

Metro Report Archives

October 2003 Articles

- [Metro LABOR NEWS UPDATE](#) (Oct. 31, 2003) Metro Won't Support Binding Arbitration in ATU Contract Talks; First Transit, Teamsters Reach Tentative Agreement – Also, MTA Working to Clarify Metrolink Agreement
- [Wildfires Taught Derick Mahome a Valuable Lesson](#) (Oct. 31, 2003) Watching the wildfires consume the brush near his Simi Valley home, last weekend, gave Derick Mahome some sleepless nights. But, he also learned a valuable lesson: Be prepared!
- [Wildfire Scare Sends SFV Sector Office Employees Home Early](#) (Oct. 31, 2003) San Fernando Valley Sector employees had a close call last Monday afternoon when wildfires raged near their Chatsworth office. The office closed early when smoke made it difficult for many employees to breathe.
- [Pint-Sized Superheroes, Cartoon Stars Bring Halloween to MTA](#) (Oct. 31, 2003) Halloween festivities kicked off early for children at the Gateway Child Development Center, Friday, as close to 70 pint-sized superheroes, cartoon stars, and fairytale characters paraded around the MTA lobby to the delight of onlookers.
- [Annual Benefits Open Enrollment Online for Non-Contract, AFSCME, and Teamster Employees](#) (Oct. 31, 2003) The Annual Benefits Open Enrollment period for Non-Contract, AFSCME, and Teamster employees is scheduled to begin on Saturday, November 1, 2003 and will end as of close of business on Monday, Nov. 17, 2003.
- [MTA LABOR NEWS UPDATE](#) MTA Waiting for ATU to Take Next Step; Munis, Metrolink to Honor MTA Employee IDs as Fare With its last, best and final multi-year contract offer in the hands of striking mechanics, MTA is waiting for the ATU to take the next step and bring the offer to a vote of its members.
- [Munis, Metrolink to Honor MTA's October Passes](#) in November (Oct. 30, 2003) While MTA mechanics remain on strike, all municipal bus operators and Metrolink have agreed to accept MTA's October passes as valid fare until further notice.
- [LABOR NEWS UPDATE](#) – Oct. 29, 2003 - MTA Issues Last, Best and Final Offer to ATU; CEO Letter, Newsletter Sent to Union Members
- [The Communicator](#) (Oct. 29, 2003) - MTA has issued a last, best and final multi-year contract offer to the ATU, representing striking mechanics. The offer was published in "The Communicator" newsletter and mailed and distributed to union members and MTA employees. Union members were asked to contact ATU leaders to request a ratification vote on the offer.
- [MTA Provides Drivers and Buses for Wildfire Relief Efforts](#) (Oct. 29, 2003) The sun could barely be seen poking through its curtain of smoke and fog at the Fire Academy in Elysian Park, but six Metro buses were lined up at dawn to transport some 50 firefighters and equipment to the front lines of the 45-mile blazing fire that rings the Los Angeles region.
- [Volunteers Needed for a Second Effort to Clean Buses, Trains](#) (Oct. 29, 2003) Following a successful weekend that left 500 buses and rail cars looking like new, MTA is again seeking volunteers to clean transit vehicles this coming Saturday and Sunday.
- [Volunteer Bus, Rail Car Cleaners Buzz Through Their Weekend Work](#) (Oct. 28, 2003) Hard-working squads of employee volunteers – mops, scrapers and towels in hand –

buzzed through division yards over the weekend, leaving some 500 buses and rail cars sparkling clean.

- [MTA LABOR NEWS UPDATE](#) MTA Board Declares Impasse in ATU Contract Talks; Last, Best and Final Offer Issued to Mechanics (Oct. 28, 2003) With negotiations deadlocked, the MTA Board of Directors has declared an impasse after 17 months of contract talks with the ATU. At the Board's instruction, CEO Roger Snoble issued a last, best and final offer, today, to the mechanics union.
- [Graveyard Shift Gets Spooky at Crossroads Depot Division 2](#) (Oct. 24, 2003) Each night, as dusk falls and the moon casts its light over downtown Los Angeles, restless spirits roam the deserted maintenance building at Crossroads Depot Division 2.
- [Gateway Building Synchronized for Weekend Time Change](#) (Oct. 24, 2003) With Daylight Savings Time ending this Sunday morning at 2 a.m., many will forget to set their clocks back one hour.
- [MTA LABOR NEWS UPDATE](#) - MTA, ATU Talks Resume; 'Big-Ticket' Issues Still Not Resolved (Oct. 24, 2003) Negotiations between MTA and the ATU, representing striking mechanics, were resumed at about 1 p.m., today, in the 11th day of the transit strike. MTA negotiators have indicated a willingness to work around the clock.
- [Bus Operation Control Ready to Roll](#) (Oct. 23, 2003) It's the 'air traffic control' of the MTA. While all may be quiet on the home front during the transit strike, Bus Operation Control is manning the critical communication center systems, albeit with a skeletal crew.
- [Volunteer Customer Info Agents Help Commuters Find Alternative Routes](#) (Oct. 23, 2003) About 75 employees from all over MTA have volunteered to work as Customer Information agents to help commuters get to work, school, recreation and home.
- [Snoble Encouraged by Resumption of Talks with ATU - Announces School Pool Program](#) (Oct. 22, 2003) With negotiations between MTA and the ATU scheduled at 1:30 p.m., today, CEO Roger Snoble says he is encouraged by the resumption of talks with the mechanics' union.
- [MTA Security Officers, Sheriff's Deputies Help Ensure a Peaceful Strike](#) (October 22, 2003) While work may have changed for some MTA employees during the strike, MTA Security officers and Sheriff's deputies have been busy protecting MTA staff and property.
- [Undercurrent of Activity at 'Deserted' Operating Divisions](#) (Oct. 22, 2003) Divisions seem abandoned without the busyness of buses and scurrying employees, but among seemingly deserted grounds are dedicated workers who are keeping the divisions alive and healthy.
- [Teamsters Striker Killed in Auto Accident Was MTA Retiree](#) (Oct. 22, 2003) A Teamsters Union striker who died following an automobile accident outside a First Transit Inc. facility, Tuesday, was a retired Metro Bus operator with almost 30 years' service.
- [MTA LABOR NEWS UPDATE](#) (Oct. 21, 2003) MTA, ATU Negotiations Resume at Hall of Administration
- [12-Step Plan to Improve Safety Following Taft High Shooting](#) (Oct. 21, 2003) – A multi-agency task force formed by MTA to review bus-operating procedures following the Sept. 9 shooting of three Taft High School students has recommended a broad series of steps to improve the safety of LAUSD students.

- [MTA, Union Negotiators Back at Bargaining Table](#) (Oct. 17, 2003) Although MTA mechanics continued their strike into a fourth day, negotiators for the UTU, representing 4,500 bus and train operators, were at the bargaining table with MTA labor negotiators.
- [MTA, Local Operators Establishing Bus Service 'Lifeline'](#) (Oct. 15, 2003) MTA is working with local transit agencies in Los Angeles and surrounding counties to expand a "lifeline" of services for passengers stranded by the transit strike, Deputy CEO John Catoe told a news conference today.
- [With Strike in Full Swing, Non-Striking Employees Pitch In](#) (Oct. 15, 2003) With the strike against MTA in full swing, Wednesday, non-striking employees pitched in wherever they could to assist stranded commuters.
- [Deputies Arrest Alleged Metro Rail Fare Inspector Impostor](#) (Oct. 10, 2003) Sheriff's deputies have charged an unemployed security guard with impersonating a Metro Rail fare inspector and felony possession of a deadly weapon, a side-handle baton.
- [Take MTA to Community Clean Up Days Oct. 11, 18](#) (Oct. 10, 2003) Angelenos interested in helping keep their city clean can take Metro Buses to two community Clean Up Days hosted by the Department of Public Works on two consecutive Saturdays, Oct. 11 and Oct. 18.
- [Metro Video, Magazine, Poster Win First-Place APTA Awards](#) (Oct. 8, 2003) A safety video, a magazine and a poster all sponsored by MTA were first-place winners at this month's American Public Transit Association conference in Salt Lake City.
- [MTA Planning Manager Coauthors Transportation Engineering Book](#) (Oct. 8, 2003) Dr. Narasimha Murthy, an MTA transportation planning manager, has taken his years of experience in transportation planning and engineering and summed them up in a book titled, "Transportation Engineering Basics: Second Edition."
- [Snoble, Francis Thank Volunteers for Gold Line Opening Work](#) (Oct. 7, 2003) "It was just spectacular," is the way CEO Roger Snoble described the July opening of the Metro Gold Line to volunteers attending an appreciation luncheon, Monday.
- [Deputy's Gumshoe Work Nabs Two Robbery Suspects](#) (Oct. 7, 2003) Cell phone records, the Internet and some solid gumshoe detective work by a Sheriff's deputy has resulted in multi-year jail terms for two men convicted in September of a robbery on the Metro Green Line.
- [South Bay Volunteers staff Drum, Jazz Festivals](#) (Oct. 3, 2003) Volunteers promoted bus and train ridership, and distributed safety tips to hundreds of residents who visited the South Bay Sector booth, last weekend, during the Festival of the Drums and the Watts Towers Jazz Festival.
- [Revenue Maintenance Achieves 300 Days Free of Lost-Time Injuries](#) (Oct. 3, 2003) Having gone 300 days without a lost-time injury, the Revenue Equipment Maintenance Department of the Regional Rebuild Center recently celebrated the milestone with a luncheon potluck.
- [New Ride Matching Web Site Ready for Rideshare Week, Oct. 6-10](#) (Oct. 3, 2003) In anticipation of Rideshare Week, Oct. 6-10, MTA and four other county agencies are launching a newly designed Web site that enables commuters interested in ridesharing to easily find each other anywhere in Southern California.
- [New Maintenance Manager Frank Lonyai](#) Joins Division 10 (Oct. 1, 2003) Having worked in transit in Africa, Europe and Latin America, Frank Lonyai brings a world of experience to Gateway Division 10 as the new maintenance manager.

- [MTA "On the Move"](#) in LA County Schools (Oct. 1, 2003) Students in Los Angeles County will have an opportunity to explore transportation issues and options this fall – thanks to a new Los Angeles Times in Education program sponsored by MTA.
- [150 Residents Attend](#) South Bay Sector Public Hearing (Oct. 1, 2003) More than 150 residents attended a public hearing conducted by the South Bay Service Sector in September to comment on proposed changes to bus service.

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Frank Lonyai, new Gateway Division 10 maintenance manager.

New Maintenance Manager Frank Lonyai Joins Division 10

By Franklin A. Holman

(Oct. 1, 2003) Having worked in transit in Africa, Europe and Latin America, Frank Lonyai brings a world of experience to Gateway Division 10 as the new maintenance manager.

Lonyai comes to MTA most recently from Orange County Transportation Authority where he was a section manager. He has a broad background in transit, manufacturing, engineering, assembly, project coordination and technical services.

Lonyai was born in Budapest, Hungary, the son of a railroad man. He started his career in transit working for the bus manufacturing company, Ikarus, where he became an export director.

"I have experience knowing how people are handling transit in other places, not only in Europe, where they have a very well developed system, but also in places like Africa," he says.

Challenging experiences

Later in his career, Lonyai helped establish a mass transit system in

Mozambique after the country was liberated from a 200-year colonization. "It was one of the most challenging experiences in my career because there was no support and the circumstances were rudimentary."

Lonyai is excited about MTA's new composite buses with their higher capacity and lower weight, the developing Bus Rapid Transit system and the new concept of better serving our customers through the service sector system.

"The new equipment and projects show that these are changing times for MTA," he says. "For me, it is exciting to convey this new and fresh image to my staff and the public."

'I improve the numbers'

Lonyai is currently sizing up where Division 10 maintenance stands so he can "work together with the supervisor team to improve the indicators."

Looking ahead, he says, "I want to know what new technologies and projects are coming because I want our division to be at the forefront of transit, so we can become the best."

Lonyai earned an automotive engineering degree from the Polytechnic University and an MBA from the University of Economics in Budapest. He lives in Rowland Heights with his wife, Dora, and daughters Anna and Dorina.

In his spare time, he enjoys landscape photography, camping, hiking, reading, listening to classical music and being with his family.

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MTA "On the Move" in LA County Schools

By MARTA MAESTAS-MACK

(Oct. 1, 2003) Students in Los Angeles County will have an opportunity to explore transportation issues and options this fall – thanks to a new Los Angeles Times in Education program sponsored by MTA.

The program provides an innovative way for MTA to promote and expand its transportation, anti-graffiti and safety education programs to targeted schools. Approximately 1,300 teachers and 78,100 students will be reached through this Program.

Called "On The Move," the program targets teachers and students in grades 4 through 8, especially those located around rail and construction corridors.

The program will focus on important transportation concepts, while reinforcing reading, writing and social studies skills as defined by the California Curriculum Content Standards.

A pilot program for grades 9 through 12, focusing on elements contained in the "On The Move" curriculum guide, will be introduced to the five schools participating in MTA's Transportation Careers Academy Program (TCAP).

The program also will include an art and essay contest, with winners selected by judges from MTA. Winners will be honored at an awards lunch early next spring at the Los Angeles Times. MTA judges and other employees, as well as winners and their parents and teachers, will be invited to attend.

LA County teachers will learn about the study unit through ads in the Los Angeles Times, direct mail and personal calls by Times in Education school representatives.

Teachers also may invite MTA employees to visit their classrooms for student interviews and discussions about transportation careers.

The program begins October 6 and runs through March 5, 2004. Teachers can enroll online at latimes.com/TIE.

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Click image above to download and print a copy of the "On the Move" teacher recruitment ad and enrollment application. Present it to your childrens' teachers to encourage their participation in the program. For more information, call MTA project manager Marta Maestas-Mack at 818-701-2840.

A local resident comments on proposed bus service changes during a public hearing held in September by the South Bay Sector Governance Council. General Manager Dana Coffey is third from left at the table.



150 Residents Attend South Bay Sector Public Hearing

By RICH MORALLO

(Oct. 1, 2003) More than 150 residents attended a public hearing conducted by the South Bay Service Sector in September to comment on proposed changes to bus service.

"We were hopeful that our patrons would attend the hearing to voice their concerns, and we were pleased at the enormous turnout and the amount of feedback we received," said General Manager Dana Coffey.

"Our public hearing was an opportunity for the community to comment on several bus service lines that are being recommended for adjustment or cancellation because they carry few passengers and require a high public subsidy to operate," she added.

Governance Council Vice Chairman Jim Hendrickson explained to the audience that no immediate decision on service changes would be made and that the council would evaluate staff reports on the public hearing in October.

"Should the council approve any of the proposals, a news release and rider brochure will be distributed announcing the decision," he said.

Service Development Manager Madeline Van Leuvan described the various lines being considered for change. Attendees then had an opportunity to voice their opinions.

"We had about 36 attendees who reported to us their views on specific routes and lines," said Van Leuvan. "Many of them were very passionate and described how they depended on certain bus

Sectors Schedule Public Meetings

- **San Fernando Valley**
6:30 p.m.,
Wednesday, Oct. 1
Marvin Braude
Constituent Service
Center
Van Nuys
- **San Gabriel Valley**
5 p.m.,
Tuesday, Oct. 7
Adult Recreation Center
San Gabriel
- **Gateway Cities**
2 p.m.,
Thursday, Oct. 9
SoCal Gas Company
Downey
- **South Bay**
9:30 a.m.,
Friday, Oct. 10
Carson Community
Center

services."

One group of women took turns at the podium to say how they need Line 226 to get to work in the Palos Verdes - Palos Verdes Drive West area.

Other South Bay lines being reviewed for modification or cancellation include the 125, 119-126, 128, 130, 225, 254, 256, 608, 625, 626 and the 646.

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Neighborhood children liked the literature South Bay Sector volunteers gave them at the Watts Towers Jazz Festival. Photo by Rich Morallo.

South Bay Volunteers staff Drum, Jazz Festivals

By RICH MORALLO

(Oct. 3, 2003) Volunteers promoted bus and train ridership, and distributed safety tips to hundreds of residents who visited the South Bay Sector booth, last weekend, during the Festival of the Drums and the Watts Towers Jazz Festival.

Just down the road from the 103rd St. Metro Blue Line station, MTA volunteers at the Watts Towers answered questions about bus and train travel and encouraged the residents to continue supporting both Metro Bus and Metro Rail.

"We also passed out bus schedules since so many of our visitors came to us asking how to make the right travel connections after riding the Metro Blue Line," said volunteer Wajeha Bilal, who worked both days at the Watts Towers festivals.

The Day of the Drum Festival focused on the role of drums and drummers in world cultures, while the Jazz Festival paid tribute to American jazz, gospel and R&B.

Bilal and Jess Godinez, who also worked at the information table, are both members of Operation Lifesaver - the national organization which sends presenters to campuses to show students how to be safe near train tracks. Both have given several safety presentations at nearby Markham Middle School.

Stream of visitors

Friends of the Watts Towers Festival member Edward Corbett helped at the transit information table, which had a steady stream of visitors.

"These events draw a lot of people even from outside our neighborhood," said Corbett who handed safety coloring books and crayons to young students in the crowd.

Still students themselves, Mytika Williams and fellow South Bay Sector intern Briana Wright were among several volunteers who gave up part of their weekend to answer questions about MTA bus service and circulate bus and train materials.

"It was a great experience sharing Metro transit information with our customers at the festivals," said Williams.

"Great jazz, interesting people and delicious food - it was LA's culture at its finest," added Cheryl Brown, another member of the South Bay Sector volunteer group.

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Revenue Maintenance Achieves 300 Days Free of Lost-Time Injuries

By LISA HUYNH

(Oct. 3, 2003)

Having gone 300 days without a lost-time injury, the Revenue Equipment Maintenance Department of the Regional Rebuild Center recently celebrated the milestone with a luncheon potluck.

Equipment Maintenance Manager Jess Godinez attributes

the team's accomplishment to the Safety's First! program. Each month, the department attends safety meetings to remind employees to work safely at the work place, as well as at home.

From here on, the department plans to celebrate each time it reaches 100 accident-free days to remind team members of their hard work and dedication.



Celebrating 300 days without a lost-time injury.
Courtesy RRC

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New Ride Matching Web Site Ready for Rideshare Week, Oct. 6-10

By DAVE SOTERO

(Oct. 3, 2003) In anticipation of Rideshare Week, Oct. 6-10, MTA and four other county agencies are launching a newly designed Web site that enables commuters interested in ridesharing to easily find each other anywhere in Southern California.

Located on the Web at www.RideMatch.Info and via MTA's Web site at www.mta.net, the site is a joint partnership of MTA, the Orange County Transportation Authority, Riverside County Transportation Commission, San Bernardino Associated Governments and Ventura County Transportation Commission.

All share and maintain the on-line rideshare database, which provides regional contacts, maps and other resources needed for commuters to initiate rideshare relationships. Currently, more than 300,000 commuters are registered in the database, with more added every day.

This year's Rideshare Week follows on the heels of a study by the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) showing that Southern California drivers spent about 90 extra hours stuck in traffic in 2001. Bay Area motorists spent 68 extra hours behind the wheel, while Denver drivers were stalled in traffic for 61 extra hours.

Billions of dollars wasted

According to TTI's annual Urban Mobility Study, traffic congestion caused "5.7 billion gallons of wasted fuel and 3.5 billion hours of lost productivity," costing the nation \$69.5 billion -- \$4.5 billion more than 2000.

"Ridesharing is an excellent way for people to share the cost of driving and use carpool lanes to get to work faster," said David Sutton, MTA's Employer Programs manager. "During Rideshare Week, we encourage everyone to 'pick a day, any day' to rideshare."

This year, MTA is offering LA County commuters the chance to win a Rideshare Week T-shirt and prize package on its Web site. The prize package consists of a CD holder, antenna ball, pens and more. A dozen winners will be announced Oct. 14.

MTA's Metro Commute Services Department helps promote alternatives to driving alone, including carpooling, vanpooling, taking transit, bicycling, walking, and telecommuting, as well as such "smart work" strategies as flex-time, or compressed work schedules.

Commuters interested in ridesharing can register on-line at www.RideMatch.Info by submitting their contact information and their home and work locations. They can specify nearby intersections, their work start and end times, carpool and/or vanpool preferences and schedule flexibility.

The database does not yet contain information relating to Metro Bus and Rail service, but public transportation information will be integrated with RideMatch.Info early next year.

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Deputy's Gumshoe Work Nabs Two Robbery Suspects

(Oct. 7, 2003) Cell phone records, the Internet and some solid gumshoe detective work by a Sheriff's deputy has resulted in multi-year jail terms for two men convicted in September of a robbery on the Metro Green Line.

It began in late February, when two men robbed a passenger at gunpoint at the Crenshaw station. The victim's jacket, cell phone and cash were taken.

Detective Ron Smith, a 12-year Sheriff's Department veteran assigned to the case, learned that the victim's girlfriend had called the stolen cell phone and had a brief conversation with a possible suspect.

Obtaining a search warrant, Smith reviewed the phone records and focused on a series of calls apparently made by the suspects. The Internet's reverse phone directory helped him locate a woman who identified two men.

The LAPD provided Smith with the men's arrest records which included phone numbers he was able to match with names and numbers the suspects apparently called using the victim's cell phone.

With this information in hand, Smith tracked down the two suspects – each of whom blamed the other for the robbery. One man was sentenced to four years in prison, the other was given a 15-year sentence.

There was nothing "hocus-pocus" in the case, says Smith's boss, Sgt. Luis Nunez. "Simplicity is genius. It was just good investigative work."

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Metro Gold Line opening weekend volunteers, from left, Liz Armijo-Holbrook, Valarie Harrison, Cathy Manzo, Yvette Robles and Marta Maestas-Mack receive official certificates.



PHOTOS: BILL HEARD

Snoble, Francis Thank Volunteers for Gold Line Opening Work

(Oct. 7, 2003) "It was just spectacular," is the way CEO Roger Snoble described the July opening of the Metro Gold Line to volunteers attending an appreciation luncheon, Monday.

The 33 volunteers were assigned as station managers and assistant managers during the opening weekend of the LA to Pasadena light-rail line.

"It was just spectacular," is the way CEO Roger Snoble described the July opening of the Metro Gold Line to volunteers.



"I've been to many rail line openings," Snoble said, "but I've never seen one like this. You cared about it, you wanted to make it happen and you worked hard to make it happen."

Metro Rail General Manager Gerald Francis said the public's response to the opening on Saturday, July 26, required some adjustments to handle crowds expected on Sunday, July 27.

"No matter what was happening, we were able to pull together

and accomplish a
goal."

--Rail GM Gerald Francis



"Everyone pulled together with that last ounce of energy to come up with a game plan for Sunday," he said. "That made me see how great a group we have here at MTA. No matter what was happening, we were able to pull together and accomplish a goal."

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MTA Video, Magazine, Poster Win First-Place APTA Awards

(Oct. 8, 2003) A safety video, a magazine and a poster all sponsored by MTA were first-place winners at this month's American Public Transit Association conference in Salt Lake City.



PHOTOS: BILL HEARD

Gary Wosk, left, and Theresa Renn are responsible for the APTA award-winning Metro Quarterly magazine. Michael Lejeune's bus recruitment poster won an APTA award.

The 2003 APTA AdWheel Awards were presented to MTA for the "Metro Experience" safety video used in the agency's new mobile theater, for the "Metro Quarterly" magazine circulated to almost 60,000 addresses in LA County, and for a bus operator recruitment poster used in the Metro system.



Yoon Ham and Abdul Zohbi produced the APTA award-winning Metro Experience video.

Senior Communications Officer Yoon Ham and Systems Safety Manager Abdul Zohbi were project managers for the Metro Experience video. Zohbi obtained state grant money to finance the video and Ham supervised production.

"The video reminds people of all ages that you should pay attention around light-rail tracks," says Ham. "It says over and over again: look, listen and stay alive."

Anniversary special

The Winter 2002 issue of Metro Quarterly magazine, a 24-page 10-year anniversary special, featured a timeline of MTA achievements. Edited by Senior Communications Officer Gary Wosk, it was designed by Graphic Designer Theresa Renn.

"It was a monumental task to collect all the achievements over the past 10 years," says Wosk. "This required a lot of research and a number of people contributed to the success of the issue."

The bus recruitment poster, with text and design by Creative Services Manager Michael Lejeune, is one of a series aimed at

recruiting bus operators.

"Welcome aboard," the bright orange poster says. "Would you mind driving?" The poster provides contact information for job seekers.

"After we began using this series of posters," says Lejeune, "bus operator recruitment spiked."

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MTA Planning Manager Coauthors Transportation Engineering Book

By FRANKLIN A. HOLMAN

(Oct. 8, 2003) Dr. Narasimha Murthy, an MTA transportation planning manager, has taken his years of experience in transportation planning and engineering and summed them up in a book titled, "Transportation Engineering Basics: Second Edition."

Murthy is a member of the Gateway Cities Area Team. A registered traffic engineer in California, he co-authored the book, published by the American Society of Civil Engineers, with Henry Mohle, a professional engineer.

Photo by Franklin A. Holman



Dr. Narasimha Murthy co-authored a book on transportation engineering.

"The book gives practical knowledge and ideas of how to apply classroom transportation theory," says Murthy. "Anybody can go to class and learn theory, but the question is, do they know how to apply it."

Among the 22 topics covered in the book are traffic control devices, travel time, speed study, delay studies, directional movements, intelligent transportation systems, air quality and parking analysis.

Many undergraduate and graduate schools in the U.S. currently use the book as part of their transportation planning and engineering curricula. The book also is useful to MTA employees who want to expand their knowledge about transportation planning and engineering.

"Readers will get a simple understanding of a complex transportation planning and engineering field," Murthy says. The book can be purchased at on-line at www.asce.com or can be checked out at the MTA Library.

The concept for the book came to Murthy when he was a part-time lecturer at California Polytechnic College, Pomona. The first edition was published in 1993.

"I am looking forward to doing a third edition with new topics taken from my experience in the last four or five years at MTA and in private consulting," says Murthy.

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Take Metro to Community Clean Up Days Oct. 11, 18

By DAVE SOTERO

(Oct. 10, 2003) Angelenos interested in helping keep their city clean can take Metro Buses to two community Clean Up Days hosted by the Department of Public Works on two consecutive Saturdays, Oct. 11 and Oct. 18.

The Oct. 11 clean-up event will be held from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. starting from Eastman Avenue Elementary School, 4112 E. Olympic Boulevard in East Los Angeles. The school can be reached via Metro Bus 66.

The following Saturday, Oct. 18, the clean-up event will take place at 9 a.m. in Vincent Park in Inglewood. The park can be reached via Metro Bus 40.

All clean up volunteers will receive free t-shirts, refreshments, goodie bags and a certificate of appreciation for doing their part to keep L.A. clean.

The Department of Public Works has launched a public education program that raises awareness about what people can do to prevent pollution and keep local waterways clean.

Nearly 100 million gallons of contaminated water and debris flow through the L.A. County storm drain system each dry day.

MTA is also doing its part to clean up L.A. via its Metro Clean Program. In FY-2003 alone, Metro Clean work crews cleaned up 48,061 bus stops, 32,237 buses, pressure washed 541 bus terminals, and removed 43,117 bags of trash from the streets of Los Angeles.

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Deputies Arrest Alleged Metro Rail Fare Inspector Impostor

(Oct. 10, 2003) Sheriff's deputies have charged an unemployed security guard with impersonating a Metro Rail fare inspector and felony possession of a deadly weapon, a side-handle baton.

Sgt. Scott Carter and Deputy Rick Callen made the arrest, Oct. 8, at the Metro Gold Line's Sierra Madre Villa station when fare inspectors Tonisha Anderson and Lakeisha Fielders became suspicious of a man dressed in a security guard's uniform.

For months, Metro Rail passengers had complained about a white male in his early 20s who appeared to be a fare inspector and was checking patrons' tickets. He was rude, especially to African American patrons, and sometimes confiscated tickets, including those of Metrolink passengers.

Sheriff's Detective Brian Doyle and Deputy Eric Jaime determined that the suspect, a Palmdale resident, had no authorization to carry a baton. A criminal background check revealed that he already was on probation for impersonating a peace officer.

Riding Metro Rail Lines

The suspect told the officers he had been riding Metro Rail lines and checking passengers' tickets. Sheriff's deputies also had cited the man, at least once, for fare evasion.

The Sheriff's Transit Services Bureau is seeking a restraining order to bar the suspect from all Metro Rail and Metrolink trains and property. A further investigation of the suspect's activities is in progress.

Sheriff's Lt. Mike Parker notes that legitimate fare inspectors always wear the Sheriff's Security Assistant uniform of white shirt, dark blue pants, Sheriff's shoulder patches, metal oval badge, patches indicating "fare inspector," an MTA pin, and carry photo identification.

Any MTA employee who has information about the suspect or his alleged actions should contact Sgt. Brian Lee at 922-3429 or at brlee@lasd.org.

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MTA, Local Operators Establishing Bus Service 'Lifeline'

(Oct. 15, 2003) MTA is working with local transit agencies in Los Angeles and surrounding counties to expand a "lifeline" of services for passengers stranded by the transit strike, Deputy CEO John Catoe told a news conference today.

"Our staff is contacting every contract operator, every charter operator in Riverside, Ventura, Orange and Los Angeles counties asking if they have buses and drivers available for MTA use," Catoe said.

He noted that Teamsters picketers had halted service, today, on 12 of MTA's 22 contract lines. But, he said the contractor – First Transit – is bringing in management staff from elsewhere in the country to re-establish service as quickly as possible.

Catoe expects the network of service to increase daily as local transit agencies respond by adding more and more buses and additional routes to the network. One of the first going into effect will be service in the San Fernando Valley from Warner Center to the Gateway Center.

OCTA to provide service

Los Angeles County has agreed to provide service from East Los Angeles College to Gateway, where passengers can connect with other service.

"As the day progresses," Catoe said, "we will assign vehicles to various areas of the county. This will not replace MTA service, but it will provide a lifeline of service to some of our customers who have no other way to get across the county."

Bus service also will be offered between the Metro Green Line's Norwalk and Avalon stations.

In response to overcrowding, Santa Monica's Big Blue Bus is obtaining 60-foot articulated buses from a private company to beef up its service.

While noting that the lifeline service "will not meet even 25 percent" of patrons' needs, Catoe said, "It is a small lifeline, but to the individual who gets a trip and keeps their job or gets their kids to school or goes to the hospital, it's truly a lifeline."

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Deputy CEO John Catoe described MTA's "lifeline" of bus services at a Wednesday news conference.

Long rows of buses stand idle in the Division 18 yard.



With Strike in Full Swing, Non-Striking Employees Pitch In

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Oct. 15, 2003) With the strike against MTA in full swing, Wednesday, non-striking employees pitched in wherever they could to assist stranded commuters.

On Tuesday, more than 50 employees from departments throughout the agency volunteered to augment supervisors working the phones in the Customer Information Center. They answered thousands of 1-800-COMMUTE calls from patrons seeking a ride to work or school.

Many of the volunteers had worked in Customer Information during the 2000 strike, but others were given a quick training course to learn the system, said Communications Manager Tom Longsdon. Customer Information will be open weekdays from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. and on weekends from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

MTA Service Development employees have been working frantically to fill the gaps in the "lifeline" bus service they've managed to stitch together in the past two days, according to Deputy Executive Officer Rod Goldman.

They've also been in constant contact with local transit agencies about beefing up service to carry extra passenger loads. And they worked closely with the Metrolink staff to set up the

PHOTOS: BILL HEARD



Epi Chawdhry, a senior secretary in Environmental Services is one of those who volunteered to staff the Customer Information Center.



Pickers demonstrate at the South Bay Division 18 gate.



Red Line “emulator” service from Union Station to downtown LA.

Passenger communications

Buses await repairs in the Division 18 maintenance garage.

Meanwhile, community relations officers, communications officers and Metro Rail employees drove from bus stop to bus stop, rail station to rail station posting service cancellation notices at elevators, platforms, stairwells and ticket machines.

Communications Manager Mike Barnes provided rail service information signs developed by MTA’s Design Studio and briefed AMTRAK and Travelers Aid volunteers.

Community Relations Manager Jody Litvak hit Metro Rapid stops along Wilshire Boulevard. At each stop, she was bombarded with questions from patrons.

While Community Relations Officer Barbara Burns was posting signs in West Hollywood, she also gave rides to four people – including two tourists from Sweden.

MTA Security

Transit Police Chief Capt. Dan Finkelstein said MTA Security officers and more than 100 Sheriff’s deputies and had been posted at MTA facilities and were patrolling Metro Rail lines to prevent vandalism at the shuttered stations.

He said the deployment of security personnel is being reassessed daily to determine where personnel can best be stationed. “Until this strike develops its own ‘personality,’ we need to have everyone out there to make sure all the bases are covered.”

Finkelstein said employees may experience some delays when crossing through lines of picketers at MTA facilities, but he noted that strikers have a right to demonstrate and he counseled employees to be calm and have patience with the situation.

At the operating divisions

At San Gabriel Valley Division 9, as at other operating divisions, management and the sector staff are starting the buses every other day and driving them around the yard to keep them ready for service when the strike ends. They also are making minor repairs, changing batteries, cleaning and fueling the buses.

At East Valley Division 15, the staff is thinking ahead to when striking employees will be back on the job. The management staff has set out chairs and tables for the picketers and arranged a barbeque.

Venice Division 6’s maintenance management staff has taken the

opportunity while the bus bays are idle to clean the facility.

Metro Rail activities

Meanwhile, at Metro Rail, managers have been alternating 12-hour work shifts maintaining daily administrative functions, including operator assignments, so employees can go right back to their schedules when the strike ends.

"All the people that came back to work are ready at a moment's notice for the strike to end and to resume working," says Rail Division Transportation Manager Hector Guerrero.

Managers at the Metro Green Line are monitoring the yard and making regular security checks. They also start trains once or twice a day and will wash them once a week.

Interns Lisa Huynh and Frank Holman contributed to this story.

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MTA, Union Negotiators Back at Bargaining Table

See: [MTA, Partners Provide 'Lifeline' Transit Service](#) in Los Angeles County

(Oct. 17, 2003) Although MTA mechanics continued their strike into a fourth day, negotiators for the UTU, representing 4,500 bus and train operators, were at the bargaining table with MTA labor negotiators.

Both sides are hopeful an agreement can be reached within 36 hours. Negotiations are expected to continue through the weekend.

Meanwhile, MTA and negotiators for ATU, representing 2,000 mechanics and maintenance employees, are exchanging proposals through a state mediator.

At a Friday morning news conference, Board Chairman Zev Yaroslavsky assured the media that MTA negotiators have the Board's full authority to reach an agreement with the unions.

Lifeline bus service

Starting Monday, Oct. 20, MTA will add the following lifeline service:

- Warner Center to Union Station via 101 Freeway
- Metro Green Line Aviation Station to Norwalk Station via 105 Freeway
- Metro Blue Line Artesia Station to Union Station via 110 Freeway
- Pico/Rimpau to Union Station via Pico and Broadway
- Extend Red Line Special Route A from MacArthur Park to Vermont
- Reroute Red Line Special Route B from 7th Street to 5th and Flower

Currently, the following Metro Bus lines are operating: 58, 96, 167, 218, 603, 605, 608, 625, 626, 646. MTA also has two lifeline shuttle service vans from Union Station to East Los Angeles: an express to El Monte Station and a regular route to East Los Angeles College and USC County Medical Center.

All municipal bus lines (DASH, Foothill Transit, Big Blue Bus, etc,) and Metrolink trains are operating normally and accepting MTA passes.

For lifeline bus routing, commuters should use the Trip Planner at www.mta.net or call the carriers directly. Phone lines at 1-800-COMMUTE are extremely busy; help can be obtained much faster via the internet.

Riders can find out about carpools and vanpools near their homes or workplaces by clicking on "Ridesharing" at www.mta.net or by going directly to www.ridematch.info.

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12-Step Plan to Improve Safety Following Taft High Shooting

By ED SCANNELL

(Oct. 21, 2003) – A multi-agency task force formed by MTA to review bus-operating procedures following the Sept. 9 shooting of three Taft High School students has recommended a broad series of steps to improve the safety of LAUSD students.

The three students were wounded in a shooting near a bus stop outside the Woodland Hills school, one critically. Three suspects have been arrested and remain in custody.

Task force members, including MTA, the Los Angeles Unified School District, the district's police department and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department will carry out the 12-step action plan.

MTA staff must submit a report to the Board in 120 days and must report on the task force's progress in implementing the recommendations in six months.

"I want to commend the MTA and the other participating agencies for addressing this very serious issue with the urgency it deserves," said MTA Board Chairman Zev Yaroslavsky, who requested that MTA convene the independent panel. "These recommendations should go a long way toward helping to ensure that we can avoid any repeat of this tragic incident in the future."

The Sept. 9 shooting, believed to be gang-related, occurred a few minutes after the operator of a Metro Rapid Line 750 bus chose not to pick up students at a bus stop at Ventura Boulevard and Winnetka Avenue. The operator believed some of the students waiting at the stop were unruly and posed a safety risk.

"The actions the task force members have chosen to pursue go well beyond the panel's initial focus," said Deputy CEO John Catoe. "While not every incident can be anticipated or prevented, this tragedy has spawned changes that will create a safer climate at bus stops located near LAUSD schools served by the Metro Bus system."

The plan includes these key actions:

- MTA will modify its current policy that requires bus operators to notify the Bus Operations Control Center (BOCC) of a pass-up *only* if it involves a wheelchair-bound or otherwise disabled customer. The new policy will require operators to immediately notify BOCC when they pass up a bus stop, regardless of the situation.
- Depending on the nature of the pass-up, MTA will contact the Sheriff's Department's Transit Services Bureau. If the pass-up involves students under the age of 18 or unruly students, the Transit Services Bureau will contact the LAUSD police department for follow up and/or intervention.
- MTA will create a bus safety-training program for schools similar to its rail safety-training program and will initially test it in schools in the San Fernando Valley. The program will be expanded later throughout MTA's service area. In addition, MTA and LAUSD will determine whether LAUSD training programs

related to situations involving adolescent behavior might be incorporated into MTA training programs.

- Whenever an MTA bus operator has requested an unruly passenger under the age of 18 to vacate a bus, the operator must request a supervisor or police officer to respond. The LAUSD police department will be notified when a student is put off the bus during school pick-up or drop-off hours.
- MTA's Chief of Police, Capt. Dan Finkelstein, and LAUSD Police Department Cmdr. Steven LaRoche will develop procedures for contact and coordination between the two agencies.

Other steps identified by the task force include:

- Notification to MTA of new school openings and coordination of bus stop locations and changes to service new schools,
- Notification to MTA of school schedule changes,
- Inspections of bus stops at or near schools to determine whether the stops should be relocated to provide maximum space,
- Familiarize LAUSD personnel with the Bus Operations Control Center, MTA's incident reporting system and new technology.

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MTA Labor News UPDATE

Tuesday, October 21, 2003

MTA, ATU Negotiations Resume at Hall of Administration

Negotiators for MTA and ATU resumed bargaining talks through a state mediator at 2 p.m., today, at the Hall of Administration. The MTA Board has scheduled a telephone conference for 4 p.m. to update members on the labor situation.

ATU leaders have been studying the MTA's latest contract offer. It includes wage and benefit proposals, as well as new provisions aimed at restoring financial stability to the union's Health and Welfare Trust Fund.

No new talks with the UTU, representing bus and rail operators, have been set. That union is studying a comprehensive offer presented on Saturday by MTA. MTA and UTU negotiators have communicated frequently through a state mediator.

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Undercurrent of Activity at 'Deserted' Operating Divisions

By FRANKLIN A. HOLMAN

(Oct. 22, 2003) Divisions seem abandoned without the busyness of buses and scurrying employees, but among seemingly deserted grounds are dedicated workers who are keeping the divisions alive and healthy.

Throughout the divisions, transportation managers and non-contract employees are busy marking the boards so that operators' schedules are ready the minute the strike comes to an end.

The buses and trains are fired up daily and kept clean so they will be in top shape when the union workers come back to their jobs. To further protect buses and equipment, regular surveillance of the bus yards takes place day and night.

Backed-up paperwork and filing are being done and stock rooms are being cleaned out. Employees have been keeping busy catching up on data input and records. They also are doing the mopping, trash pickup and other janitorial requirements around the division.

"It's been a team effort to keep the facility clean," says Central City Division 1 Transportation Manager Sonja Owens.

From time to time during the day, employees and managers talk to the picketers and make sure that they have water, access to restrooms and some shade, when possible.

"I talk to the strikers every day," Owens says. "I want to keep open and honest communication with them."

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Teamsters Striker Killed in Auto Accident was MTA Retiree

(Oct. 22, 2003) A Teamsters Union striker who died following an automobile accident outside a First Transit Inc. facility, Tuesday, was a retired Metro Bus operator with almost 30 years' service.

Hamilton Lylum, 78, had worked the past eight years as a bus driver for First Transit following retirement from MTA. As he drove away from the First Transit facility in Compton, his car was struck broadside by an oncoming vehicle.

The accident happened right in front of the picket line he had just left, stunning his co-workers. Lylum was a member of the Teamsters Local 572, which has been on strike against First Transit since last week.

First Transit contracts from MTA to operate 15 bus lines, of which 12 have been affected by the Teamsters strike.

Lylum, who lived with his wife in Harbor City, joined MTA in June 1957 and over the years had worked at Arthur Winston Division 5 and other operating divisions. He retired in January 1987 from South Bay Division 18. His brother, Benjamin, now deceased, was a division manager.

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MTA Transit Security Officers Gus Lozano, left, and Henry Solis keep vigil at the general entrance to Gateway Transit Center.



PHOTO: GAYLE ANDERSON

MTA Security Officers, Sheriff's Deputies Help Ensure a Peaceful Strike

By FRANKLIN A. HOLMAN

(October 22, 2003) While work may have changed for some MTA employees during the strike, MTA Security officers and Sheriff's deputies have been busy protecting MTA staff and property.

"The main challenge is ensuring that everyone keeps a cool head when crossing the picket line," Transit Security Lt. Dan Cowden says. "We want staff to relax and be patient when crossing the picket lines."

To ensure a peaceful strike, Security officers have been reassigned to strike duty, working 12-hour shifts, six days a week. The number of Security officers that can be deployed has also increased so they can efficiently monitor gates and patrol rail lines during the strike.

"We have several billion dollars of public assets that we are keeping an eye on," says Cowden.

First Amendment rights

While on duty, Security officers maintain open communication with the picket line captains to ensure that the First Amendment rights of the picketers are protected, says Sheriff's Lt. Gary Hayden.

Along with the Security officers, Sheriff's deputies are placed on fixed posts wherever there are picketers. "Their safety and security is part of our job too," says Cowden.

The deputies keep their eyes open for problem areas and stay in contact with the Transit Law Enforcement and Security Emergency Operations Center so resources can be sent out quickly if certain picketing areas heat up.

"We make sure that there is peace," Sheriff's Sgt. Paul Becker says. "We know that sometimes tempers flare."

Cordial relations

Although strikes can be packed with emotion, "For the most part,

strikers have been cordial in exercising their right to strike," says Becker.

Crossroads Depot Division 2 Transportation Manager Thom Pelk says, "This is the most congenial strike I have ever been involved in."

To prepare for strike duty, Sheriff's deputies get instruction regarding labor laws and enforcement issues from Labor Relations Sgt. George Smith, but through their training, the deputies and Security officers are prepared to handle the duties assigned to them.

"The types of things they do are part of their training," says Cowden.

Although the Security Department is not involved in the issues of the strike, Cowden says, "We hope we come to a good resolution for both parties so we can get back to providing service for the transit riding public as quickly as possible."

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CEO Roger Snoble responds to inquiries at morning media briefing.



PHOTO: BILL HEARD

Snoble Encouraged by Resumption of Talks with ATU

- **CEO announces Metro School Pool at media briefing.**

(Oct. 22, 2003) With negotiations between MTA and the ATU scheduled at 1:30 p.m., today, CEO Roger Snoble says he is encouraged by the resumption of talks with the mechanics' union.

During a morning media briefing at MTA Headquarters, the CEO said he's hopeful the momentum will build toward a contract settlement.

He added that, although the emphasis in the labor talks has now shifted to the ATU, MTA may be closer to agreement with the UTU, representing bus and rail operators.

The CEO used the media briefing to announce the School Pool Program – an addition to MTA's Rideshare Program.

The School Pool program will have an exclusive database of families interested in forming or joining a car- or vanpool at specific campuses within LA County.

Metro Commute Services, MTA's rideshare group, is in the process of identifying and contacting school districts and schools in Los Angeles County. A hotline (922-2811) will be active as of Thursday, Oct. 23.

During the media briefing, Snoble said Caltrans studies show that local freeway traffic has increased by about 2 percent, causing a 5 mph to 10 mph reduction in freeway speeds. LADOT reported a 4 percent to 6 percent increase in traffic at intersections during the first week of the strike.

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Orbital consultant John Tyni, seated, tests ATMS on new console as Bus Operations Control Manager Tom Jasmin reviews.



PHOTOS: GAYLE ANDERSON

Bus Operation Control Ready to Roll

- Advanced technology system coming online and on board advances tracking capability.

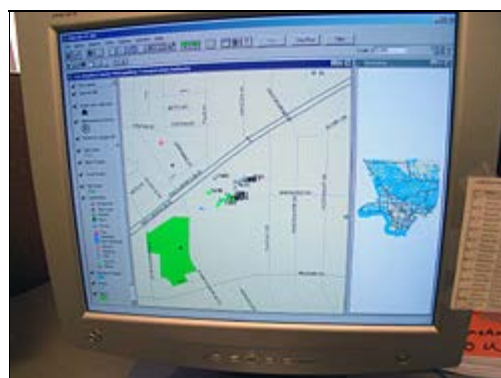
By GAYLE ANDERSON

It's the 'air traffic control' of the MTA. While all may be quiet on the home front during the transit strike, Bus Operation Control is manning the critical communication center systems, albeit with a skeletal crew.

"BOC remains a vital resource in emergencies," says Manager Tom Jasmin.

In addition to emergency calls that may come at any time from the fire department, law enforcement and MTA divisions, the center monitors the ADA Hotline and remains a source of information for inquiries from operators and personnel.

When the strike ends, bus controllers will return to new and vastly improved Automated Transit Management System (ATMS) consoles that will enhance the BOC's tracking system with a high-tech, state-of-the-art capability. From the new consoles, controllers will be able to electronically board the bus in real-time.



"We can pinpoint the location of a bus within ten feet," said Jasmin. "We can also determine the number of passengers on

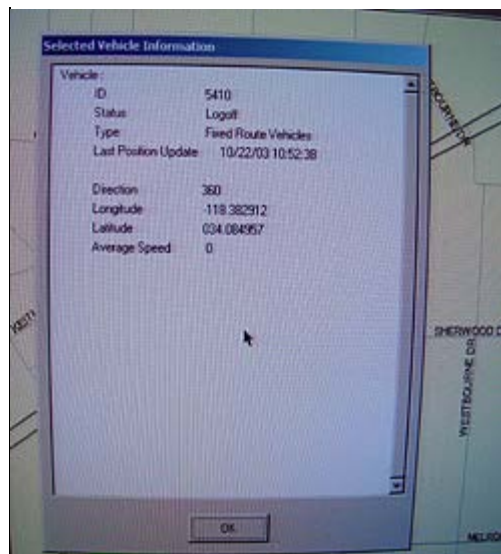
Controller pinpoints bus on screen, above, and reads data on a separate screen, below.

board and advise the operator in various situations.

"Most significantly, in the event of an emergency on board a bus, controllers will now be able to listen in on what is happening," said Jasmin.

The ATMS system has already been installed at Divisions 1 and 2. The contractor, Motorola, has been outfitting 22 buses a day at Division 7.

The MTA's fleet of more than 2,000 buses began to be outfitted with the communication system in September. The entire operation should be rolling by April 2004, noted Jasmin.



Tyni establishes contact at console with readied buses to test newly installed system. Installations are complete for the divisions 1 and 2 fleet.



Along with the new consoles, returning bus controllers will find a tidy work area. Data entry has been brought up to date, remedial work made current and the carpets thoroughly vacuumed.

All may be quiet on the home front, but, Jasmin says, BOC is ready to roll in a heartbeat.

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Volunteer Customer Info Agents Help Commuters Find Alternative Routes

By LISA HUYNH

(Oct. 23, 2003) About 75 employees from all over MTA have volunteered to work as Customer Information agents to help commuters get to work, school, recreation and home.

With only 15 to 20 minutes of training, the temporary agents learned to use the computer database to find alternative routes for callers inconvenienced by the strike



Planning Administrative Aide Lisa Martinez finds working as an information agent rewarding.

The agent can enter the caller's location, destination and travel time to trace every possible route to accommodate a customer's needs.

"Right now, there aren't very many choices or routes because we pulled all of the MTA services out of the database," says Customer Relations Manager Tom Longsdon.

Agents also can find alternative routes by using maps, the Thomas Guide and brochures. Commuters are relying on municipal bus lines, such as LADOT, Foothill Transit, Montebello Transit and Santa Monica's Big Blue Bus.

Sheriff's Department Security Assistant Ivan Moreno has been a Customer Information agent for a couple of days and found it was stressful in the beginning.

"Fortunately, I haven't gotten any bad or rude calls," says Moreno. "Everybody is just desperate about finding information on how to get to their destination. People have been polite and patient, so it's a good thing for me."

Planning Administrative Aide Lisa Martinez, who has been working as an information agent for about a week, says helping out customers during the strike is rewarding.

"It seems like they're very appreciative knowing that there's someone on the other side of the line that is willing to help and go the extra mile to find alternative routes," says Martinez.

Martinez also says that, although some callers are frustrated because it can take a few hours and up to five buses to get where they need to go, they are thankful for the service.

"The volunteers are doing an incredible job," says Longsdon. "To come here with minimal amount of training, go into a strange environment, and be as cheerful as they are, I can't say enough good things about them. They've been fantastic."

Then and Now:

- Normally, there are about 95 full-time Customer Information

agents. During the first week of the strike, there were about 30 volunteer Customer Information agents. Now, there are about 75.

- During the first week of the strike, the average wait time for a caller to get to an agent was about 15 to 20 minutes. Now, the wait time is less than a minute.
- Before the strike, the Customer Relations Department received about 7,000 calls per day. Now, they get about 5,000 calls per day.
- Before the strike, MTA's website received about 25,000 hits per day. Now, it gets 40,000 hits per day.

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Gateway Building Synchronized for Weekend Time Change

(Oct. 24, 2003) With Daylight Savings Time ending this Sunday morning at 2 a.m., many will forget to set their clocks back one hour.

But thanks to a synchronization system transmitted by satellite to clocks in the MTA Board Room and conference rooms, the transition to Standard Time on Sunday morning will proceed like clockwork at the MTA, reports General Services Manager Irma Licea.

While the conference room and board room clocks will remain constant in their synchronization, General Services staff will still need to change the clocks on office walls. Employees are reminded to make note of the time change at the close of business day prior to Sunday. -- from ADRIENNE S. BLYTHE



What time is it? General Services Manager Irma Licea reminds us to set our clocks back one hour on Sunday morning.

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Assistant Maintenance Manager Gary Schachel keeps a watchful eye during nightly rounds at Division 2.



By ADRIENNE FIGUEROA

(Oct. 24, 2003) Each night, as dusk falls and the moon casts its light over downtown Los Angeles, restless spirits roam the deserted maintenance building at Crossroads Depot Division 2.

The wind whistles through the old glass skylight windows above the shop floor, rattling chains that hang ominously from the ceiling. The flutter of bird wings echoes throughout the cool night air in the desolate century-old structure.

Occasionally, the gas detection alarm will sound abruptly, but the source remains a mystery. It's spooky enough to raise the hairs on the back of your neck.

Before the MTA mechanic strike, an average of 28 people – service attendants, supervisors and mechanics – worked overnight at the division. Now, Division 2 Assistant Maintenance Manager Gary Schachel works the graveyard shift.

"It gets haunted here at night," says Schachel. "I go searching for noises."

Is Division 2 haunted? That's been the talk around the building for some time.

"The goblins'll get you if you don't watch out!"
-- Children's poem



Gary Schachel checks the rattling doors, above, but the street outside, below, is empty.



"It's a little spooky," says Division 2 Maintenance Manager Donel Harris. "I've had mechanics tell me they've heard some strange noises in the yard, but things like that don't scare me. It doesn't give me the heebiejeebies."

Constructed in 1903 as a Los Angeles Railway division, the structure was closed down in 1985. Then, in 1992, Division 2 reopened, resurrecting the spirits that had been locked up for eleven years.

As a child, Crossroads Division 2 Transportation Manager Thom Pelk was always on the quest for a good scare. Now, he has fulfilled his thirst for thrills by working at the division.

"I look for that kind of stuff," he says. "There's something very eerie about the maintenance building."

But, tonight, by the dim light of a crescent moon, it's Gary Schachel who will hold vigil in the cavernous structure, watching...listening ...for things that go bump in the night.

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When he's not raising the rafters, above, Crossroads ghost retires to his office in the basement, below, where workers often find his chair pulled back from his desk, as if to rest his ghostly feet.



PHOTOS: GAYLE ANDERSON

MTA LABOR NEWS UPDATE

Friday, October 24, 2003

**MTA, ATU Talks Resume;
'Big-Ticket' Issues Still Not Resolved**

Negotiations between MTA and the ATU, representing striking mechanics, were resumed at about 1 p.m., today, in the 11th day of the transit strike. MTA negotiators have indicated a willingness to work around the clock.

Following a late afternoon start, Thursday, negotiators met until 10:30 p.m. The day was marked by the presentation of a counterproposal by the ATU, but the talks still have not resolved the big-ticket items of wages and benefits. The negotiations are expected to go into the weekend.

No contract talks were held, Thursday, between MTA and the UTU, representing bus and train operators. Negotiations are scheduled to resume, Sunday, at the County Hall of Administration.

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WORKIN' ON THE RAILROAD - Vic Carlucci, a Real Estate assistant, at right, and Gayner Paz, an administrative analyst in the CEO's Office, are hard at work deep-cleaning a pair of rail cars at the Metro Rail Division 20.



Photos: Bill Heard and Gayle Anderson

Volunteer Bus, Rail Car Cleaners Buzz Through Their Weekend Work

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Oct. 28, 2003) Hard-working squads of employee volunteers – mops, scrapers and towels in hand – buzzed through division yards over the weekend, leaving some 500 buses and rail cars sparkling clean.

Outfitted in masks, goggles and gloves, almost 90 volunteers worked through the hot, smoky weather, Saturday and Sunday, at nine operating divisions and the Metro Red Line yard.

"They did a beautiful job," said Rich Herpers, assistant maintenance manager at North Los Angeles Division 3. "Everybody got along great and did the work that needed to be done. I want them to come and volunteer next weekend."

From left, Fe Alcid-Little, Norfina Jones, Mary Lou Williams and Walt Davis are a cleaning machine at Gateway Division 10.



Frances Calzada, an administrative aide in Program and Policy Analysis, teamed up with Patsy Espinoza, a secretary in the Board Secretary's office, to clean Crossroads Depot Division 2 buses.

Patsy Espinoza, left, and Frances Calzada clean up at Crossroads Depot Division 2.



"It was hard work," said Espinoza. "I think I lost, like, 50 pounds!"

Inventive passengers

The two discovered that bus riders have found some inventive ways to get rid of their gum, stashing it in crevices around the seats and windows. Then, there was the passenger who superglued a penny to a seat back.

"We couldn't get it off," said Calzada.

Meanwhile, at the Metro Rail Division 20, Vic Carlucci, a Real Estate assistant, and Gayner Paz, an administrative analyst in the CEO's Office, were hard at work deep-cleaning a pair of rail cars.

"A lot of elbow grease goes into cleaning these cars," Carlucci said, as he scrubbed away at a stubborn stain running along a door frame.

Across the aisle, Paz interrupted his work wiping the ceiling to say, "It's taken all day to clean two cars. It's really labor-intensive with a lot of details to make the cars look like new again."

"I'm very appreciative of their efforts," Deputy CEO John Catoe said of the volunteers and their accomplishments. "They care about our services and they want us to get our services back on the road. Any thing they can do will help."

Catoe said MTA may ask for volunteers, next weekend, to clean buses and train cars. Exempt employees are paid for

Meanwhile, at North Los Angeles Division 3



Yes, Kimberly Yu and Aurora Jackson do windows. Below, Claudia Casasola and Diane Ponce mop up.



their work at regular hourly rates, while non-exempt employees are paid time and a half.

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MTA LABOR NEWS UPDATE

Tuesday, October 28, 2003

**MTA Board Declares Impasse in ATU Contract Talks;
Last, Best and Final Offer Issued to Mechanics**

With negotiations deadlocked, the MTA Board of Directors has declared an impasse after 17 months of contract talks with the ATU. At the Board's instruction, CEO Roger Snoble issued a last, best and final offer, today, to the mechanics union.

When negotiations broke off, MTA officials estimated that the two sides were \$37 million apart on health and welfare issues and, overall, approximately \$98 million apart. The Board said no more money can be or will be added to the last, best and final offer.

Saying that further talks with the union would yield no progress, Snoble has urged ATU leaders to present the MTA offer to its members and to recommend its approval by union members.

Negotiations with the UTU, representing bus and train operators, are expected to continue, although no further talks have been scheduled at this writing. Talks also are continuing with the TCU, representing clerks and custodians.

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MTA LABOR NEWS UPDATE

Wednesday, October 29, 2003

**MTA Issues Last, Best and Final Offer to ATU;
CEO Letter, Newsletter Sent to Union Members**

- READ> ['The Communicator'](#)

MTA issued a last, best and final multi-year contract offer, Tuesday, to leaders of the striking mechanics union. The offer also was discussed in a letter from CEO Roger Snoble and in a Communicator newsletter. Both were mailed to ATU members and have been distributed on the picket lines.

The Communicator newsletter has been published on MTA's Internet website at www.mta.net and is also available here. (Click on link at top of article)

The newsletter laid out many details of the last, best and final offer. These included wage increases totaling 5 percent over three years, an immediate cash infusion of \$4.7 million to the ATU Health & Welfare Trust Fund, along with increased contributions to the Fund by MTA.

In Snoble's letter and in the management newsletter, MTA urged union members to contact the ATU leadership to request that the contract offer be presented to the members for a ratification vote.

Meanwhile, negotiations with the UTU, representing bus and train operators, are expected to continue, although no further talks have been scheduled at this writing. Talks also are continuing with the TCU, representing clerks and custodians.

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Volunteers Needed for a Second Effort to Clean Buses, Trains

(Oct. 29, 2003) Following a successful weekend that left 500 buses and rail cars looking like new, MTA is again seeking volunteers to clean transit vehicles this coming Saturday and Sunday.

"The sector general managers and division maintenance managers were very pleased with the pride and dedication displayed by the many volunteers," said Alex Clifford, managing director, Operations.

Volunteers will be needed, this weekend, at the Metro Red Line yard and at divisions 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 15 and 18. The deadline for weekend volunteers is mid-day, Thursday, Oct. 30.

Sign-up form

Volunteers must complete and return the linked form to Renee Willis by mid-day, Thursday, Oct. 30. In order to ensure there is adequate allocation of volunteers across the various divisions, volunteers should indicate three preferred assignments.

- [Click here to download 'weekend assignment' excel report.](#)

Want to volunteer to help get Metro Buses and Trains ready for when the strike ends? Here are the details:

Volunteer Pay:

Paid overtime will be limited to pay grade P and below. Exempt employees will be paid straight time for overtime hours (payroll earn code OSK), and Non-Exempt employees will be paid time and a half for overtime hours (payroll earn code OTP).

Your overtime hours at the Division will be reported on your regular timesheet and charged to Project 300006, Task 02.04 (If you have a regular work assignment on Saturday and/or Sunday, you will not be able to volunteer for this assignment).

Keep in mind that you qualify for overtime if you have worked 40 hours this week as of Friday, October 31st for Saturday's OT work, and plan to work 40 hours next week for Sunday's OT work, inclusive of Time Off With Pay.

Intern Volunteers:

Interns may volunteer provided they meet the following criteria:

- Interns must obtain the permission of their immediate supervisor prior to volunteering
- Interns cannot work overtime
- Hours worked will be paid as straight time
- Interns can work Saturday and/or Sunday, provided the total hours per week, Sunday through Saturday, does not exceed 40 hours, inclusive of the volunteered hours.

Plan To Get Dirty:

Please expect to get dirty, so dress appropriately (long pants), but for safety reasons, please wear closed-toe and closed-back shoes with a rubberized or non-slip sole, such as tennis shoes, running

shoes or safety shoes. Consider a hat or baseball cap, in case you work outside the bus in direct sun light.

You must wear a safety vest during your work assignment. All Divisions will provide you the safety vest. If required, the Division will provide all other safety wear, such as gloves and eyewear.

First Come, First Served:

Assignments will be allocated on a "first come, first served basis." Please feel free to volunteer for one or both days, but we do request that you complete a full eight hours of service for the day or days you volunteer. All assignments will start at 8:00 a.m. at each location (Division addresses will be provided with the assignment sheet).

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Firefighters from Fire Station 4 board MTA bus and take a seat for long, but air-conditioned, ride to Hesperia.

MTA Provides Drivers and Buses for Wildfire Relief Efforts

By GAYLE ANDERSON and FRANKLIN A. HOLMAN

(Oct. 29, 2003) The sun could barely be seen poking through its curtain of smoke and fog at the Fire Academy in Elysian Park, but six MTA buses were lined up at dawn to transport some 50 firefighters and equipment to the front lines of the 45-mile blazing fire that rings the Los Angeles region.

The MTA buses were recruited to deliver the firefighters to a three-day assignment at various command posts set up to battle the fire, said Tom Jasmin, Bus Operations Control manager. The buses return in the afternoon with an exhausted crew of firefighters coming off their three-day duty on the front lines of the fire.

The fire, which has charred hundreds of thousands of acres in an advancing wall of flame, is a formidable foe.

Today, an army was preparing for battle: Some 50 firefighters from 10 fire stations, escorted by a squadron of sheriff's deputies, were loading onto a convoy of MTA buses operated by a contingent of MTA supervisors and support staff. Each transport would be accompanied by a field equipment vehicle from the Regional Rebuild Center.

After the fire chiefs had drawn the battle lines, San Gabriel Valley Sector Assistant Transportation Manager Yvonne Brewer-Smith huddled with operators to deliver the assignments: two buses would head out to Hesperia; two others would head south to San Diego. Two more buses would return to North Los Angeles Division 3 to stand by on-call.

MTA is sending diesel buses, instead of CNG coaches, to San Diego since diesel refueling stations are more accessible there.

Transportation Operation Supervisors Marty Brower, Robert Nedelcoff, Devinder Pal Singh, Frank Cecere and



MTA leads convoy of firefighters to San Diego and Hesperia hot spots.



Above, SGV Assistant Transportation Manager Yvonne Brewer-Smith delivers the roll call and assignments. Below, firefighters board bus with gear.



Tom LaPatka from the San Gabriel Valley Sector office, along with TOS's David Castillo, Collis Harrison, Anthony Salcido of West Hollywood Division 7, are tapped for the mission.

On Tuesday, MTA transported some 120 firefighters and their equipment to the communities suffering from the wildfires.

TOS David Castillo was operating one of the buses sent to the San Bernardino fires.

"We were sent straight up the mountain to the Rim of the World location," he said. "At one point we passed a wall of fire that had just broken through. Low-flying planes were dropping loads of fire retardant around us. It was a disaster area like I've never seen."

Buses marked "firefighter transport" convoyed along with fire trucks and Sheriff's deputies' cars to Porter Ranch, Simi Valley and Lake Arrowhead. Field Equipment Technician Sean Dunning also joined the group so that mechanical difficulties could be dealt with immediately.

"This task is in support of the fire fighters and the communities we serve," said Jasmin.

The buses departed from North Los Angeles Division 3 and, although they passed ATU picketers, there were no protests.

Union leaders support

"The picketers and union leader Neil Silver are in full support of transporting fire fighters," said Jasmin. UTU General Chairman James Williams also gave his approval to the effort.

MTA has frequently aided in civil emergencies in the past by driving relief crews to disaster scenes such as the Los Angeles Riots.

"Responding to this emergency is the same, except that supervisors are taking care of business because of the strike," said Jasmin.

Until the fire is extinguished, MTA will aid firefighters in their efforts to put out the blaze by transporting them to the communities that need help.

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Above, Firefighter Chip Molloy, chief staff assistant at OCD, left, and Fire Chief John Quintanar, right, flank SGV's Yvonne Brewer-Smith and BOC manager Tom Jasmin to map out deployment. Below, Fire Station 4 firefighters await orders.



PHOTOS: GAYLE ANDERSON

Open Enrollment Online for Non-Contract, AFSCME, and Teamster Employees

LINK> Click here to download 2004 [Benefits Enrollment Instructions](#)

LINK> Click here to access 2004 Benefits [Online Enrollment System](#)

- The Annual Benefits Open Enrollment period for Non-Contract, AFSCME, and Teamster employees is scheduled to begin on Saturday, November 1, 2003 and will end as of close of business on Monday, November 17, 2003.

Important steps to take:

- **Review the Employee Benefits Enrollment Instructions.**
This link is located at the top of the right-hand column of the metro.net home page. These easy-to-follow instructions explain your unique ID and password, as well as provide helpful reminders.
- **Access the 2004 Benefits Online Enrollment System.**
This link is also located at the top of the right-hand column of the metro.net home page. This system is available online from any location at <http://fisben.mta.net>

The online system will allow you to review your current enrollment choices, add, delete, or update dependent information, and make changes to your benefit plans for calendar year 2004, if you so desire. Please pay particular attention to instructions (printed in "red") which will assist you in successfully completing your enrollment.

If no changes are made, current plans will remain in effect during calendar year 2004, with the exception of the Flex Spending Accounts and the Non-Tobacco Users Life Insurance, both of which require an election each year.

The 2004 Guidebooks, brochures, plan enrollment forms, and links to insurance carrier websites are included on the system. Specific insurance carrier websites require Internet access, and are provided as a convenience, but are not required to complete your enrollment process.
- **Print a copy of your Confirmation Statement** and retain for your records.

Please contact the Pension and Benefits staff if you have any questions or need assistance completing your Open Enrollment:

- Jan Olsen 922-7151
- Judi Cline 922-7186
- Ed Myatt 922-7185

Extra computers are also available in the Pension & Benefits area for your use if you do not have access elsewhere.

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Munis, Metrolink to Honor MTA's October Passes in November

- Employee IDs OK, Too

By RICK JAGER

(Oct. 30, 2003) While MTA mechanics remain on strike, all municipal bus operators and Metrolink have agreed to accept MTA's October passes as valid fare until further notice.

The transit agencies also have agreed to accept MTA employee ID badges as fare during the union work stoppage.

Agreements are in place with 17 municipal transit operations to accept October passes through the month of November. MTA passes also are honored on all Metrolink trains.

Municipal operators honoring MTA passes are: Antelope Valley Transit, Access Services Inc., Arcadia Transit, Claremont Dial-a-Ride, Commerce, Culver City, Long Beach Transit, Foothill Transit, Gardena, La Mirada, LADOT, Montebello, Norwalk, Redondo Beach, Santa Clarita, Santa Monica and Torrance.

MTA patrons who purchased monthly, semi-monthly or weekly passes for October should retain those passes until the strike has ended.

MTA will announce at a later date a plan to credit passholders for the days on which Metro Bus and Metro Rail service was not available.

The latest information on lifeline transit services is available at www.mta.net by clicking on Transit Service Update. For rideshare information, visit www.ridematch.info.

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Wildfires Taught Derick Mahome a Valuable Lesson

By BILL HEARD and ADRIENNE S. BLYTHE

(Oct. 31, 2003) Watching the wildfires consume the brush near his Simi Valley home, last weekend, gave Derick Mahome some sleepless nights. But, he also learned a valuable lesson: Be prepared!

Details are not confirmed, but a Central City Division 1 Transportation Operations Supervisor Harry Bayless, 53, a 20-year MTA veteran, is said to have lost his home in the Rancho Cucamonga wildfire.

Despite firefighters' best efforts in starting backfires, on Monday the flames jumped the 118 Freeway and came within three-quarters of a mile of his three-year-old house. Heavy smoke obscured the sky and ash rained onto the neighborhood.

"It was almost surreal," says Mahome, an assistant transportation manager at West Hollywood Division 7. "You don't think this can happen to you, but it was!"

Mahome had been working seven days straight because of the transit strike. But, for three days this week, his first priority was to his family.

As the situation in Simi Valley deteriorated, Mahome worked alongside his wife, Marina, and their college-age kids, son Tytan, 22, and daughter Ma-Ryia, 20, to pack their cars with as much of their household goods as possible. Many of the neighbors left the area during a voluntary evacuation.

As the fire approached, Mahome took pictures of his house and its contents in case he had to make an insurance claim. He gathered important documents.

Jammed their cars

The family packed their clothes – deciding which clothes was difficult – and some family photos. They jammed as much of it as they could into their cars.

In the end, the family was able to remain in their house, although the property and their cars werer blanketed with ash. "The pool looks like someone took a bath in it and left a ring around the tub," says Mahome.

Since the threat of fire has receded and life is getting somewhat back to normal, Mahome has had time to reflect on how he and his family can be better prepared in the event of another such crisis.

They're stocking emergency supplies and assembling insurance documentation, organizing their important papers and placing some in a safety deposit box at their bank. They also will send copies to family members for safekeeping. They have walkie-talkies ready for use.

They made a list of critical phone numbers and have devised a plan with a meeting place in case the family is separated in an emergency.

And, if the fire comes again or another disaster strikes, Derick Mahome and his family will be better prepared. They may not sleep easy, but it won't be the nightmare they just experienced.

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Pint-Sized Superheroes, Cartoon Stars Bring Halloween to MTA



By VERONICA TORREJÓN

(Oct. 31, 2003) Halloween festivities kicked off early for children at the Gateway Child Development Center, Friday, as close to 70 pint-sized superheroes, cartoon stars, and fairytale characters paraded around the MTA lobby to the delight of onlookers.

A chorus of “Trick or Treats” could be heard from children ranging in age from 6-months to 6-years. Superman, Scooby Doo, Tigger, Bob the Builder, Snow White, The Incredible Hulk, and Spiderman were among the parade attendees.

“I’m Winnie the Pooh,” says 2-year-old Austin Compton, whose father Keith works as a chief administrative analyst for the MTA Diversity and Economic Opportunities Department.

It was the largest turnout in several years, said Center Director Esmeralda Ortiz. The Center, located in the MTA

Doing her best lamb impression, nine-month-old Amber Kashay warms up backstage.



Two-year-old Austin Compton rests in the arms of his mother Karen before his big debut.



Even Superman needs a little help from his dad -- Three-year-old A.J. Reyes gets a last-minute costume adjustment by his dad Leo Reyes.



Plaza on Cesar Chavez Boulevard, cares for infants as young as 6-weeks-old and children up to age 6.

More than half of children at the center belong to MTA employees many of who brought candy for the mini Trick-or-Treaters. Some, like Administrative Intern Shante Bell were overwhelmed by the number of children in the parade.

No more candy!

"I don't have any more candy," says Bell incredulously. "Where are all these kids coming from?"

Behind the scene in the Center, parents frantically straightened hats, touched-up makeup, took last-minute pictures and adjusted costumes.

"I wanna look in the mirror," said Austin, before scampering away from the outstretched arms of his mother, Karen, who was busy drawing whiskers on his face.

Close by, city employee Leo Reyes smiled proudly behind the lens of his camera at his 3-year-old son dressed as Superman. "A.J., smile for Daddy," said Reyes.

For some, like 6-month old Tyson Belle, whose father Terrence works as an MTA signal inspector, the experience was a first.

"This is his first Halloween ever," said his mother, Superior Court employee Shalonn Belle. "I just had to be here."

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Gearing up for the big parade is Assistant Director Lisa Johnson and her flock of superheroes and princesses.



Trick-or-Treaters from the Gateway Child Development Center arrive in style.



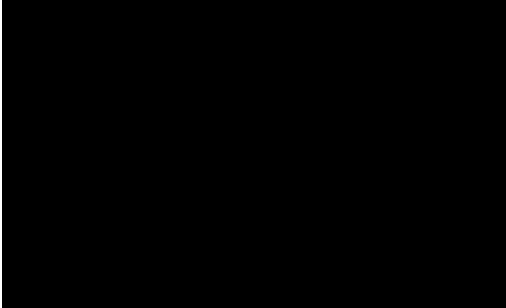
Ever the reluctant star, 16-month-old Preston Howey stops crying long enough to pose for the camera with his dad, Chief Administrative Analyst Donald Howey.



Candy gram.



Andrea Burnside escorts a rocket man, son Thomas, down the candy lane.





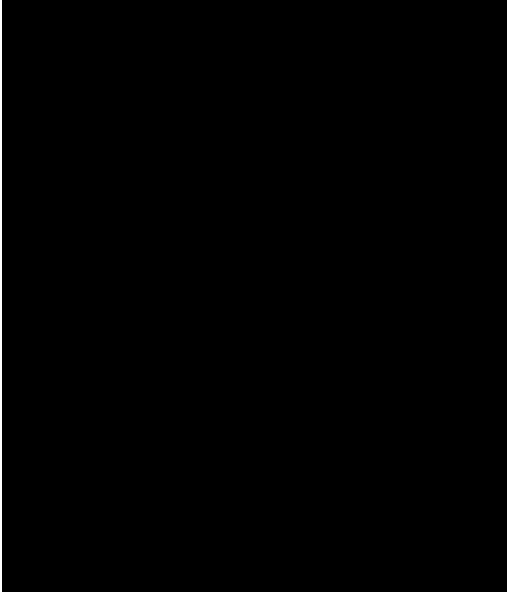
Trick-or-Treaters trade smiles for candy as employees hand out the goodies.



All ready for the sock hop are administrative interns Shante Bell, Helen Valenzuela, Pricila Hidalgo, and Anne Nguyen.



This little M&M is cute enough to make anyone melt. The center's youngest Trick-or-Treater, 6-month old Tyson Belle, retreats from the spotlight in the arms of his mother



Shalonn.



PHOTOS: GAYLE ANDERSON

MTA LABOR NEWS UPDATE

Friday, October 31, 2003

**MTA Won't Support Binding Arbitration in ATU Contract Talks;
First Transit, Teamsters Reach Tentative Agreement**

- **Also: MTA Working to Clarify Metrolink Agreement**

Friday saw increased activity on the labor front as the region entered the 18th day of the transit strike:

MTA officials said they do not support intervention of an outside arbitrator into its negotiations with the ATU, representing striking mechanics.

First Transit Inc. and Teamsters Local 572 reached a tentative agreement, Thursday. If ratified by union members on Sunday, as expected, all 12 MTA contract bus lines will be back in service Tuesday morning, Nov. 4.

MTA's statement came in response to an announcement by the ATU that its members would return to work if the agency agreed to binding arbitration. MTA welcomed the union's offer to return to work, but said it has given the union a fair and reasonable last, best and final offer that should be presented to union members for a vote.

MTA said it cannot turn over responsibility for negotiating contracts worth hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars to an arbitrator who is not accountable to the taxpayers. The agency said use of an arbitrator would only serve to further delay a resolution of the outstanding contract issues.

MTA Working to Clarify Metrolink Agreement

MTA is working to clarify Metrolink's position on acceptance of employee ID badges as fare media on the commuter rail line. MTA says it will reimburse Metrolink for all employee rides to all destinations, regardless of whether MTA buses service those locations.

"Our intent is for badges to be good at all Metrolink stops," said Rod Goldman, deputy executive officer, Operations. "We will reimburse Metrolink for those passengers."

In the meantime, Goldman notes that Transitcheks are again available and that employees who ride Metrolink can use them to purchase a November pass, if they wish.

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Wildfire Scare Sends SFV Sector Office Employees Home Early

By ADRIENNE S. BLYTHE

(Oct. 31, 2003) San Fernando Valley Sector employees had a close call last Monday afternoon when wildfires raged near their Chatsworth office. The office closed early when smoke made it difficult for many employees to breathe.

"The air was clear throughout the morning and then around 2:30 the wind shifted and within 10 to 15 minutes the air became black," said Community Relations Officer Eric Rapp. "You could not see a quarter of a mile in front of you."

When employees walked outside they could see the flames rising from the hills across the street from the office.

"The pavement and the pool cars were covered with ash and the smell of smoke remained in the building until Thursday morning," Rapp said.

Many of the surrounding neighborhoods in the community of Chatsworth were evacuated and the winds were blowing directly towards the MTA office building. The office closed at 3 p.m. just to be safe.

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Photos taken by Eric Rapp on Monday show progression of wildfire. View is from the San Fernando Valley sector office, looking north and west up Topanga Canyon Blvd.



... at 11 a.m.



... at noon



... at 3 p.m.