt

Although Snoble foresees no cutback in transit services, the agency's efforts to tighten its fiscal belt will include reducing its non-contract workforce somewhat. This will be accomplished, "without having to disrupt people's lives," by attrition and through the current hiring freeze.

The CEO said non-contract employees were "unlikely to have general overall increases" in pay this year, but he expects to approve a "very modest" pay-for-performance increase.

Referring to the "tough times," Snoble said, "Now's the time to prove we're good. We need to get together and work hard. The Strategic Plan will keep our focus on what's important."

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SG Valley Governance Council Holds Orientation Session

- Council members set first public meeting date.

By DAVE SOTERO

(March 20, 2003) The San Gabriel Valley Governance Council conducted an orientation meeting this week and set the date for its first public meeting.

At the initial meeting, newly appointed council members learned about service sector governance policies and by-laws, as well as the MTA's ethics policy and code of conduct.

Staff members presented overviews of MTA transit services and service sector operations, the state's open meetings law and Consent Decree requirements.

Governance councils oversee the planning and implementation of bus service within their service sector area. They are responsible for, among other things, strengthening customer service, conducting public hearings for sector bus line changes and implementing those service changes.

Public meeting scheduled

The San Gabriel Valley council scheduled its first public meeting for 5 p.m., Tuesday, April 1, at a location to be announced later. Regular governance council meetings will be held at 5 p.m., the first Tuesday of every month.

The nine-member governance council includes two newly appointed members: Dave Spence and Rosie Vasquez.

Other members Councilman Harry Baldwin of San Gabriel, representing the cities of San Gabriel and Rosemead, Councilman Sid Tyler of Pasadena, representing Pasadena, La Canada-Flintridge and Sierra Madre and Mayor Emile Bayle of San Marino, representing San Marino, Alhambra and South Pasadena.

Also, Councilwoman Sharon Martinez of Monterey Park, representing Monterey Park and Montebello and Mayor Bart Doyle of Sierra Madre, representing the other cities in the San Gabriel Valley.

The San Gabriel Valley Council of Government's (SGVCOG) will nominate two additional members, who will be non-elected officials, to serve on the governance council.

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Westside/Central Sets Hearing for Proposed Service Changes

- [Table of Metro Westside/Central Proposals Effective June, 2003 or Later](#)

(March 20, 2003) MTA will hold a public hearing to discuss proposed service changes planned for implementation in June 2003 or later in the Westside/Central service sector.

The hearing, which will address proposed changes for eight bus lines, is set for 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, April 1, in Hoffman Hall at Westwood Presbyterian Church, 10822 Wilshire Boulevard.

"These changes are intended to provide more service to riders in the Westside and Central areas...with more service in locations and during periods of peak demand," said General Manager Tracy Daly. "We will also be able to add more late evening and improve night-time to day-time service."

Line No.	Line Name	Description of Change:
Line 2, Route 3	Sunset Blvd.	Eliminate Route 3 portion of Line 2 (Canon Drive, Beverly Hills) and other minor route change.
Line 4/304	Santa Monica Blvd.	Increased service and minor route changes.
Line 22	Century City – Brentwood Shuttle	Cancel line.
Line 33/333	Venice Blvd.	Increased service and minor route changes.
Line 220	Robertson Blvd. – Culver Blvd. - LAX	Cancel line.
Line 720	Metro Rapid Wilshire/Whittier Blvd.	Proposed schedule modifications.

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Sheriff's Capt. Dan Finkelstein Named Chief of Transit Police

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(March 21, 2003) Sheriff's Capt. Dan Finkelstein, a 27-year law enforcement veteran, has been named MTA's Chief of Transit Police – a first-of-its-kind arrangement that is expected to consolidate the agency's security forces and improve safety for employees and patrons.

Deputy CEO John Catoe announced Finkelstein's appointment, Thursday, during the Board's Operations Committee meeting. It comes as MTA is negotiating a full-service, five-year security contract with the Sheriff's Department.



Sheriff's Capt. Dan Finkelstein is named MTA's Chief of Transit Police at Operations Committee meeting.

Noting that Finkelstein will remain a member of the Sheriff's Department while serving as Transit Police chief, Catoe said he expects to see a greater security presence in the Metro system and at MTA facilities and "a creative use of law enforcement."

"This will improve security," he said. "Visibly and actually."

In addition to commanding a 448-member Transit Services Bureau that includes 342 deputies and 50 uniformed fare inspectors, Finkelstein also will be responsible for the MTA Security force.

One-voice operation

"The great thing about this is that we'll be a more seamless, more efficient, one-voice operation," said Finkelstein. "We'll be able to assist MTA security with training, communication and other issues. And they'll be an extra set of eyes and ears for the deputies who are working the system."

Finkelstein also will oversee an MTA counter-terrorism and threat assessment team headed by Paul Lennon, currently managing director of Systems Safety and Security.

Lennon will work with local, state, federal and even some foreign security agencies to gather counter-terrorism intelligence that will be useful in MTA's security planning and operations.

Finkelstein joined the Sheriff's Department as an intern in 1975. As a deputy, he worked in such assignments as the Men's Central Jail and at the Carson, Firestone and Lennox stations. He was promoted to sergeant in 1987 and to lieutenant in 1991.

Headed Metrolink Bureau

As a lieutenant, he commanded the Metrolink Bureau, providing security for the commuter rail network. Promoted to captain in May 2001, he was named to head the Sheriff's Transit Services Bureau at MTA.

Finkelstein earned an Associate's degree in liberal arts at Los Angeles

Harbor College and a BS in criminal justice from Cal State Long Beach. He currently is pursuing a master's degree in health sciences, with a specialization in disaster and emergency management.

Finkelstein and his wife, Ilene, a deputy sheriff assigned to court services in Lancaster, have a son Danny, 20, a sophomore at Cal State Long Beach.

In his spare time, Finkelstein and his wife enjoy raising and training quarter horses on their ranch. They compete as partners in team roping events throughout the West. In his leisure time, he enjoys running, cooking and riding his motorcycle.

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Special Master Accepts MTA Plan to Add 125 Buses

(March 21, 2003) The special master overseeing the Consent Decree has tentatively accepted an MTA plan to schedule 125 additional coaches on its most crowded Metro Bus lines.

MTA presented a plan to Special Master Donald Bliss, Jan. 31, that proposed providing the 125 buses by reassigning 30 buses from non-productive or cancelled lines, providing 40 through more efficient scheduling of existing lines, and by reactivating 55 buses (plus 11 spares) from the contingency fleet.

The contingency fleet buses, some of which have reached retirement age but are in fully operational condition, would be replaced starting in 2005 when MTA begins taking delivery of the 200 articulated buses it plans to order.

In an order signed March 18, Bliss directed MTA to add 125 buses by the June six-month "shakeup" in order to meet passenger load factor goals.

MTA must provide additional information about the plan to Bliss by March 31. His final remedial plan could include information from both MTA and the Bus Riders Union. Over the years, the BRU has argued that MTA should add between 800 and 3,000 new buses to the fleet.

MTA will take delivery by mid-2004 of 100 new 45-foot CNG buses. The 200 articulated buses, scheduled for delivery in mid-2005, will be the final installment of the MTA Board's original plan to purchase nearly 2,100 new buses.

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Like to play with trains?



Volunteers Needed for MTA Rail Rodeo in May

(March. 21, 2003) Like to play with trains? Metro Rail is asking for volunteers to help with family activities and some event judging during the 2003 MTA Rail Rodeo, Saturday, May 3.

Metro Rail needs 20 or more volunteers to help judge certain competitions, supervise children's activities and staff the popcorn machine and food lines. Volunteers with a Class C driver's license may drive shuttle vans from the parking lot to the rail yard.

Contact Duane Martin at Ext. 65530 (310-816-5530) or George Kennedy at Ext. 65504 (310-816-5504) for more information or to volunteer for the event.

This year's Rail Rodeo will be conducted at the Metro Blue Line Division 11, 4350 208th Street, Carson. From I-710, exit at Del Amo Boulevard, and drive west to Santa Fe Avenue. Turn south on Santa Fe and left onto 208th Street to reach the rail yard.

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MTA, Local Media Celebrate Arthur Winston's 97th Birthday

By ADRIENNE FIGUEROA

(March 25, 2003)
Surrounded by friends, co-workers and the camera crews of several Los Angeles-area media outlets, Arthur Winston celebrated his 97th year of life, last Thursday – an event that also marked his 73rd year with MTA.



PHOTO BY RICK JAGER

The Los Angeles Times, KTTV Fox Channel 11 and UPN Channel 13 put Arthur Winston in the media spotlight for his 97th birthday.

General Manager Dana Coffey, who has known Winston since she began working for MTA 27 years ago, presented him with a framed gift: an autographed Laker Girls photo.

"Arthur is so inspirational," she said. "He's so warm, excited and appreciative of life."

Winston, flattered by the presence of The Los Angeles Times, KTTV Fox Channel 11 and UPN Channel 13, was delighted that MTA was honoring another one of his birthdays.

"They keep doing it, so I guess I deserve it," Winston said with an ear-to-ear grin on his face. "I think it's great."

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The festivities included candles, cake and ice cream as well as a surprise in the form of an autographed Laker Girls photo.



PHOTO BY ADRIENNE FIGUEROA

Division 1 Takes Home Double Win for Outstanding Division

By JENNIFER YEH

(March 25, 2003) It was a double win for Central City Division 1.

In January, the division took home two "How You Doin'?" Award trophies for their double win for Outstanding Division in Transportation and Maintenance.

For the category of In-Service On-Time Performance, Division 1 came in first with a score of 76.44 percent.

The division came in second place for maintenance Attendance, Miles Between Mechanical Failures, scored 99.89 percent On-Time Pull Outs, and Running Hot. For the category of minimal Customer Complaints, the division received a score of 2.78 complaints for every 100,000 boardings.

"We accomplished this as a team and that is the reason we can celebrate our success," says General Manager Rich Rogers. "These trophies represent our accomplishments."

"When you compare Division 1 with the other eleven divisions," he says, "Being ranked Number One is something we are truly proud of."

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PHOTOS BY JENNIFER YEH



From left, General Manager Rich Rogers, Asst. Transportation Manager Thomas Mattocks, Transportation Manager Sonja Owens, and Asst. Transportation Manager Fred Fluker.



Division 1 Transportation and Maintenance teams. Below, Division 1, third shift Maintenance team.



New High-Tech Trucks Will Make Towing Buses Easier, Safer

By ALISHA GOMEZ

(March 25, 2003) New high-tech tow trucks destined for the bus operating divisions promise to make retrieving a disabled bus safer and more efficient for MTA maintenance crews.

Fourteen new hydraulic-lift tow trucks and three flatbed tractor trailers are scheduled to arrive soon at the divisions, according to Pat Astredo, Equipment Maintenance Supervisor at Non-Revenue Division 4.

"The biggest difference between the new and old equipment is safety," he says. "The new equipment is much more reliable. Some of the vehicles we are replacing are 20 years old."

Using the updated equipment will require mechanics to change the way they've been handling a tow job. To recover a disabled bus with a flatbed truck, a mechanic must tilt the bed and winch the coach up onto it.

The hydraulic-lift trucks use a "stinger assembly" that folds down behind the back of the truck and extends underneath the front axle of the disabled bus. A fork or wheel-lift mechanism then picks up the bus by the axle or by the wheels.

"This method is a simpler hook-up, a lot safer and quicker," says Astredo. The Quality Assurance department currently is drafting towing procedures that will be placed in each of the tow trucks and mechanics will be trained to use the new equipment.

PHOTOS BY ALISHA GOMEZ



"The biggest difference

Leery at first

"I was a bit leery about these new trucks when I first saw them, like anything new," says Miguel Enriquez, mechanic "A" at Gateway Division 10. "But once we went to the class and they showed us how they work, I was quite impressed. The new equipment will make a big difference as far as the time it takes to tow buses in."



between the
new and old
equipment is
safety."
-Pat Astredo

Astredo says the mechanics were concerned towing buses with such long trucks. However, despite their length, the trucks have proven to be quite maneuverable and even fun to drive.

"Most of the mechanics at the end of the training and workshop sessions gave these trucks a big 'thumbs up' and said they were excited to start using them," says Astredo.

Despite the weight of the buses the trucks will tow, they are designed to keep sufficient weight on the front axles, ensuring that the driver always has firm steering control.

Safety features include video cameras mounted on the back of the trucks with a screen in the cab that provides a better rear view. The trucks also have strobe lights for better visibility and accident prevention.

Keith Nielsen, mechanic "A" in Fleet Management and Support Services, was mainly concerned that the agency purchase the safest piece of equipment possible.

"We want to make it as easy and safe as we can for those who will be using the equipment every day," says Nielsen. "The fact is that, when you are out doing this type of work, you have to know what you are doing and have to have equipment that works."

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Employees Can Catch Shuttle Bus to Dodgers Games

(March 26, 2003) Employees who plan to attend the Los Angeles Dodgers opening day game, April 7, and Friday night games throughout the season will be able to catch a shuttle bus to the stadium direct from Patsaouras Plaza.

Priced at \$2 per round trip, the shuttle service will pick up fans at Stop 9 on the transit plaza and take approximately 15 minutes via a dedicated shuttle lane to reach the drop-off point at Lot 13. From there, fans can easily enter all levels of Dodger Stadium.

Following the game, fans can catch the shuttle at the drop-off point for the return trip to Union Station. The shuttle service will operate during the Dodgers' 14 Friday night home games.

Shuttle service to Dodger Stadium will begin approximately one hour and 40 minutes prior to the first pitch. The wait between shuttles is expected to be 10 minutes or less.

The final shuttle to the stadium will depart the transit plaza 50 minutes after the start of the game, while shuttles returning to Union Station will begin at the top of the eighth inning.

The final shuttle will depart Dodger Stadium approximately 30 minutes after the last pitch, but no later than 11 p.m., to ensure fans can make their Metro Rail and Metro Bus connections at Union Station.

The 43-passenger shuttle buses will be operated by Transit Systems Unlimited, Inc., which also runs shuttle service to the Hollywood Bowl.

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Library to Host 'ID the Photo' Open House on Wednesday, April 2, from 2 to 4 p.m.

(March 26, 2003) The Dorothy Peyton Gray Library and Archive will conduct an "ID the Photo" open house on Wednesday, April 2, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. The Library is located on the 15th floor of MTA Headquarters.

Many photographs donated to the Library have no identification or information associated with the people, places, events, and equipment depicted.

In this, the second in a series of "ID the Photo," Librarian Matt Barrett is asking current and retired employees to help the Library "fill in the blanks" in preparation for a future digital archive, as well as for future photo exhibits in the library.

Barrett encourages employees to stop by the open house to enjoy refreshments, check out the reconfigured library space and help with photo identification.

Additional "ID the Photo" events will be scheduled in the Library and at other MTA locations in the near future.

More than 50 photos were fully captioned by employees who helped identify photos for the MTA Library Archives at first open house held December.



Below, Library archivist Jim Walker, left, recruits Susan Chapman to "fill in the blanks."



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Division 7's Ron Reedy Retires after 30 Years at MTA

By JENNIFER YEH

(March 26, 2003) Now that he is retiring, West Hollywood Division 7 Transportation Manager Ron Reedy plans to spend more time charter fishing and enjoying the company of his family.

He takes with him many great memories, wonderful friendships, and a great deal of pride that he has acquired through his years at MTA.

Reedy, who's also a Vietnam veteran, started at MTA 30 years ago as a bus operator.

"In those days there were no dispatch radios or air conditioning, but nobody complained," recalls Reedy.



PHOTO BY JENNIFER YEH

West Hollywood Division 7 Transportation Manager Ron Reedy retires.



Has his cake...

Since then Reedy has worked in every division at one time or another.

"I've worked in divisions that don't even exist anymore," he says. "I even watched them build Division 7."

Reedy gives some credit for his success to the things he's learned from his mentors.

Wonderful mentors

"Since I started here, not only have I learned from some wonderful mentors, but I've learned to better myself by learning from people's mistakes."

Reedy believes the valuable experiences he has gained throughout the years are lessons that should be passed on to others.

"I have helped many people just by listening to their problems, and offering my advice," he says. "Sometimes people just want someone to talk to, and I'm there for them."

That may be one the reasons Reedy has made so many friends throughout the journey of his career.

"When news about my retirement went around, I started receiving numerous calls and e-mails from so many people," he says, "including those I haven't spoken to in years."

A phone call away

He admits he will miss all his friends at MTA and wants everyone to know that not only is he just a phone call away, but he plans to visit periodically.

"It sure will be different here without him," says Assistant Transportation Manager Ron Whitney, "He'll be receiving many calls from me, that's for sure"

"Ron has been a great mentor and friend," says Assistant Transportation Manager Derick Mahome. "I'm going to miss him."

In the near future, Reedy plans to donate some of his MTA memorabilia to the MTA library. Some of the items include a 1938 Rose Bowl Poster and old bus transfers.

"I have very fond memories here and that's one of the reasons I am going to really miss working here," he says. "We've done very well on making this a great place to work."

"I've never seen an agency that has so many great professional and dedicated people like we have here at MTA."

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EDITOR'S NOTE: April is Earthquake Preparedness Month. Since 1987, seven earthquakes have caused extensive destruction and loss of life in California – 130 deaths, some 15,000 injuries and more than \$40.5 billion in property damage. On average, a damaging earthquake strikes the state every two years. Although the emphasis during April may be on earthquakes, it's a good time to prepare for any kind of disaster.

See: [California Earthquakes Since 1987](#)

See: [What to do before, during and after an earthquake.](#)

MTA's Diversity Staff is Ready for Any Emergency

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(March 27, 2003) If an earthquake or other disaster hits Los Angeles, today, disrupting transportation and communications and stranding employees at MTA Headquarters, the Diversity and Economic Opportunity staff is ready for it.

Squirreled away in a department storage room is a cache of emergency provisions – food, water, sanitary supplies, medicines and even a little candy – enough to feed and comfort 35 staff members for three days.

"Nothing needs to be cooked," says Linda Perryman, who along with Violeta Aguilos and Bessie Rush-Johnson, took the lead in stocking the emergency supplies after co-workers voted to undertake the project.

She points to shelves loaded with pork and beans, canned vegetables and fruit, canned meats and fish, pain relievers and rubbing alcohol, bleach for purifying water, flashlights, sanitary supplies and "things that bring joy into our lives like cookies, crackers and peanut butter."

Included in the storeroom are supplies for the children of several employees whose kids attend MTA's day care center. DEOD employees also were advised to keep extra clothing and a small reserve of non-perishable food at their desks.

Example of teamwork

How DEOD gathered its store of emergency supplies is an example of teamwork, employees say. During a meeting last Monday morning, the



^ Linda Perryman checks stocks of disaster provisions in the Diversity and Economic Opportunity emergency supply storeroom.

Below, Stocks of aspirin, antacid, rubbing alcohol and bleach are among the medical and sanitary supplies gathered for DEOD by, from left, Violeta Aguilos, Linda Perryman and Bessie Rush-Johnson.



staff voted to contribute \$20 each – college interns tossed in \$10 each – to purchase the stores.

Following the meeting and with about \$500 in hand, a flying squad made trips to Costco and Smart & Final. By 2:30 p.m., most of the supplies were on the shelves.

By Tuesday afternoon, the storeroom was fully stocked and 53 cents was left in the kitty.

In addition to the stock of emergency provisions, Deputy Executive Officer Linda Wright has encouraged staff members with special medical conditions to bring in enough medication to tide them over for three days.

Wright also has designated two staff members to assist those employees by providing safekeeping for confidential lists of their medical conditions or allergies. The sealed envelopes may be opened only with the employees' permission in the event of an emergency.

California Earthquakes Since 1987

- Whitter-Narrows, M5.9 – October 1, 1987 (8 deaths, 200 injuries, \$358 million in damage)
- Loma Prieta, M7.1 – October 17, 1989 (63 deaths, 3,757 injuries, \$5.9 million in damage)
- Upland, M5.5 – February 28, 1990 (38 injuries, \$10.4 million in damage)
- Sierra Madre, M5.8 – June 28, 1991 (1 death, 30+ injuries, \$33.5 million in damage)
- Humboldt County, M6.9 – April 25, 1992 (\$60 million in damage)
- Landers, M7.3 / Big Bear, M6.7 – June 28, 1992 (1 death, \$93 million in damage)
- Northridge, 6.7 – January 17, 1994 (57 deaths, 11,000+ injuries, \$40 billion in damage)

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What You Should Do [Before](#), [During](#) and [After](#) an Earthquake

Before

- Stock at least a 3-day supply of food, water, clothes, medical supplies, eyeglasses, extra cash (including change) and other items your family will need.
- Conduct Earthquake: Duck, cover, and hold drills every six months with your family.
- Identify the safest places in each room in your home so you know where to take cover during an earthquake.
- Identify all ways to exit your home and keep these areas clear.
- Decide where and when to unite should you be apart when an earthquake happens.
- Choose a person out of the area for family members to contact if separated.

- Locate shutoff valves for water, gas, and electricity. Learn how to turn off the valves before an earthquake. Be sure to train all members who may need to shut off these utilities after an earthquake.
- Make copies of vital records and make photos and/or video of your valuables. Keep these records in a safe deposit box or with trusted relative/friend in another city or state.
- Know the policies of the school or daycare center your children attend.

During

- Remain calm.
- Inside, stay inside.
- Protect yourself by ducking under a heavy piece of furniture or in a hall near an interior wall while covering your head and neck and holding on.
- Do not stand in a doorway. The door may injure you during the shaking.
- Stay away from appliances, large glass panes, shelves holding objects, and large decorative masonry, brick or plaster such as fireplaces.
- Keep hallways clear. They are usually one of the safest places to be during an earthquake. Stay away from kitchens and garages, which tend to be the most dangerous places.

After

- Check for injuries and give aid.
- Only use the phone for serious injury or fires.
- Check for hazards. Check gas and water leaks, broken electrical wiring and sewage lines. If damaged, turn off the source.
- Check the building for cracks and damage.
- Check food and water supplies.
- Turn on radio or TV (portable if no power) for instructions.
- Keep the streets clear for emergency vehicles.
- Be prepared for aftershocks.
- Remain calm and help others. If evacuating, post a message inside your home telling family members where to find you.
- Plan to report to work on your next scheduled shift, unless otherwise instructed.

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UPDATE: (April 1, 2003) MTA Payroll has learned from its vendor that the use of tamper-resistant, self-contained envelopes has been postponed until the Friday, May 2, payday – or later. A confirmation will be issued later this month.

New Paychecks to Come in Tamper-Resistant Envelopes

(March 27, 2003) Your next MTA paycheck or pay stub will look different – and will provide better security for confidential information.

Paychecks and pay stubs to be distributed for the April 4 payday will come in tamper-resistant, self-contained envelopes with advanced security features to protect confidential employee financial information.

There will be no difference in the format or information printed on the paychecks or pay stubs.

The self-mailer paychecks and pay stubs will have perforated side strips to ensure that the document can't be opened and resealed. High-quality paper will reduce the ability to see text through the paper and will prevent tears during distribution.

Security features also include a watermark printed in a special opaque ink and unevenly spaced lines that will make it difficult to cut and paste the envelope without detection.

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Move mouse over image to illustrate new paystubs. The new envelopes will have tamper-resistant side strips for improved security of confidential payroll information. The high-quality paper prevents "see-through" and tears during distribution.



PHOTOS: BILL HEARD

The Metro Gold Line Rail Activation Team is split into two shifts in order to maintain 16 hours of testing per day. Pictured here are, from left, Arnold Johnson, Milton Guthrie, JoAnn Derbigny, Mike Hubler, Lorne Currie, Albert Dominguez, Mike Brown, Ruben Ramirez, Ken Mosinski , Bruce Fitzgerald, Julie Crawford, Ramiro Estavillo



PHOTO BY ROMAN ALARCON

Rail Activation Team Focused on Readying Metro Gold Line

By ADRIENNE FIGUEROA

(March 28, 2003) The Metro Gold Line Rail Activation Team is conducting a series of tests and emergency drills – all in preparation for the Rail Operation Date (ROD), an event that's just a few short months down the track.

"We're doing a lot of drills with emergency teams from fire departments and the police in various cities," says Tom Lingenfield, Rail Fleet Services manager for the Metro Gold Line. "This is because they need to know how our trains work and what they can do in an accident or fire."

The team is split into two shifts in order to maintain 16 hours of testing per day. Many of the tests monitor the automatic train protection and signaling systems and the interlocking signals. These components must work together to prevent accidents by alerting operators to dangers on the track.

The start-up team also is responsible for acquiring and assembling equipment, writing policies, setting up operating procedures and establishing emergency response plans.

"The team is there to ensure the safety of the system," says Roman Alarcon, Metro Gold Line Rail Activation Team manager.

In addition to these duties, the start-up team also has talked with members of the Pasadena community about the construction of the 13.7-mile line.

Should alleviate traffic

Team member Hector Villa, a rail maintenance specialist who just transferred from the Metro Red Line, says the Metro Gold Line promises to alleviate traffic in the area.

"It seems that we're getting positive feedback from the public," says Villa.

At the moment, the team consists of 31 members who have electrical, electronic and mechanical backgrounds. Each member must undergo a 12-week training course before joining the team.

"We're bringing new people on board," Lingenfield said. "Every week, we get one to two new people."

Expansion of the group is expected soon – 13 trainees have recently graduated and nine trainees are in the process of completing the course.

"For the most part, everything is going along well and everyone has a great attitude," Lingenfield said. "They know they have a mission and they're taking care of it."

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Employees on Workers' Comp May Be Assigned Parking Lot Duty

(March 28, 2003) Employees drawing Workers' Compensation benefits could be assigned to monitor MTA parking lots, Metro Rail stations and "key stops throughout the city" under a motion approved unanimously, Thursday, by the MTA Board.

The motion by Chairman Hal Bernson directs the staff to study the feasibility of a "parking lot observer program" and to present a plan within 30 days. Deputy CEO John Catoe said the labor relations and legal staffs already are studying the proposal.

The program would be similar to a Washington (D.C.) Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) program that helped increase security in the capital's transit system.

In answer to a concern raised by a spokesman for the United Transportation Union during last week's Executive Management and Audit Committee meeting, Bernson said, "We don't want to put anybody in harm's way. Our intent is to try to make some productive use of people who can't perform their regular duties and to reduce our Workers' Compensation claims."

"We're not talking about people who are seriously ill or who are not ambulatory," Bernson explained at Thursday's Board meeting, "but about people who are recovering from an injury (that will allow them) to be back at their regular job within a short time."

Bernson's motion notes that MTA's Workers' Compensation costs are two to 15 times greater than transit agencies in other major metropolitan areas.

Such costs have "an effect on our ability to increase wages and other benefits," he said during the committee meeting. "We think everybody benefits if we can make this work."

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