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Meals for the Homeless



Intern Briana Wright (left), volunteer Max Morallo and Metro Bus Operator Shinese Harlins of North Los Angeles Division 3 spent part of the New Year's weekend working with the Carson Kiwanis Club preparing meals for the homeless. "Helping someone who is less fortunate than I am makes me realize that what I have is a blessing," said Harlins. Wright agreed, saying, "Giving to others is something special to me." Max Morallo, 15, is the son of Rich Morallo, South Bay communications manager.

Metro Gold Line's 'Ride to the Roses' Thrills Revelers, Parade-goers and Rose Bowl Fans

PHOTOS BY GAYLE ANDERSON



Photos> <u>Metro Faces in the Crowd</u>

Photos> <u>Safety's First</u>

 Metro volunteers lined the route to Pasadena with safety, courteous assistance and a lasting good impression.

By GAYLE ANDERSON

January 7, 2004 - It didn't rain on the Rose Parade and the USC Trojans mercilessly trampled the visiting Michigan Wolverines. But it was the Metro Gold Line that scored the most points with parade-goers, Rose Bowl fans and float reviewers attending New Year's Day festivities in Pasadena.

Estimates from volunteer counts and observations at key stations indicate "upwards of 30,000" above and beyond the normal daily ridership during the crucial 24-hour period that began with the start of revelry on New Year's Eve and concluded with the departure of Rose Bowl fans on New Year's night.

"We couldn't provide such an excellent level of service without the tremendous support of all Metro employees involved in this event, especially those who volunteered their time" said Bruce Shelburne, Rail Scheduling Manager who coordinated the Gold Line rides to the Roses.

The Volunteers were tasked with providing platform safety to assisting customers with directions and information to sorting out confusion with TVM machines and the fare changes.

Some 90 volunteers were used to staff the various posts at Union Station and five Pasadena Metro Gold Line

Metro Faces in the Crowd



stations from 8 p.m. on New Year's Eve to 8 p.m. on New Venice Division Mechanic "A" Leader Year's Day. Nearly 30 volunteers lined up on Friday and Saturday to assist visitors to the float exhibit in Victory Park, a shuttle hop away from the Sierra Madre Villa Station.

Narendra Desai greets Planning Mgr. Art Henry at Memorial Park Station. Below, Copy Services' Donain Martinez and RRC Mechanic "A" Julio Molina.

From standing vigil at Union Station to crowd control as riders emerged from Del Mar and Memorial Park stations to braving the elements in the middle of the freeway at Lake, Allen and Sierra Madre Villa stations, the volunteers did it all.

"Volunteers were very important for this event," said Shelburne. "They made a positive and lasting impression on the customers who may have been using the Metro Gold Line for the very first time."

The Metro Gold Line's first New Year's experience was a collage of headways, events, fans, riders and a surreal time warp that brought a new situation with every changing hour:

Thinking ahead - Anticipating some cold weather chills and middle-of-the-night blues, the Community Relations Department crafted a goodie bag of Metro cheer that was presented to each volunteer at a pre-event information session. Each bag was a self-contained support system of cough drops, wool caps, gloves, handi-wipes, and energy bars.

8 p.m. - Party-goers and late night revelers began to arrive on the Metro Red Line at Union Station and many other stations on the rail system, anxious to ring in the New Year on Colorado Boulevard.

1 a.m. – The last of the campers, toting sleeping bags and pillows, compete for the last bit of pavement along the parade route.

2 a.m. – People are still going home from the Colorado Boulevard celebration. Quite an interesting crowd: It was not unusual to see customers decked out in everything from formal attire to pajamas. The trains are still very lively, and decorated with confetti, streamers and silly string.

4 a.m. – The trains have been cleaned and parade-goers throng to Pasadena on the Gold Line from the Metro Red Line and Metrolink trains with wide-eyed anticipation. To many, it appears, the Gold Line is a direct route through roadblocks of all-night camping, impossible parking and prohibitive grandstand seating that stopped all intentions of attending the parade in previous years.

8 a.m. – Everyone is at the parade by now. Volunteers at Metro Gold Line stations take a coffee break.

10 a.m. - Surprise! Here come the Rose Bowl fans in Michigan sweatshirts and USC cardinal and gold Trojanwear, coolers and pennants in hand. Thousands get off





Rita Malone and Gwen Noyes direct arrivals at Union Station. Below, Sylvia Pantoja helps a patron select fare at the TVM.





Carl Velasquez, above, and Teresa Robbins at Del Mar Station.

trains at Memorial Park and Del Mar and walk the short distance over to the bus shuttles waiting at Pasadena Ave. and Union St. to transport fans to the Rose Bowl Stadium.

10:30 a.m to noon - The parade ends, everybody wants to go home or to the game or to Victory Park to see the floats. Metro buses are used to supplement the trains leaving Memorial Park and Del Mar. The volunteers at Sierra Madre Villa station, who have been standing in the middle of the freeway since before dawn, are ready with smiles, "this way" signs, and directions. Meanwhile, the Rose Bowl fans continue to arrive.

The rest of the day – Visitors and day-trippers take the Metro Gold Line back and forth to home, Colorado Boulevard and Victory Park.

2 p.m. – The football game starts. The prospect of thousands of returning Rose Bowl fans creates significant concern. Metro Rail, Bus and Sheriff personnel huddle to discuss crowd control strategy.

5 p.m.—It's all hands on deck at Memorial Park Station for the watchful LASD deputies, command center chieftains armed with cell phones and clipboards, and a massive contingent of volunteers. As the shuttles return from the Rose Bowl, Sheriff deputies quickly close off Holly Street to help direct anticipated long lines of both cheering USC fans and disappointed Wolverine supporters.

8 p.m. – Not to worry. Train after train of 300 plus passengers, each tucked into 8-minute departures by caring volunteers, safely escorted everyone back to home, hotels and all points north and south. "It was a very well-behaved and exhausted crowd," said Shelburne.

There's much more that can be said about the Metro Gold Line performance on its special day but the final score says it all:

Metro Gold Line - 30,000 and counting Problems - Zero.

Safety's First







From left, Raul Narajo, Maria Tapia, Carlos Rea and Brian Takamiyashiro at Sierra Madre Station. Below, service attendants Irv Golden, Barbara Davis and Virginia Middleton keep the sparkle going





Above and below, Victor Carlucci and Peishan Wang point the way to the Rose Parade at Allen Station.

Art Henry, Bruce Shelburne, Tom Jasmin, and Bill Moore confer to fine tune headways. Below LASD Lt. Mike Parker regroups troops at Memorial Park Station





Bruce Shelburne and Byron Lee join forces with Sheriff 's deputies moments before the Rose Bowl crowd converges upon Memorial Park Station.



LASD mounted patrol were natural barricades for orderly crowds. Below, fare inspectors help direct safety as trains depart Memorial Park Station with capacity loads.







Above and below, Betty Velazquez and Roger Serrano manage inquiries at Lake Station





Mary Lou Algallar, Monique Ramos and Cora Arellano, joined by husband Armando, help northbound passengers depart to Sierra Madre Villa Station.



Bill Moore, Yolando Rosales, Helen Ortiz, Stephanie Kaping and Duane



Metro Transit Security Mgr. Dan Cowden patrols entrance to Gold Line at Union Station.

Back to Headlines

Martin team up at Memorial Park Station. Below, Yolanda Rosales orients arriving passengers.



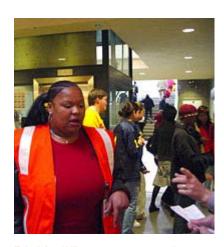


Volunteer at the Mission Station maintains lonely vigil. Below, Benny and Miya Lorenzo await Rose Bowl game surge of departures at Memorial Park Station.





Art Henry stands out in the crowd as passengers arrive from the Rose bowl shuttle buses.



Trimisha Wilson answers questions about fare at Union Station.



Have a good trip - See you next year!

Arraignment Set for Employee Accused of Insurance Fraud

 Focus on safety, claims handling, fraud credited in reducing MTA's Workers' Comp costs

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Jan. 7, 2004) A Metro Bus operator accused of faking an injury to collect \$3,000 in Workers' Compensation will be arraigned in Superior Court, Feb. 9, on 16 counts of insurance fraud.

Lolita A. Hicks Dolliole-Crowder, 50, of Palmdale, a 23-year MTA employee assigned to East Valley Division 15, was arrested Dec. 30. If convicted on all 16 fraud counts, she could face up to five years in prison.

The operator, who previously had filed 15 Workers' Comp claims, said she was injured, Dec. 3, during an assault by a bus passenger.

Investigators from MTA's Special Investigations Unit reviewed an on-board videotape of the incident and found that, although there had been an argument between the operator and the passenger, there was no evidence of an assault.

Reducing Workers' Comp costs

The employee's arrest marks the first such action since MTA began a campaign to reduce Workers' Comp costs in FY 2002. At that time, the agency was spending \$64.4 million annually on injury claims – nearly 10 percent of the hourly cost of operating a Metro bus.

MTA's Workers' Comp costs were six times more per employee than for Washington D.C.'s transit system and 10 times higher than those for New York City's transit agency.

In FY 2003, MTA's Worker's Comp costs fell to \$54.3 million, a 16 percent reduction from the previous fiscal year, according to Chief Financial Officer Dick Brumbaugh.

'Clearly making progress'

"We're clearly making progress," says Brumbaugh, pointing primarily to the success of the Safety's First program in reducing employee injuries, but also crediting the improved handling of injury claims and the effort to root out fraudulent claims.

"We're well aware that the huge majority of all injury claims are legitimate," says Bruce Cochran, the County Counsel assigned to the Special Investigations Unit. "Employees are entitled to medical care and disability payments, but we are actively pursuing those claims that are fraudulent."

Of all the factors associated with reducing Workers' Comp costs, however, Brumbaugh says, "We'll reap the most benefits by having a safe environment."

Planning Experts to Study North Hollywood Development

(Jan. 8, 2004) MTA and the Community Redevelopment Agency have asked the Urban Land Institute (ULI), a Washington, D.C., land use consulting group, to conduct an independent development study in North Hollywood.

Beginning later this month, ULI will send a team of planning experts to examine development opportunities, market potential and strategies for the NoHo Arts District and the neighborhood adjacent to the North Hollywood Metro Rail station.

Under contract to MTA and CRA, the ULI team will spend a week touring the neighborhood, examining existing planning and property documents and conducting interviews before presenting recommendations at a public meeting, Jan. 30.

MTA and CRA also will invite the public to provide ideas, comments, and observations on the future development of the area at two community meetings. Public comments will be included in a briefing package for ULI use in the study.

The community meetings are scheduled from 10 a.m. to noon, Saturday, Jan. 10; and from 7 to 9 p.m., Monday, Jan. 12. Both meetings will be held at the Beverly Garland Holiday Inn, 4222 Vineland Ave., North Hollywood.

New Sierra Madre Shuttle Connects to Metro Gold Line

(Jan. 8, 2004) The City of Sierra Madre has launched a streamlined shuttle bus route connecting downtown locations with the Metro Gold Line's Sierra Madre Villa station in East Pasadena.

The circular, nine-mile Sierra Madre Gateway Coach service will operate during the peak commute hours of 6 to 9 a.m. and 4 to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday.

During the non-peak hours of 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., service is extended to include additional points of interest within the city.

The regular fare for the coach service is 50 cents. Seniors, disabled and youth 16 and under with ID ride for free.

Fleet Coordinator Mike Stanford Retires After 30 Years with MTA



Assistant Manager Pat Astredo, right, presents Fleet Coordinator Mike Stanford with a scroll to honor is 30 years with the agency.

By LISA HUYNH

(Jan. 9, 2004) After 30 years of commitment and dedication, Fleet Coordinator Mike Stanford, 57, has retired from MTA.

Stanford has held several jobs during his time with the agency, including bus operator, clerk, instructor and analyst.

Most recently he has worked as a Fleet Coordinator oveseeing bus fleet needs and coordinating bus fleet activities. Stanford kept track of more than 2,700 buses, ensuring that each operating division had the proper number of buses for rollout.

"Bus Operations Control Center could call to find a bus and Mike knew right where it was," says Fleet Manager Hector Rojas. "We will miss his valuable contribution to public transportation."

Surprise party

Fleet Management and Support Services department held a surprise party, Monday afternoon, at the San Antonio Winery to honor the father of two. His wife, a son and about 50 of his coworkers attended the bittersweet event.

"I've always thought of this as a legacy job," he says. "You do the best you can and you leave it behind for others. You would think that you'd get lazy in the end, but you actually work harder so that you can leave it in better shape for the people to follow."

Assistant Manager Pat Astredo presented Stanford with a framed scroll, a farebox and a bus stop sign engraved with his name and badge number on it.

Vehicle Verification Clerk Linda Hill, who coordinated the event, will miss Stanford.

"He was my supervisor as well as a good friend," says Hill. "He is very compassionate, family-oriented and has a great sense of humor. It's hard to believe that he has retired."

Intranet to Debut
New Name,
New Design

(Jan. 9, 2004) It's a new year...and when you sign onto the employee Intranet, next week, you'll see a fresh look – a new name and a contemporary, eye-pleasing design.

The web site will now have an employee-friendly name, myMetro.net, and will feature MTA's new logo. The theme line "Something news every day!" continues as our promise to you.

The bright red, yellow, green and blue color scheme – in use since mid-1999 – will be replaced by softer plum, teal, gold and gray tones that are consistent with the new visual identity already in use on MTA's Internet web site and external publications.

The new Intranet page layout provides easy-to-find links to news stories and information features, department pages and the internal phone directory. The design and navigation links will be carried over to the individual news pages.

Masthead photos will rotate each time you visit the Intranet to highlight employees on the job and a variety of Metro services and departments.

Web Designers Kevin Woo and Joe Simpson developed the redesign concepts under the direction of Lead Designer Neil Sadler and Creative Director Michael Lejeune. Intranet Associate Editor Gayle Anderson and Senior Account Executive Gricel Sanchez also were closely involved in the project.

We hope you will enjoy the new design.

-- Bill Heard, Editor

EDITOR'S NOTE: You may discover that our new name, myMetro.net, is similar to others on the World Wide Web. From MTA computers, the employee Intranet should only be accessed via http://intranet1. The employee Intranet can be accessed from home by going to the MTA web site at www.metro.net, clicking on the "MTA Employee Access" link and entering your employee badge number and hire date.



By ED SCANNELL

(Jan. 9, 2004) What's in a name? A lot when it reflects a new way of doing business.

MTA is building on the identity of its already well-known services such as Metro Bus, Metro Rapid, Metro Rail, Metro Freeway Service Patrol and Metro Commute Services by establishing "Metro" as the official brand name for all of the agency's services.

You'll also see a new look, a revised "M" logo that emphasizes the word "Metro." Its universal use clearly puts all of MTA's programs and services under one umbrella.

"We're not changing the corporate name, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority," said CEO Roger Snoble. "At the same time, however, we feel it's important to have an easily identifiable name for all of the products, programs and services the agency provides."

'Metro covers everything'

"'Metro' covers everything from running buses and trains to paying for the construction of carpool lanes and bike paths, as well as promoting ridesharing and other commute services," Snoble said. "No matter how you get around LA County, we want you to know that 'Metro' is at your service."

MTA staff designed the new "Metro" logo. The logo is a legal trademark, which is key to preventing its unauthorized use.

From the transit user's perspective, the new "Metro" logo will help make travel easier by highlighting the integration of operations and uniformity of fares on the Metro Bus and Rail System.

Consistent use of the logo on Metro buses and trains and the agency's website, letterhead and signage will heighten public awareness not only of MTA's services, but also of its responsibilities.

UPDATE:

Operations Committee Approves MTA Cleanliness Policy

(Jan. 13, 2004) The Operations Committee is scheduled to consider a motion, this week, to establish a first-ever agency cleanliness policy aimed at reducing graffiti vandalism.

The item is one of a number on the agenda for Wednesday and Thursday committee meetings. Also included is a report on the value of reestablishing the MTA Transit Police Department and a report on streamlining the student 10:30 a.m., Thursday, Jan. 15 pass program.

January Committee Meetings:

Planning and Programming:

1 p.m., Wednesday, Jan. 14

Executive Management and Audit:

9:30 a.m., Thursday, Jan. 15

Finance and Budget:

Operations:

1 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 15

Cleanliness Policy

Item 36, Approved and forwarded to full Board.

The Operations Committee will consider Item 36, adoption of MTA's "first formal" Cleanliness Policy. The intent of the policy is to "improve our customers' quality of life...and...remove the effects of vandalism on bus and rail vehicles...and other MTA owned facilities."

The seven elements of the proposed policy include maintaining a high level of cleanliness, developing cleanliness procedures and a "stringent vehicle inspection" program for the bus and rail fleet, cooperation with law enforcement and a community education program.

A report attached to the proposed policy notes that, although MTA has had at least five anti-graffiti programs in the past, most faded out due to budget cuts and changing agency priorities. Components of these programs will be consolidated into the Cleanliness Policy, which will be implemented through the Metro Clean Program.

Item 31, Approved and forwarded to full Board.

Item 31, also on the Operations Committee agenda, is a motion to award a one-year, \$497,600 contract extension to Graffiti Control Systems of North Hollywood.

For more than five years, the company has been under contract to remove graffiti from Metro stations and rail facilities. The contract extension would increase the number of graffiti control technicians assigned to this task from seven to 10 and would assign one technician to the Metro Gold Line.

Transit Police

Item 27, Received and Filed.

The report to the Operations Committee on reestablishing the Transit Police Department, Item 27, estimates that MTA could save 20 to 40 percent annually by operating its own police force instead of contracting with the Sheriff's Department.

The report outlines such challenges as staffing "a sound, capable and professional" department, the cost of recruiting, training, equipping and providing administrative and operational support. It also cites increased MTA liability, the potential for negative publicity and the reluctance of other law enforcement agencies to cooperate with the

new department.

"These cost savings and other benefits must be carefully weighed against the start-up costs and operational challenges of reestablishing a major modern law enforcement agency," the report says, noting that it would take about five years to develop the department.

Student passes

Item 17, Update. The Executive Management and Audit committee approved a motion directing the Communications staff to provide more information to the committee about the application process and other elements of the school pass program.

The Executive Management and Audit Committee will hear a report, Item 17, on the staff's efforts to cooperate with LAUSD in streamlining the student ID card program.

In mid-2002, MTA implemented an automated digital ID card system. Many student ID card requests are processed and ID cards mailed within five days after the vendor receives them, although the procedure may take between 12 and 15 days.

While 75 percent of all student pass applications are acceptable, the longest delays typically occur when applications are incomplete or are submitted with an unacceptable photo and must be returned for correction.

Among the options being considered by MTA and LAUSD to improve the student pass process is a pilot program with seven secondary schools, beginning in April. Under a streamlined application process, the schools would sell student stamps and receive sales commissions. If successful, the program could be extended to other secondary schools in the fall.

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Special Master Issues New Order for More Buses, More Service

(Jan. 13, 2004) The special master overseeing implementation of the federal Consent Decree has issued a new order requiring MTA to buy more buses and provide more service hours.

The order would require MTA to purchase and to place into service the equivalent of 145 new 40-seat buses no later than December 2005. The agency also was ordered to provide at least 370,185 additional annual in-service hours to meet Consent Decree obligations.

MTA staff members told local reporters the Special Master's 88-page ruling was complicated and would take time to analyze before discussing it with the MTA Board later this month.

Officials said MTA has made great strides in improving Metro Bus service by placing 437 more peak-hour buses on the road, today, than in October 1996 when the Consent Decree was signed. Much of the fleet has been replaced, new high-capacity buses will soon start arriving and new Metro Rapid service has been implemented.

To date, MTA has spent about \$716 million to comply with the Consent Decree – nearly half its annual budget is earmarked for bus operations and capital.

The Special Master's order for the equivalent of 145 buses and 370,185 service hours would cost almost \$40 million to implement in 2004 and \$40 million annually to operate the service.

Staff members noted that MTA is in a difficult financial situation due to proposed state budget cuts, uncertain federal funding and now the Special Master's order for more bus expenditures.

Award Marks Agency Partnership in Rail Overpass Project



Regional Transportation Planning Director Ray Maekawa (left), who participated in the Imperial Highway overpass project, and CEO Roger Snoble view the Caltrans Certificate of Merit accepted by Supervising Engineer Ed Richardson on behalf of MTA.

(Jan. 13, 2004) Caltrans District 7 officials honored MTA with a Certificate of Merit, last week, for its role in the successful completion of the Imperial Highway overpass in 2003.

The award praised MTA for "working and partnering with other agencies" during construction of a 2000-foot, six-lane bridge that lifts traffic over Willowbrook Avenue and the Metro Blue Line and Union Pacific tracks.

MTA, city and county officials officially opened the overpass during a Dec. 18 ceremony. The \$20 million project was funded by MTA, Caltrans and the City and County of Los Angeles.



The overpass construction project began in 1994 and was one of the first MTA-Caltrans joint projects. Before it was completed, the project was done in coordination with construction of a new county child care center, new MTA maintenance facilities, city acquisition of a medical clinic and other properties.

Also cooperating in the project were MTA Facilities Maintenance, Bus Operations and the Rail Operations Center.

Metro Systems Boardings Fall in December

(Jan. 13, 2004) The latest figures for average daily boardings on the Metro system show bus ridership fell 15 percent in December from pre-strike patronage, while boardings were down from 18 to 22 percent on the four Metro Rail lines.

"About half the decline in ridership is due to seasonal fluctuations and the rest is likely due to the strike," says Ed Muncy, director, Service Performance and Analysis. "And, as has happened following previous strikes, it could be months before we see a recovery in ridership levels and some riders won't return at all."

In September, average daily Metro Bus boardings stood at 1,114,382. In December, ridership showed a decline in average daily boardings of 168,696 to a low of 945,686.

Metro Red Line daily boardings dropped 18 percent from 112,021 in September to 92,137 in December – a 19,884 difference.

Daily boardings for the Metro Blue Line fell by 10,747 – a 14 percent decline from 74,306 in September to 63,659 in December.

The Metro Green Line saw an 18 percent ridership loss from 35,847 in September to 29,297 in December – a difference of 6,550.

Finally, Metro Gold Line average daily boardings dropped by 3,158 – 22 percent – from 14,573 in September to 11,415 in December.

A Metro Rapid bus makes its way along a stretch of Wilshire Boulevard that will be included in the bus-only lane project beginning March 1.



Bus-Only Lane Demonstration Starts March 1 on Wilshire
By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Jan. 14, 2004) Testing for the next phase of the Metro Rapid bus program – peak-period, bus-only lanes – is scheduled to begin March 1 on a one-mile stretch of Wilshire Boulevard just west of the Veterans Administration Hospital.

Managers hope the six-month project, which reserves curbside lanes for buses during morning and afternoon peak hours, will demonstrate improvements in bus operation and general traffic flow in an area that experiences frequent gridlock.

Each weekday from 7 until 9 a.m. and from 4 until 7 p.m., parking will be banned on both sides of Wilshire between Federal Avenue and the Santa Monica city line at Centinela.

City and county officials, whose approval is key to implementation of a regional Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system, will be closely watching and evaluating the project. Eventually, MTA hopes to designate busonly lanes on portions of a number of traffic-choked streets to help keep buses rolling.

Solid white line

The bus-only lanes will be set off by a solid white line for most of each block and by white dashed lines at approaches to the intersections. Various signs, including a large overhead sign near Federal, will mark the area and indicate restrictions for motorists.

Not only Metro Rapid buses, but also local service Metro Buses and buses operated by municipal transit agencies will be permitted to use the exclusive lanes.

Cars will not be allowed to enter the bus-only zones except to make right turns at intersections or to turn into off-street parking lots. LADOT traffic officers, along with LAPD and Sheriff's deputies, will enforce restrictions on parking and curb lane use by non-transit

vehicles.

In selecting a demonstration site, Tom Carmichael, Wilshire BRT project manager, says MTA chose the location to avoid taking traffic lanes. The Los Angeles City Council approved the project in a November 2003 vote.

Curbside parking

The 13-block section was suitable for the project because it currently has curbside parking. Parking meters will be left in place so that drivers can park on the street during off-peak periods.

"We won't be negatively affecting street traffic because the traffic never had that lane, anyway," says Carmichael. "Our feeling is that traffic actually will move smoother when buses operate in their own lane. Our studies show that the displaced parking can be accommodated in the adjacent blocks."

Later this month, staff members from Community Affairs and Planning will visit area merchants to brief them on the project and determine whether mitigation will be needed. The evaluation period will continue through Aug. 31.

"This test is intended to prove to the City of LA that this lane is really worth it and that we can move the buses faster," says Rex Gephart, Metro Rapid project manager. "These lanes will be most beneficial when the traffic in the other lanes isn't moving at all."

Mobility 21 Calls for Return of Sales Tax Funds for Transportation

By CLAUDIA KEITH

(Jan. 14, 2004) The Mobility 21 Coalition, meeting Tuesday at MTA Headquarters, adopted a resolution calling for restoration of sales tax funds for transportation in the state's proposed budget.

The coalition, made up of elected officials, transportation providers, business and labor leaders, academic and community representatives, singled out Proposition 42 revenues. California voters approved Prop. 42 in March 2002, directing the sales tax on gasoline purchases for transportation purposes.

Coalition members also voted to support the implementation in Los Angeles County of an additional half-cent local sales tax for transportation purposes.

Governor Schwarzenegger's 2003-04 mid-year reductions and 2004-05 proposed budget would reduce transportation funding by about \$2.1 billion. To date, \$2.5 billion in transportation funds already has been lent to the state General Fund.

'Need adequate funding'

"The latest proposal by the Department of Finance could jeopardize many vital transportation projects needed to help solve traffic congestion in this region," said CEO Roger Snoble. "We need adequate funding from the federal government and Sacramento if we expect to continue building a public transit system and making the transportation improvements that are critical for Los Angeles County's economic growth and mobility."

In addition to hampering MTA and municipal operators, the proposed funding reductions could affect the Exposition light-rail line; alternative fuel bus purchases; improvements to the 101/405 interchange; Alameda Corridor East grade separations; Metrolink systemwide improvements and many other local roadway and traffic signal improvements.

"While we realize that everybody is feeling the pain of the state budget crisis, lawmakers can't continue to rely on money that voters have said they want earmarked for transportation programs to help shore up the general fund," said Dan Beal, manager of public policy programs for the Automobile Club of Southern California.

Other policy initiatives

In other action, coalition members adopted policy initiatives addressing such issues as transit work stoppages, freight movement and public safety on county streets.

Mobility 21 Coalition state and federal legislative priorities for the year include:

Federal Legislation: Support the reauthorization of TEA-21, advocate an increase in the federal ethanol tax to match other fuels, support Los Angeles County transportation agencies' appropriation requests, support MTA's funding request for the Metro Gold Line Eastside extension and legislation to better coordinate state and federal environmental approvals.

State Legislation: Oppose additional transfers of transportation revenues, including state highway account, Prop. 42 revenues, federal transportation funds and the public transit account to non-transportation purposes; support a constitutional amendment to allow a 55 percent vote requirement for passage of local transportation sales taxes, and support legislation to allow transportation agencies to use innovative contracting and financing tools, without case-by-case legislative signoff.

New ID Badges Will Make Life Easier for Employees

By VERONICA TORREJÓN

(Jan 14, 2004) New employee badges set to debut this year will ultimately pack a 3-in-1 punch, serving as a combination smart card, access card and identification badge.

The badge, which will feature the new whiteon-black Metro logo, should be unveiled later this year, says Marketing Communications Officer Jeff Ringsrud. New badges are currently being tested.

"Technical challenges have postponed the immediate issuance of new ID badges," says Ringsrud.



New employee badges will serve as a combination smart card, access card and identification badge.

Employees can continue to use current ID badges until new ones are issued, says Human Resources Supervisor Scott Lloyd. Some badges, such as those held by temporary or contract workers, will have expiration dates and should be renewed.

Replacing expired cards

"Interns and those who have an expiration date on their card can come in and we will print them up a new card," he says. Employees can also choose to keep their current picture or have another taken.

The implementation of the new ID cards is timed to correspond with the unveiling of the Universal Fare System (UFS), now in its final design phase. Chief Administrative Analyst Helen Cosner expects the system will roll out to the public sometime in the 2004-2005 time period.

The UFS system will allow passengers to use wallet-sized "smart cards" instead of cash or tokens to pay fares on the Metro or municipal transit systems. MTA employees also will use their new ID badge to gain access to buses or trains, says Cosner.

Restricted area access

Eventually, the new ID badge will replace current ProxCards, which give employees access to stairwells and restricted areas. In addition, employees working on the new TransitSafe, M3 and ATMS systems will use the "universal card" to access those systems.

The new system will prevent unauthorized users from gaining free access to services reserved for employees by allowing lost or stolen cards to be turned off remotely from a master central computer system.

Ultimately, employees will be able to use their badges like debit cards at the Gateway cafeteria or with other authorized vendors.

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TOS Kim Mitchem is donating two used cell phones to help support her cousin who is a Marine paratrooper in Iraq.

Help Support Troops by Donating Used Cell Phones

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By LISA HUYNH

Viewpoint

(Jan. 15, 2003) With an ambitious goal of collecting 2,000 used cell phones to support the troops returning from Operation Iraqi Freedom, the "Donate Old Phones to Thank Our Troops" campaign has been extended to Feb. 16.

"We currently have collected 750 phones," says Senior Community Relations Officer Barbara Burns. "We're hoping that employees will look into their hearts and dig out

their old cell phones to help us reach our goal."

Transit Operations Supervisor Kim Mitchem already has donated two used cell phones.

"I want to support my cousin who's been in Iraq for over a month," says Mitchem. "Giving up an old cell phone is such a small thing that can do a lot of good."

Supporting the troops

MTA teamed up with the Employers United for A Stronger America (EUSA) foundation in October 2003 to provide financial support to the National Guard and Reserves.

The donated cell phones will be refurbished and then be resold throughout the world. Seventy-five percent of the net funds from the resale will be given to returning soldiers and their families.

"This is the first year its been done," says Burns. "I think it's a great opportunity for Americans to give back to the troops and to say thank you."

Employees can drop off their old cell phones in the red bins at the Gateway building, the service sector offices and the operating divisions.

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SB Governance Council Members to Monitor Metro Bus Lines

By RICH MORALLO

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(Jan. 15, 2004) In an effort to learn more about the Metro Bus customer experience, the seven members of the South Bay Governance Council will begin riding buses throughout their service area.

Council members have adopted specific bus lines to monitor. They'll report back on their observations regarding on-time performance, high passenger demand, high service frequency and customer complaints.

"The council members will also be looking at bus cleanliness, the number of people standing, and any on-board incidents," says General Manager Dana Coffey, who had asked Service Development Manager Madeline Van Leuvan to develop the Adopt-a-Line Observation program.

"I believe the campaign will bring us closer to the service that we are responsible for," says Terisa Price, Governance Council chair. "I look forward to becoming familiar with my lines and the people that ride them."

Adopt-a-Line Program

Price will choose a couple of South Bay bus routes from a group of 16 in the Adopt-a-Line program.

Among the local bus routes included in the program are Line 444 that travels through Rancho Palos Verdes, Rolling Hills, Torrance and northward to Patsaouras Plaza, and Lines 445 and 446-447 that stretch from San Pedro, Wilmington and Carson to Union Station.

Council member and bus rider Margaret Hudson wants to help ensure better service for the area through the bus line observation program.

"I can make a meaningful contribution if I experience the actual conditions bus riders face every day," Hudson says.

Helping out

Council member and Redondo Beach resident Howard Sachar will be helping out as well.

"At the Citizens' Advisory Council we make a point of riding lines to spot-check how we are doing...(we)...intend to continue our program this year," says Sachar, a long-time CAC member.

Other council members who agreed at their Jan. 9 meeting to adopt bus lines are Vice Chairman Jim Hendrickson from Palos Verdes Estates; Inglewood Councilman Curren Price; Lou Mitchell, a co-chair of a Watts neighorhood area council; and John McTaggart, a former Rancho Palos Verdes mayor.

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Field Trip: A Morning on the Metro Rail System

By RICH MORALLO

(Jan. 15, 2004) Fifty parents and children from the South Bay Adult School in Manhattan Beach spent Tuesday morning on Metro Rail many of them riding the train system for the very first time.

"This Metro field trip is educational for the parents and their youngsters," said Chris Brown, a teacher at the adult school.

She has coordinated orientation tours on the Metro Green Line. from Marine Station to Rosa Parks Station, every year since the line opened in 1995.

"A lot of the families haven't ridden Metro, so this is an opportunity for all of them to get used to the system," Brown said, adding that after the initial transit experience many of the first-time travelers continue to explore public transportation on their own.

Families will travel more

"Many families will travel more on the system, riding on the Green Line and then switching over to the Metro Blue Line and the subway to tour Olvera Street at Union Station,"

On Tuesday, the group also visited the Rail Operations Center where Luis Canel, a Metro Blue Line transportation operations supervisor, showed them how controllers monitor train and passenger movement at the facility.

Redondo Beach resident Pauline Mukhalian and her four-year old daughter, Lena, enjoyed the two-hour field trip.

"We are very excited to meet the Metro," said Mukhalian.



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Teacher Chris Brown prepares Metro travel maps for groups traveling on the trains. Below, Transportation Operations Supervisor Luis Canel welcoming group at the Rail Operations Center.



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she said.

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Enroll to purchase the new "Series I" bonds or other denominations of U.S. savings bonds at one of three locations next week.



Savings Bond Enrollments Set at Three Locations

(Jan. 16, 2004) Uncle Sam needs you! And you may need him to help you save money.

Employee enrollments for United States Savings bonds are scheduled at three locations over the next two weeks.

Investing in Savings Bonds helps support the federal government, but it also gives bond holders a painless, safe and profitable way to put aside dollars for the future.

Savings Bond enrollments are scheduled at the following times:

- Tuesday, Jan. 20, in the train room at Venice Division 6,
- Wednesday, Jan. 21 and Thursday, Jan. 22 in the train room at Metro Blue Line Division 11,
- Friday, Jan. 23 and Monday, Jan. 26 in the training room at the Rail Operations Center.

On-site bond counselors will provide detailed information about the use of Savings Bonds and the optional Life and Critical Illness Insurance coverage. This optional insurance benefit can be used for any purpose, including purchasing Savings Bonds.

For more information about the advantages of United States Savings Bonds, go to this Internet web site:

http://www.publicdebt.treas.gov/sav/sav.htm. Employees also may contact the Security Marketing Group at 1-800-711-2922 or by e-mail at smgil@insightbb.com.

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Arthur Winston to Celebrate 70 Years With MTA

 MTA's most senior employee turns 98 in March

By ADRIENNE FIGUEROA

(Jan. 16, 2004) It was January 24, 1934, when the Los Angeles Railway – one of MTA's predecessors – hired the 28-year-old Arthur Winston to what would become one of this country's longest individual employment records.



Arthur Winston at 2002 "Best of the Best" awards.

On Friday, Jan. 23, at the division named in his honor, MTA's most senior employee will celebrate 70 consecutive years of dedicated service.

"Arthur is MTA's legendary Bob Hope," says Dana Coffey, South Bay Sector general manager. "He was dealt a good hand of cards."

Initially employed by Los Angeles Railway in 1924, Winston left the company in 1931 only to return three years later. Over the span of seven decades, he has watched the agency's name change several times, transportation technology evolve and co-workers come and go.

Service Attendant Leader

The 97-year-old is a service attendant leader at Arthur Winston Division 5. At this location in South Los Angeles, he oversees a group of 11 employees who maintain MTA buses.

Coffey believes Winston's infectious positive attitude and his refusal to let life's little hardships inconvenience him are two factors that make him a key leader and role model.

"Arthur holds an impeccable record as a leader," she says. "His focus is coming to work and doing what he has to do. He provides energy, and that's inspiring."

This inspiration has been recognized and honored outside the agency on a national level. In 1996, Winston received a Congressional Citation from former President Clinton as "Employee of the Century."

'Citizen of the Week'

The following year, he appeared on Oprah Winfrey and, in 2002, was named "Citizen of the Week" by KNX Radio.

With his 98th birthday approaching March 22, Winston is still going strong with no plans to retire.

"He sees the Arthur Winston Division as his second home," Coffey says.

"He's surrounded by friends and co-workers that genuinely care about him."

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Charles Pankow, MTA Headquarters Builder, Died Jan. 12

(Jan. 20, 2004) The man whose company built the MTA Headquarters building, the East Portal and parking garage complex died Jan. 12. Charles Pankow was 83.

An early proponent of the design-build concept, Pankow also was a pioneer in concrete-forming technology. In 1999, he was recognized by Engineering News-Record as one of the "Top Six World Builders."

Charles Pankow Builders began construction on the \$295 million Union Station-Gateway complex in 1993 and completed it on schedule and under budget in September 1995.

Gary Spivack, who served as overall project lead for development of the project said of the firm, "I always complemented the company on the fact that their job site was clean and orderly. When you're organized, it shows through in the quality of the project."

The Altadena company also built the Metropolitan Water District headquarters, as well as more than 1,000 other structures throughout the U.S.

A native of South Bend, Ind., Pankow graduated from Purdue University in 1947 with a degree in civil engineering. He is survived by his wife of 58 years, Doris, three sons and a daughter, nine grandchildren, and a brother and sister.

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'Seniors on the Move' Workshop, Thursday, in Inglewood

(Jan. 20, 2004) Some 300 senior citizens are expected to turn out, Thursday, for "Seniors on the Move," a workshop on how to use public transportation.

The program, co-sponsored by the LA County Commission on Aging, Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, MTA and other transit agencies, is scheduled from 7 a.m. until noon at the Inglewood Senior Center, 111 North Locust St., Inglewood.

A field trip to the Metro Green Line station at the I-105 overpass is included in the event.

During the program, seniors also can visit a transit exhibit with information provided by participating agencies. MTA will issue senior ID cards with February stamps to all qualified participants.

The information collected will be used as a pilot for the new MTA senior ID database program.

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SG Valley Sector Sets Community Meetings, Public Hearing

By RICK JAGER

(Jan. 20, 2004) The Metro San Gabriel Valley Service Sector will hold two community meetings and a public hearing on proposed changes to Metro Bus service operating in the San Gabriel Valley.

Proposed service changes include the creation of three new lines:

- A new Metro Rapid Bus Line along the Soto Street corridor,
- New weekday peak-hour limited stop service on Line 76 (Los Angeles/El Monte via Valley Blvd.), and
- New shuttle service (Line S-684) between the Brea Mall and the City of Pomona.

Other proposed changes include:

- Canceling Line 350 (Soto Street Limited) and replacing it with a new Metro Rapid Line,
- Discontinuing service on Line 484 (Los Angeles/El Monte/La Puente/Pomona) and replacing it with a new shuttle route S-684, and
- Ending Line 490 (Los Angeles/El Monte/Baldwin Park/West Covina/Walnut/Pomona/Brea Mall) at Valley Boulevard and Temple Avenue near Cal Poly Pomona.

The first community meeting will be from 5 to 7 p.m., Tuesday, Jan. 27, at Cal Poly University's Bronco Student Center – Building 35-Orion Room AB, 3801 W. Temple Boulevard in Pomona.

The second community meeting will be from 10 a.m. to noon, Saturday, Jan. 31, at Plaza De La Raza, 3540 North Mission Road in Los Angeles.

The public hearing will begin at 6 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 10, at the Metro San Gabriel Valley sector office.

The service changes, if approved, will be implemented on June 27, 2004 or later.





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Budget Crisis Forces Termination of 2003 Call for Projects

(Jan. 21, 2004) Threatened with the loss of millions in state transportation funding and facing a budget crisis, MTA has taken the extraordinary measure of terminating the 2003 Call for Projects.

The move, outlined by CEO Roger Snoble in a report to the MTA Board, affects 363 local transportation projects valued at \$2.3 billion. It is the first time since the Call for Projects process began in 1991 that one has been cancelled.

Call for Projects money typically funds road improvements, car-pool lanes, bikeways and other transportation improvements. The county's 88 cities compete for the funding allotted in a Call for Projects.

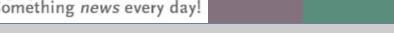
Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has proposed reallocating \$1 billion in transportation funding to the state's General Fund to help close a \$15 billion gap predicted for the next fiscal year.

Funding for congestion relief already has been cut, a move that may cause California to lose \$8 billion in federal transportation funds through 2010 if the state fails to meet its clean-air goals.

"Until the state can get its financial books in order, it is clear that funding is not available for the 2003 Call for Projects," Snoble's report states. He said MTA is working to ensure that projects approved earlier continue to move forward.

Snoble said MTA is "actively working with...the State Legislature and the Governor's Administration in advocating for Los Angeles County's mobility needs...."

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Three Metro Bus Lines Debut, Feb. 1; Other Changes Due

• TABLE: Complete list of service changes

By RICK JAGER

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(Jan. 21, 2004) Three new Metro Bus lines will begin operating, Sunday, Feb. 1, as part of a region-wide service enhancement aimed at improving the efficiency of the Metro system.

The three new lines are Metro Rapid Line 710 on Crenshaw Boulevard (beginning Feb. 2), Line 353 (Slauson Avenue) and Line 212 (La Brea Avenue).

Additional service will be added to 10 Metro Bus lines throughout the region to improve service performance and relieve overcrowding on heavily traveled lines. Service will be added in either the morning or afternoon peak periods, or a combination of both, as well as some weekend and night service.

Two Metro Bus lines – Line 250/253 (Euclid Ave./Evergreen Ave.), and Line 471 (Puente Hills Mall/Whittier Center via Colima Rd./Brea Mall) – will be cancelled as part of the service modification due to low ridership.

Service will be reduced or cancelled on underutilized segments of eight other lines. Service also will be rerouted on a number of Metro Bus lines as part of the service changes.

The service changes received pubic review last year and were scheduled to go into effect Dec. 21. However, due to the strike, the service changes were postponed until Feb. 1.

The following is a complete list of Metro service changes:

3 New Services					
710- Crenshaw Blvd. Rapid Bus	Implement new Line 710 Crenshaw Blvd. Rapid Bus.				
358- Slauson Ave.	Create limited service to operate between Fox Hills Mall and Eastern Ave.				
212- La Brea Ave.	Implement limited service between Manchester Ave. and Hollywood Blvd. During peak periods.				
Additional Services on 11 Bus Routes					
90/91- Foothill Blvd Glendale Ave.	Add one southbound AM trip to reduce passenger loads.				
166- Nordhoff St./Lankershim Blvd.	Add northbound trip departing No. Hollywood Station at 4:20PM and terminating at Osborne & Glenoaks at 4:51PM.				
233- Van Nuys Blvd.	Add southbound trip in 7:20AM time period and extending trip to Westwood to reduce passenger loads.				
233- Van Nuys Blvd.	Add north bound trip in 5:20PM time period to				

	reduce passenger loads.			
761- Westwood- Van Nuys Rapid Bus	Add trip departing the Federal Building at 7:18PM.			
16-316- West 3rd. St.	Add new eastbound evening trip to reduce passenger loads.			
220 - Robertson Blvd Culver Blvd.	Add a PM tripper for Hamilton High School.			
	Increase service span to match that of the cancelled 250-253 line (6AM to 7:30PM).			
111 - Florence Ave.	Add service during rush hours			
204 - Vermont Ave.	Add service during rush hours			
81- Figueroa St.	Increase number of southbound Line 381 trips.			
Rerouting Service on 8 Bu	us Routes			
761- Westwood- Van Nuys Rapid Bus	Implement midday shortlines at Moorpark and Ventura.			
434 - Trancas Cyn. Express	Modify the route of the line through Malibu.			
484 - El Monte- La Puente- Pomona Express	Reroute Line 484B to serve Industry Metrolink station on-street (Brea Canyon/Currier).			
60-360- Long Beach Blvd.	Operational change at Long Beach Mall.			
60-360- Long Beach Blvd.	Change the north terminal to Figueroa St. and Sunset Blvd.			
611 - Huntington Park - Vernon Shuttle	Move the terminal to Long Beach & Vernon to accommodate passenger travel pattern.			
40-340-442- Hawthorne- LAX-Downtown LA	Reroute limited service to terminate at 7th & Maple.			
40-340-442- Hawthorne- LAX-Downtown LA	Reroute service through the Inglewood Transit Center.			
42- La Tijera BlvdMartin Luther King Jr. Blvd Downtown LA	Reroute selected service via Slauson Ave., La Cienega Blvd., bypassing La Tijera Blvd.			
Service Reduction/ Cance	Illation on 10 Bus Routes			
720- Wilshire Blvd.	Relocate eastern terminal from Montebello Metrolink Station to Whittier Blvd. near Atlantic Blvd.			
18- West 6th StWhittier Blvd.	Cancel route west of Western Ave.			
26/51/52/352- Hollywood- 7th StAvalon Blvd Carson-Compton	Reduce service on unproductive segment on Franklin Ave. by scheduling 60 minutes HW to Hollywood. Shorten the North terminal at Hollywood & Vine Station.			
120-121- Imperial Hwy.	Cancel segment east of the Norwalk Station due to duplication of service with Norwalk Line 4.			
124- El Segundo Blvd Santa Fe Ave.	Cancel segment east of Rosa Parks Station due to low ridership.			
127 - Compton Blvd Bellflower Blvd.	Cancel segment west of the Compton Station due to low ridership.			
207/357- Western Ave.	Cancel segment of the line east of Harbor I-105/ I-110 Green Line Station to Rosa Parks Station.			
250/253- Euclid Ave Evergreen Ave.	Cancel Line.			
471 - Puente Hills Mall Whittier Center - Via Colima Rd. Brea Mall	Cancel Line.			
687 - Los Robles Ave.	Reduce peak period weekday service level from 15 minutes to 20 minutes.			

Extended Route Coverage on 3 Bus Routes						
720- Wilshire Blvd.	Extend selected shortline trips from Wilshire & Westwood Blvds. to 5th St. and Colorado St.					
111 - LAX-Florence Ave Leffingwell Rd.	Reroute service through the Inglewood Transit Center. Reroute through service via the Norwalk Station.					
. 0 3	Establish new Alternate Route for Line 245 trips serving Chatsworth Metrolink Station.					
Other Minor Changes on 4 Bus Routes						
761- Westwood- Van Nuys Rapid Bus	Add additional Rapid Bus stops at Huston and Chase.					
260-361- Artesia Sta Pasadena-Altadena via Atlantic Blvd.	Convert more AM southbound and PM northbound trips to Route 361.					
358- Slauson Ave.	Modify route to remain on Slauson Ave. in the Fox Hills Mall area to operate bi-direction peak hours only.					
207/357- Western Ave.	Extend Limited service area to operate between Manchester Ave. to Hollywood and Western Red Line Station.					

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Harbor City Safety Event



Harbor City Boys and Girls Club members were happy to receive safety checklist brochures provided, recently, by the South Bay Service Sector staff. "The community appreciates the various Metro informational and outreach campaigns that keep them aware of being safe on and near buses and trains," said Lomita Councilman Mark Waroneck. "Metro staff who attend our fairs, festivals and community meetings have an important challenge to meet - keeping safety first and foremost in the minds of our families who are so busy with school schedules, work, appointments and social activities." -- from Rich Morallo (1/21/04)

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While MTA's most senior employee was getting a standing ovation at the presentation of an official commendation for 70 years on the job, MTA Board Members joined Arthur Winston at the podium for a heartfelt and spontaneous round of good cheer. Pictured, from left, are directors Mike Antonovich, Frank Roberts, Pam O'Connor, Arthur Winston, Zev Yaroslavsky, Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, Antonio Villaraigosa, Tom LaBonge, Martin Ludlow, Don Knabe, Beatrice Proo and John Fasana.



PHOTO BY ROXANNE TAN

Board Congratulates 70-Year Employee Arthur Winston

In other actions:

- Requests MTA cost-cutting scenarios
- Approves UTU labor agreement
- Names ad hoc labor task force
- <u>Designates Metro Orange Line</u>
- Approves MTA cleanliness policy
- Restores Alameda Corridor East funds

(Jan. 22, 2004) With 70 years on the job and still counting, MTA's most senior employee – Arthur Winston – received the formal congratulations and "sincere thanks" of the Board of Directors at Thursday's meeting.

South Bay Sector General Manager Dana Coffey, reciting the 97-year-old Winston's accomplishments and longevity, dubbed him "our Number One employee" and MTA's "Bob Hope." She compared his endurance to the "Incredible Hulk."

The Board unanimously approved a resolution recognizing Winston for his "inspiration, professionalism and unprecedented commitment to transit, his fellow workers in his crew, division, sector and the agency."

Afterward, the members all gathered at Winston's side to shake his hand and wish him well.

"I appreciate the job," Winston said. "I love it." He will celebrate his 98th birthday, March 22.

In other business, the Board:

Cost-Cutting, I tem 40: Approved a motion directing the MTA staff to develop for Board consideration three cost-cutting scenarios for across-the-board cuts of at least 5 percent, 10 percent and 15 percent for every MTA department.

The motion notes that MTA has been "hard hit recently by state and federal actions which have reduced anticipated revenue for many MTA projects." The motion said it is "incumbent upon the MTA to cut costs and reduce spending across the board to reflect this dire fiscal situation."

UTU Labor Agreement, Item 38: Approved a three-year labor agreement between MTA and the United Transportation Union, representing bus and train operators. The agreement, which took effect July 1, 2003 will continue through June 30, 2006.

Labor Task Force: Board Chairman Zev Yaroslavsky appointed an "ad hoc labor task force" to determine ways to avoid future transit strikes. Members of the task force are directors John Fasana, Gloria Molina and Antonio Villaraigosa.

Metro Orange Line, Item 39: The Board voted unanimously to designate the San Fernando Valley Metro Rapidway as the Metro Orange Line. The 14-mile dedicated busway, which will connect the North Hollywood Metro Rail station and Warner Center, is currently under construction.

The motion by Yaroslavsky said giving transit lines color designations "helps in the marketing and promotion" of the line and "helps communities and neighborhoods identify with the line and fosters linkage between the line and the rest of the transit network."

The motion also noted that the San Fernando Valley once was "home to many orange groves" and that many orange trees still can be found in the Valley.

MTA Cleanliness Policy, Item 36: Approved MTA's "first formal" Cleanliness Policy. With the intent of improving Metro customers' quality of life, the seven elements of the proposed policy include maintaining a high level of cleanliness, developing cleanliness procedures and a "stringent vehicle inspection" program for the bus and rail fleet, cooperation with law enforcement and a community education program.

"Today's Board action underscores the MTA's commitment to be a regional leader on this issue by aggressively stamping out all forms of graffiti and vandalism...for the comfort and safety of our passengers," said Yaroslavsky.

Alameda Corridor East, Item 41: The Board voted to restore funding to the Alameda Corridor East project by directing the CEO to "rescind the Board action" taken at the December, 2003 meeting.

At the December meeting, the Board designated the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension as its highest priority rail project and included MTA's 17 percent Alameda Corridor East contribution in a contingency fund for the light-rail project.

With Thursday's vote, MTA funds will once again be made available to support the Alameda Corridor East project.





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Board Approves 9 Metro Freeway Service Patrol Contracts

By JOSÉ UBALDO

(Jan. 22, 2003) The MTA Board today approved nine three-year contracts, valued at \$11.5 million, that will keep the Metro Freeway Service Patrol (MFSP) in operation assisting stranded motorists along various Los Angeles County freeways.

The MFSP program consists of 41 different designated freeway segments, or "beats", served by 147 tow trucks that patrol more than 400 miles of congested freeway.

Three new contractors are joining the Metro Freeway Service Patrol to minimize traffic congestion caused by minor incidents such as the need to change flat tires, jump-start cars, refill radiators, tape leaky hoses, and put a gallon of fuel in empty tanks.

Since the MFSP started in 1991, its drivers have helped more than 3.7million motorists. MTA, the California Highway Patrol (CHP) and Caltrans jointly manage the program.

MTA funds the program through local Proposition "C" sales taxes and state highway funds.

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Board Approves UTU Contract with Wage, Benefits Increases

In other actions:

Home

- Extends anti-graffiti contract
- Approves Blue Line shop catwalk

(Jan. 23, 2003) The three-year labor agreement with the United Transportation Union, approved Thursday by the MTA Board, includes increases in wages and benefits for the union's 4,400 bus and train operators.

The agreement, which took effect July 1, 2003 and will continue through June 30, 2006, gives UTU members a 2.5 percent pay hike on July 1, 2004 and another 2.5 percent pay increase on July 1, 2005. It includes no quarterly wage adjustments (QWA).

It increased the operator training rate for full-time, part-time and BDOF operators to \$10.

Among other provisions, the agreement includes increases in MTA monthly contributions to the UTU Health Plan for full-time operators of \$607 in the first year, \$698 in the second year and \$803 in the third year of the contract. For part-timers, the monthly contributions would amount to \$296 in the first year, \$329 in the second year and \$379 in the third year.

The agreement calls for the union's Health Plan governing board to have six UTU trustees and two MTA trustees.

MTA agreed to raise its group life insurance premium payment for fulltime operators from \$10,000 to \$25,000. Under a new provision, MTA will pay the first \$50,000 of the operators' accidental death and dismemberment insurance premiums.

In other action, the Board:

Approved Item 31, awarding a one-year, \$497,600 contract extension to Graffiti Control Systems of North Hollywood for graffiti removal on the Metro system.

For more than five years, the company has been under contract to remove graffiti from Metro stations and rail facilities. The contract extension would increase the number of graffiti control technicians assigned to this task from seven to 10 and would assign one technician to the Metro Gold Line.

Approved I tem 33, authorizing the construction of a steel catwalk to provide safer and easier access for maintenance employees working in the Heavy Repair Shop at Metro Blue Line Division 11.

The catwalk will be designed to be used as a working platform to handle the loading of air condition units, pantographs, roof cables and other heavy repairs to rail cars. Milco Constructors of Long Beach, who won the \$306,000 job, earlier installed a similar catwalk in the Metro Blue Line vehicle shop.

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MTA's Top Stories of 2003: Year Began with Great Momentum, But Hit a Wall with Strike By BILL HEARD, Editor

<u>Viewpoint</u>

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VIPs, Pyrotechnics Welcome Opening of Metro Gold Line The future arrived at Union Station in a burst of pyrotechnics, July 25, when a gleaming white train burst through a large "Discover Gold" banner to the applause of several hundred officials, MTA staff and guests.

In this report: The Year's Top Stories									
<u>January</u>	<u>February</u>	<u>March</u>	<u>April</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>June</u>				
<u>July</u>	<u>August</u>	September	<u>October</u>	<u>November</u>	<u>December</u>				

(Jan. 23, 2004) The year 2003 began with great momentum as MTA moved forward in January with the beginning of construction of the San Fernando Valley Metro Rapidway – now the Metro Orange Line – and the purchase of new high-capacity buses.

It picked up steam through the spring with the introduction of new transit passes, the implementation of a countywide bus signal priority project and with the opening in July of the Metro Gold Line.

But, progress was brought to a screeching halt - a painful 35-day hiatus when MTA's 1,900 maintenance employees and 5,600 members of three other unions walked off the job. "Lifeline" bus service filled some of the gap for stranded customers, while employee volunteers staffed phone lines and cleaned buses and train cars.

With the end of the strike in mid-November, wheels started to turn again. The Mobility 21 transportation summit was a success; the "CompoBus" made its debut; and a key bridge on the Metro Orange Line was completed.

Despite the stop-and-go character of 2003, it's fair to say that MTA managed to make progress and can record some significant accomplishments.

Here, month-by-month is a look back at the top MTA stories in 2003.

January

Crews began construction of a bridge over the Los Angeles River in Van Nuys, Jan. 17, a major step in the San Fernando Valley Metro Rapid Transitway project. The 14-mile, \$329.5 million dedicated busway will have 13 stations between the North Hollywood Metro Rail station and Warner Center when opened in 2005.

The MTA Board appointed William Waters as the agency's new Inspector General, replacing Arthur Sinai. Waters had been acting Inspector General since July 2002.

Taking advantage of an option to purchase more high-capacity buses, the MTA Board approved the acquisition of 70 additional 45-foot, CNG "CompoBus" coaches. The low-floor "CompoBus" will seat 46 passengers, 16 percent more than the traditional 40-foot buses.



Sr. Security Officer Arthur Grant patrols aboard a new Segway. MTA received its first electrically-driven, gyroscope-stabilized Segway implementing the "human transporters" for

February

The Board approved five new transit pass programs, including a one-day pass, a pass for those on jury duty, one for such large organizations as colleges and government agencies, and two for employers.

The Board awarded a \$138.9 million contract to North American Bus Industries for 200 low-floor CNG articulated buses. The buses will be direct replacements for diesel buses that will be removed from the fleet within the next three years.

As part of an effort to improve bus transit schedule adherence and speed up travel times, MTA began

INSPIRATIONS: 2003



Division 7's Roy Allen made an inspirational comeback as an active Metro Bus operator. Facing a life or death decision, he agreed to have his left leg amputated rather than die from a blood condition. After therapy and training, he was permitted to drive again and returned to the job he loves.



Gateway Division 10 Operator Gregory Scott won praise from a passenger, who was in Los Angeles on a business trip from Mexico, when he recovered her purse containing nearly \$1,300, a passport and a plane ticket.



Call it beginner's luck. Operator Majd Bakir may have saved a patron's life with a technique he used for the first time since he learned it 13 years ago -

use by law enforcement and security personnel who patrol MTA facilities. "The Segways will enhance our foot patrol and help in our special assignment areas," said Sgt. John Davis, MTA Transit Security.

Countywide Bus Signal Priority Project, a program designed to ensure that even the county's smaller cities can have Metro Rapid service.

March

Sheriff's Capt. Dan Finkelstein, a 27-year law enforcement veteran, was named MTA's Chief of Transit Police – a first-of-its-kind arrangement to consolidate the agency's security forces and improve safety for employees and patrons.

MTA and Los Angeles Superior Court teamed up to offer weekly transit passes to jurors in exchange for their vehicle mileage reimbursement.

It was "A Night of Stars" aboard the Queen Mary in Long Beach Harbor for 256 MTA employees who were honored for their excellent performance over the past five years. Each honoree received a bronze medallion and a 2002 Metro Gold Star Award lapel pin.

April

The Regional Rebuild Center celebrated the opening, April 4, of its new chemical warehouse. The warehouse is designed to be environmentally safe for storage of hazardous materials, as well as to make handling of materials easier for employees.

Twenty-three employees were recalled to military duty for the war in Iraq. A total of 14 are serving with Army units, four with Air Force units, three with the Marine Corps and two with the Navy. The group includes two women — an Air Force Reservist and an Army Reservist.

May

The first two Sheriff's Department fare inspectors took their posts on the Metro Red Line, May 13 – the first of a force of 50 selected to serve in the subway and on the Metro Gold Line.

Paleontologists working on MTA property have unearthed a small section of a mammoth tusk approximately 10,000 to 70,000 years old. MTA donated the fossil to the Museum of Natural History.

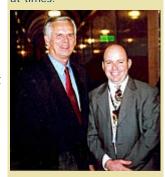
the Heimlich Maneuver. Bakir successfully applied the life-saving technique when a passenger appeared to be choking.



At age 21, Raven Sanders graduated with honors from USC as salutatorian and received a full scholarship to medical school – all while working as a bus operator at Venice Division 6.



North Los Angeles Division 3 Operator Randy Montes – a Marine Corps reservist – was relieved to have made it home safely from Iraq. The 33-year-old lance corporal says the duty was frustrating, scary and boring at times.



MTA's Dave Schlesinger was among members of Mayor James Hahn's Crisis Response Team who were honored by the City of Los Angeles for providing onscene crisis intervention services to victims and families.

With blasting hip-hop music and heart-stopping video images, MTA introduced its new "Metro Experience" mobile theater. The agency hopes to reach a young, impressionable audience with a rail safety message.



John A. Dyer, 66, who led the SCRTD for almost six and a half years in the 1980s – including through the early days of Metro Red Line funding and construction – died at his Glendale home of a heart attack. In this mid-1980's photo, Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley, at left, commends Dyer for his "many accomplishments and continued support for transportation systems that serve the Southern California region."

MTA and the Sheriff's Department marked the debut of the nation's second largest Transit Police force as LASD assumed responsibility for law enforcement throughout the Metro system.

After more than a year of operating on a bare-bones system, Metro Gold Line crews witnessed the completion of the Midway Yard.

June

Investigators from MTA's Transit Services Bureau and the Los Angeles Department of Transportation arrested 20 unlicensed drivers and impounded 47 "bandit vans" used to carry passengers in violation of city and state laws.



Gale "Ed" Vandeventer, 61, who led SCRTD Rail Operations from 1985 through the mid-1990s – including the early days of Metro Rail subway and light-rail planning – died, June 5, of a heart attack.

The Board approved staff plans to repaint Metro Buses and Metro Rail cars in colors that clearly identify each vehicle with the type of service it provides. Bright red continues to signify Metro Rapid service, California poppy orange denotes local bus service and a crisp blue will be used in the future on express buses. All Metro Rail cars will either be painted silver or will retain their stainless steel appearance.

The Metro Rapid bus program reached another milestone with the start of service on Van Nuys Boulevard and Florence Avenue.

July

A gleaming white train bursting through a large "Discover Gold" banner marked the opening of the Metro Gold Line -- the first time in almost 50 years that downtown Los Angeles and communities along the way to

Pasadena had been connected by light-rail service.

A Los Angeles County Grand Jury study of Workers' Compensation praised MTA for a "comprehensive and effective program that is beginning to show bottom-line results." Measures taken by MTA resulted in a startling 29 percent reduction in new Workers' Comp claims, among other successes.

August

MTA and Flexcar, the nation's largest and oldest provider of car-sharing programs, officially launched an innovative on-demand service during a media event at MTA Headquarters.

The MTA Board of Directors approved a six-year Short Range Transportation Plan that focuses on the phasing-in of transportation improvements in Los Angeles County through 2009.

September

CEO Roger Snoble announced the hiring of Rick Thorpe, one of the most highly regarded builders of light rail systems in the United States, as executive officer for MTA project management.

U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta presented MTA Board Chairman Zev Yaroslavsky with federal grants totaling \$45 million.

West Hollywood Division 7 Transportation Manager Jim McElroy was named general manager of the Westside/Central Service Sector.

Deputy CEO John Catoe described a future in which MTA will routes its buses through a network of 15 to 18 regional transit "hubs" – including Metro Rail stations – connected by "spokes" of express service lines. MTA is expected to begin the shift to a "hub and spoke" system in mid-2004.

The MTA Board approved an agreement with RAD Jefferson, LLC, to exchange MTA's antiquated bus yard property in Venice for construction of a new bus division in a more centralized, industrial area of West Los Angeles.

October

Led by Local 1277 of the Amalgamated Transit Union, some 7,600 mechanics, bus operators, clerks, custodians and unionized supervisors walked off the job just after midnight, Oct. 14, to begin what would become a 35-day work stoppage.

With the strike against MTA in full swing, non-striking employees pitched in wherever they could to assist stranded commuters. Some 75 volunteers staffed the Customer Information Center. A skeleton crew manned Bus Operations Control. Dozens of others took mops, scrapers and towels in hand and cleaned hundreds of Metro Bus coaches and Metro Rail cars.

MTA worked with local transit agencies in Los Angeles and surrounding counties to expand a "lifeline" of services for passengers stranded by the transit strike.

Members of Teamsters Local 572 went on strike against First Transit Inc., Oct. 15, taking 12 MTA contract lines out of service.

With negotiations deadlocked on Oct. 28, the MTA Board 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 to the mechanics union.

A multi-agency task force, formed by MTA to review bus-operating procedures following the Sept. 9 shooting of three Taft High School

students, recommended a broad series of steps to improve the safety of LAUSD students.

On Oct. 29, six Metro Buses – driven by transportation operations supervisors – lined up at dawn outside LA's Fire Academy to transport some 50 firefighters and their equipment to the front lines of a 45-mile fire that threatened communities in the area.

On Oct. 31, MTA officials said they would not support binding arbitration or the intervention of an outside arbitrator in its negotiations with the ATU.

First Transit Inc. and Teamsters Local 572 reached a tentative agreement in a labor dispute that had sidelined 12 MTA contract bus lines.

November

Members of the ATU turned down MTA's last, best and final offer in a Nov. 7 vote by a margin of 1,267 to 87. Expressing disappointment, MTA noted that its offer amounted to more than \$30 million over the contract period.

Almost 500 local officials, community leaders, businesspeople and others gathered, Nov. 17, for the Mobility 21 transportation summit aimed at bringing more state and federal funding to bear on the increasing congestion of the region's transportation network.

On Nov. 17 - 35 days after it began – the 2003 strike ended when MTA and the ATU announced a tentative contract agreement. The agreement left the Health and Welfare Trust Fund issue still to be resolved. Final agreements also had yet to be reached with the UTU, representing bus and train operators, and the TCU, representing clerks and custodians.

ATU members ratified the contract agreement with MTA, Nov. 19. The agreement called for mediation and arbitration on the still-unresolved Health and Welfare Trust Fund issue.

As of Nov. 19, nearly 100 percent of Metro Bus lines were back in operation. Metro Rail trains went back into partial service, Nov. 20. Many passengers, relieved to see Metro service rolling again, welcomed operators back with open arms – and even some applause.

December

Sheriff's deputies filed charges against three teenagers suspected of causing more than \$175,000 in graffiti vandalism damage to Metro Buses and bus stops in downtown Los Angeles, the South Bay and the San Fernando Valley.

The "CompoBus," a prototype transit coach that will become a featured element of the Metro Bus fleet was introduced during ceremonies in Anniston, Ala. The "CompoBus" is a 45-foot coach made of a lighter-weight, crash-resistant fiberglass composite. It features contoured windshields and a stylish retro look.

The first of three key bridges to be built for the San Fernando Valley Metro Rapidway was completed Dec. 12. The 525-foot bridge over the Los Angeles River is an element of the San Fernando Valley Metro Rapidway.

MTA and the UTU reached a tentative agreement, Dec. 18, on a new three-year labor contract. The UTU represents 5,000 bus and rail operators.

Current and former leaders of MTA dedicated a plaque honoring former SCRTD General Manager John A. Dyer as "father of the Los Angeles County subway system." The plaque will be mounted at the Wilshire/Vermont Metro Red Line station. Dyer died of a heart attack, May 3, in Glendale.





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Authorities Locate Mother of 4-year-old Found in Subway

By KIM SIM

(Jan. 27, 2004) Authorities have located the mother of a 4-year-old boy found alone, but safe, at the entrance to a Metro Red Line station.

Archives

The boy, discovered outside the Wilshire/Western station near Koreatown, Sunday afternoon, has been identified and members of the Sheriff's Transit Services Bureau have met with his mother.

The youngster will remain in the care of the Department of Children and Family Services while Sheriff's deputies investigate the incident.

Normally, a child in protective custody will not be released until a department caseworker determines that the child can and should be returned to the parents, said Det. Sgt. Luis Nunez of the Transit Services Bureau.

Custodian discovered boy

Aurora Amador, a subway custodian, discovered the boy at 4:10 p.m., Sunday, and contacted the Metro Rail dispatcher, according to phone logs. Miguel Banuelos, a rail transportation operations supervisor, then alerted the Sheriff's Department.

Sheriff's deputies arriving at the scene could not determine either the boy's name or address. Because he had not been reported missing, deputies had to turn to both the English- and Spanish-language media for help in finding the family.

They also requested the assistance of the Department of Children and Family Services.

Early Monday morning, a breakthrough.

The boy's aunt saw his picture on the news and called the mother, who called the Sheriff's Department.

Boy was with uncle

Laura Cuellar, the boy's mother, told authorities she last saw him walking with an uncle at around 4 p.m., Sunday, after a family barbeque, said Lt. Mike Parker of the Transit Services Bureau.

Cuellar, who lives about eight blocks from the station, said she went to bed at 9:30 that night without knowing her son was gone.

Parker said it was unusual to find someone who had not yet been reported missing. "We deal more with found, not missing persons."

"We're happy that we identified the boy and that we located the mom," Nunez said. "(But) the investigation into this matter is ongoing."

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Happy 70th Year On the Job, Mr. Winston

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The Laker Girls helped MTA's most senior employee, Arthur Winston, celebrate his 70th continuous year of employment in transit at a cake and plaque bash Jan. 23 at the division named in his honor. The 97-year-old Service Attendant Leader was served smiles, hugs and a media frenzy before dashing off to Century City for the KNX "2003 Citizen of the Week" awards, a glitzy reception saluting title holders honored for extraordinary lifetime achievement.







Metro South Bay GM Dana Coffey and Arthur Winston



From the top, Arthur Winston gets hugs from the Laker Girls, shares the media spotlight with co-workers and holds a press conference to celebrate 70 years of continuous service in transit.





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Chick Hearn Plague to be Dedicated at Pico Station



The Metro Blue Line Pico Station will be renamed for the late sportscaster Chick Hearn. (Jan. 28, 2004) The late Los Angeles Lakers announcer Chick Hearn will be memorialized during ceremonies scheduled for 3:30 p.m., Thursday, at the Metro Blue Line's Pico station.

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Mayor James Hahn, Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Deputy CEO John Catoe and Lakers officials, along with Hearn's widow Marge, will unveil a plaque in honor of the two-time Basketball Hall of Famer.

The MTA Board voted in September, 2002 to name the Pico station – the nearest Metro Rail station to the Staples Center –for Hearn, who died Aug. 5, 2002 at age 85. The plaque will be installed on the platform of the station platform.

In his motion to dedicate the station to Hearn, Hahn said, "Chick Hearn was more than an announcer. He was a pioneer, an innovator, a promoter, a friend, a father and a husband. He will be sorely missed."

Play-by-play man

A native of Aurora, III., the Lakers' play-by-play man was noted for having broadcast 3,338 consecutive games over a 36-year period that stretched from Nov. 21, 1965 to Dec. 16, 2001.

He invented the terms "slam dunk," "air ball," "finger roll" and "no harm, no foul."

"For more than four decades, Chick Hearn brought millions of people together throughout Southern California through their love of the Lakers," says Lakers General Manager Mitch Kupchak. "He had such a huge impact on this city that it is a very fitting tribute for the Metro to honor him in this way. And as...passengers...see his plaque on a daily basis, it will keep his memory alive in a very positive way."

Francis Dayle "Chick" Hearn began his career in 1956 broadcasting USC football and basketball games. He won two Emmy Awards for a nightly radio sports show. He also was twice named national Sportscaster of the Year.

Over nearly 50 years as a sportscaster, he provided play-by-play and incisive commentary for NCAA and NFL football, UNLV basketball, PGA golf, the first Ali-Frazier fight, the Rose Bowl and NBC's Triplecast coverage of the 1992 gold-medal U.S. Olympic Basketball "Dream" Team in Barcelona.

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Metro Rapid Services Begins, Feb. 2, on Crenshaw Boulevard

By ED SCANNELL

Home

(Jan. 28, 2004) A seventh Metro Rapid bus line goes into operation on Monday, Feb. 2, when the big red and white buses begin rolling down Crenshaw Boulevard.

Viewpoint

MTA officials, joined by Board Chairman Zev Yaroslavsky, Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, City Councilman Bernard Parks and LADOT General Manager Wayne Tanda, will take an inaugural ride on the new Line 710 during a media event, Thursday.

Line 710 will operate weekdays from 5:30 a.m. to approximately 7:30 p.m. from the Hollywood/Vine Metro Red Line Station to the South Bay Galleria in Redondo Beach via Vine Street, Rossmore Avenue, Crenshaw and Redondo Beach boulevards.

Six Metro Rapid bus lines are already in operation on Wilshire/Whittier Boulevard, Ventura Boulevard, Vermont Avenue, S. Broadway, Florence Avenue and Van Nuys Boulevard.

'Quick and reliable alternative'

"Metro Rapid has been so successful elsewhere because it offers commuters a quick and reliable alternative...on some of LA County's most congested corridors," says Yaroslavsky. "We're confident Metro Rapid service on Crenshaw Boulevard will be an equally popular choice for thousands of additional commuters."

Metro Rapid has succeeded in reducing passenger commute times by up to 25 percent, thanks in part to a transit signal priority system developed by LADOT. The Crenshaw Metro Rapid marks the first time that signal priority has been implemented outside the City of Los Angeles.

As a result of this and other advantages such as less frequent stops, Metro Rapid has generated significant gains in ridership on the six existing corridors, even attracting discretionary riders.

"While ridership on many transit systems in the United States remains flat, Metro Rapid has acted like a magnet, luring thousands of people new to transit and serving existing transit users more efficiently," says CEO Roger Snoble. "In a survey a few years ago, our customers said their biggest wish was to get to their destinations more quickly. Metro Rapid clearly has answered the call."

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Docent Dennis Lytton explains Hollywood and Vine station artwork to Bill Upchurch, Paul Jackson, Dennis King and Peter Force.



PHOTO BY RICH MORALLO

Residents Enjoy a Marathon Metro Rail Tour

By RICH MORALLO

Home

(Jan. 28, 2004) A group of South Bay residents took a marathon tour of Metro Rail, recently, to learn more about the various lines and where the trains can take them.

The group assembled at MTA Headquarters where they received an orientation in the Board room before starting their seven-hour journey on the rails.

After a walking tour of Union Station's East Portal, the visitors hopped on the Metro Red Line subway to travel to 7th and Metro and then to the Rail Operations Center.

"I especially found the Rail Operations Center interesting and was pleasantly surprised to see that each line had its own team of monitors, and that rail operation and station security was split and done at separate monitoring stations" said Palos Verdes Peninsula resident Bob Leabow. "This experience will definitely make me feel safer in the future when riding Metro Rail."

On to Chinatown

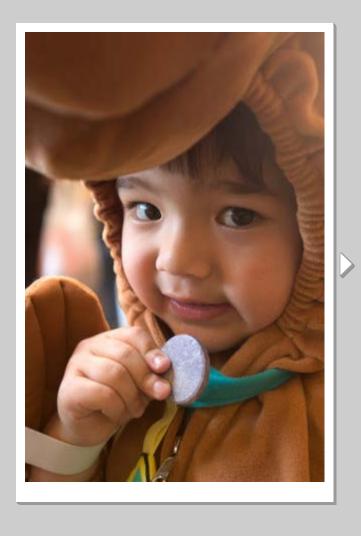
After viewing the Metro Green Line, the visitors returned to Union Station where they trooped onto the Metro Gold Line and traveled to the Chinatown Station.

Then it was back to Union Station to spend the rest of the afternoon on the Metro Red Line, with a long stop at the Hollywood and Vine Station.

"That's Hooray For Hollywood," said Bill Upchurch from San Pedro's Northwest Neighborhood Area Council, referring to the musical notes on the mezzanine handrails.

Docent Dennis Lytton explained the station's unusual artwork, as the visitors enjoyed the warm Los Angeles afternoon.



















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Gateway Cities Governance Council Members Get Inside Look at MTA Operations

By CATHY MANZO

(Jan. 29, 2004) Four Gateway Cities Governance Council members got a behind-the-scenes look at Metro Operations when they toured Bus Operations Control (BOC) and the Customer Service Department recently.

Council members JoAnn Eros-Delgado, Jacqueline Rynerson, Wally Shidler and Cynde Soto were accompanied on the tour by General Manger Rich Rogers, David Hershenson and Cathy Manzo from the community relations department, and Scheduling Manager Dan Nguyen.

The tour began with an up-close and personal visit to the BOC. Tom Jasmine, director of operations control, and his staff demonstrated MTA's newest technology, the Advanced Transit Management System (ATMS) system, which tracks bus operations in the field.

Transportation Operations Supervisor David Seelig explained how buses are tracked and the two-way communications systems between Metro Buses and Operations Control.

"I didn't realize the details that go into putting a bus on the street," said Soto.

Tom Longsden, communications manager of the Customer Relations and Metro Information Department, offered the council members an opportunity to observe the customer service representatives at their workstations, where they handle



Tom Jasmin, Director of Operations Control, explains how communication is coordinated between the BOC and Metro Buses



Gateway Cities council members Cynde Soto, JoAnn Eros-Delgado, Jacquline Rynerson and Gateway Cities Communications Officer Cathy Manzo get on-site customer service demonstration from Tom Longsden, Customer Relations and Metro Information Manager, and Andrea Smith, Passenger Service Officer.



Transit Operations Supervisor David Seelig shows how the system works to Gateway Cities

between 7,000 and 10,000 calls a day.

Council members Wally Shidler and JoAnn Eros-Delgado

Andrea Smith, passenger service officer, gave council members a tour of the newly upgraded department's 86 workstations, which now feature ergonomically-improved, state-of-the-art furniture.

Council members were complimentary of the customer service employees and operations. "You can see where they are making real efforts to make service response time quickly and efficiently," said Rynerson.

The tour allowed the council members the opportunity to acknowledge MTA's commitment to improving and enhancing the efficiency of bus operations and customer relations of the agency.

Council member Eros-Delgado noted, "The MTA's improvements ultimately impact the quality of life for its ridership more efficiently."

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Elementary School Children **Tour the City** on Metro

By RICH MORALLO



(Jan. 29, 2004) More first-time users experienced the safety, convenience and value of the Metro Rail System when 70 teachers, parents and students from Middleton Elementary School in Franklin Heights toured Metro last, Jan. 24.

"Our destination was Chinatown and we learned so much about the rail system," said teacher Gonzalo Bayardo, as he described how the group boarded at the Metro Blue Line Florence Station, switched over to the Metro Red Line subway and traveled to Union Station.

"For many of the families, that was the first time to ride Metro," Gonzalo said.

Escorted by Community Relations staff and Los Angeles Sheriff's deputies, the group took a walking tour at the east portal of Union Station, received a bus and rail safety presentation, and then caught the next Metro Gold Line train headed to Chinatown to participate in the Chinese New Year activities.

"This is just like an adventure," said third-grader Virginia as she marveled at how fast and easy it was to travel to Chinatown from Franklin Heights.

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Metro San Gabriel Valley **Monitors Service with** Innovative 'Ride Along' **Program**

By Liz Armijo-Holbrook

(Jan. 29, 2004) The "Staff Ride Along Program," an innovative hands-on service monitoring system started in November by Metro San Gabriel Valley General Manager Jack Gabig, has sector staff and division managers riding a Metro bus at least twice a month to report on what they observe.

On the ride-along, staff members write a report on the various aspects of the ride, including the condition of the bus. The purpose of the program, says Gabig, is to give staff members a first-hand experience of the daily Metro ride experienced by patrons and to improve service by providing feedback to the sector.



Clipboard in hand, Metro San Gabriel Valley GM Jack Gabig greets Division 9 Operator Pete Perez as he boards a Metro Bus for a "Staff Ride Along."

"It is not the intention of this program to report on operator rule violations," says Emma Nogales, sector senior administrative analyst and project coordinator. "The intention is really to enhance the sector staff's ability to focus on continuously improving customer service, which is one of the MTA's strategic plan goals."

Staff members are encouraged to introduce themselves to the operator at the beginning of the ride and let the operator know that they will be observing, says Nogales.

Since implementing the program in December, Nogales has received reports of graffiti on seats, etched window ledges and messy bus stops. Most sector staff members have reported smooth rides with courteous drivers, she says.

"The new Ride Along Program will provide more support to our Bus Operators, scheduling staff and maintenance team in our effort to improve the quality of service to our customers," says Gabig. "With over 25 staff members participating, Metro SGV service now has a new quality assurance team without adding a single position."

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Sector Governance Councils Schedule February Meetings

By RICK JAGER

(Jan. 30, 2004) MTA's five service sector governance councils have scheduled public meetings in February to discuss transit issues.

Residents within the South Bay, Gateway Cities, Westside/Central, San Fernando and San Gabriel Valleys are invited to attend the meetings.

Governance council meeting schedules are:

- San Fernando Valley Sector, Wednesday, Feb. 4, at 6:30 p.m. in the Marvin Braude Constituent Service Center Community Room, 6262 Van Nuys Blvd., Van Nuys
- Westside/Central Service Sector, Thursday, Feb. 5, 3 p.m., at the La Cienega Tennis Center, 325 S. La Cienega Blvd., Beverly Hills.
- San Gabriel Valley Sector, Tuesday, Feb. 10, 4:30 p.m., at the Metro San Gabriel Valley Sector Office, 3369 Santa Anita Ave., El Monte.
- Gateway Cities Service Sector, Thursday, Feb. 12, 2 p.m., The Gas Company, 9240 Firestone Blvd., Downey.
- South Bay Service Sector, Friday, Feb. 13, 9:30 a.m., Carson Community Center, 801 E. Carson St., Carson.

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MTA Dedicates Pico Station in honor of Chick Hearn



From left, Metro Rail GM Gerald Francis, Marge Hearn, Mayor Jim Hahn, Lakers GM Mitch Kupchak, MTA Board Chairman and County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Lakers announcer Stu Lantz, Deputy CEO John Catoe, Lakers executive Jeanie Buss and Lakers announcer Paul Sunderland. Below, Deputy CEO Catoe teams up with announcer Lantz, Lakers GM Kupchak and Marge Hearn for a photo op.

The Play-by-Play: The late Lakers announcer Chick Hearn scored a civic tribute Thursday, this time at the Metro Blue Line Pico Station, a short distance from the Staples Center where the Lakers play. Mayor Jim Hahn, County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Lakers officials and Hearn's widow Marge unveiled a plaque bearing the likeness of the legendary announcer. Drawing a comparison between the announcer and the train that fans take to Lakers' games, Mayor Hahn remarked: "By virtue of his announcing abilities, Chick Hearn was able to transport fans to courtside seats of the Los Angeles Lakers' games by radio for over 40 years."



PHOTOS BY JUAN OCAMPO

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Members of the Sheriff's Special Enforcement Bureau (SWAT) surround a Metro Blue Line train and fire smoke grenades in a terrorism drill Friday held near the Compton Station.



PHOTOS BY KIM SIM

Sheriff's Department Leads Massive Terrorist Exercise

By BILL HEARD and KIM SIM

(Jan. 30, 2004) In what was billed as the "largest, functional terrorism exercise held in Los Angeles County," some 500 law enforcement, military and emergency personnel converged on the Metro Blue Line Friday.

In a rapidly moving scenario that began about 9 a.m., "terrorists" launched a chemical attack on some 100 "victims" at the Cerritos Performing Arts Center and then fled toward Compton.

The four "suspects" crashed their vehicle near the Compton station where they seized a northbound Metro Blue Line train.

The simulated attacks – called "Operation Blue Skies" – drew a massive response from local, state and federal authorities led by the Sheriff's Department, including members of the Transit Services Bureau.

At least a dozen agencies – including county, city and local fire departments, California National Guard, FBI, Metro Rail Operations and MTA Security – participated in the drill.

'Semblance of service'

"We still had to maintain a semblance of service for our regular customers" during the exercise, said Duane Martin, Rail Operations Control Center manager. Metro Blue Line trains were single-tracked through the exercise area.

"Operation Blue Skies" gave MTA its first opportunity to use the Rail Mobile Emergency Command Center, a newly converted facilities truck modified to serve both as a command center and as an emergency dispatch center.

Dimosthenis Giannissopoulos, chief of security for the Athens Metro system, was on hand to observe the exercise in preparation for the 2004 Olympic Games. Greek officials have said they expect an attack by anarchist groups at the games, scheduled Aug. 13 – 29, in Athens.

By studying procedures used during the exercise by law enforcement and emergency personnel, Giannissopoulos hopes to prevent an attack during the Summer Olympics.

"It can happen and it might happen," he said. "If it might happen, we have to be prepared. If we're prepared, we can save lives."

In full combat gear and carrying rifles, a SWAT team storms the train to capture the simulated "terrorists."



SWAT went into action

With the "terrorists" aboard the Metro Blue Line train, and hostages under their control, members of the Sheriff's Special Enforcement Bureau (SWAT) went into action.

In full combat gear and carrying rifles, they surrounded the train and fired smoke grenades. Hoping to talk with the "terrorists," and prevent injury to hostages, they sent a robot forward with a phone.

When that tactic failed, the officers stormed the train, capturing the "terrorists." Others, wearing orange biohazard suits, checked for the presence of toxic chemicals.

With the "terrorists" in custody, firefighters rescued the "victims," including one man who had to be taken away on a stretcher. Two fire trucks with water spray jets were positioned nearby to decontaminate the "victims," and several were directed to run through the spray.

Sheriff's Lt. Mike Parker explained that the exercise included both criminal tactical operations and a decontamination phase.

He emphasized that the exercise was a worst-case scenario, but added, "It's all part of the drill. We want to expose more agencies to what they would have to do in such a situation. We're testing everyone."