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## Making the Rounds at the Arthur Winston Division Open House



MTA Board Member Pam O'Connor attended the March 27 South Bay Governance Council meeting and later joined the Open House festivities at Arthur Winston Division 5. Clockwise, from left, Council Chair Terisa Price, General Manager Dana Coffey, Director O'Connor and her mother, Esther Smicklas. Pablo Robles, who won a safety contest winner at Ritter Elementary, attended with his mother, Graciela. (4/1/04)


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## Funeral Services Set for RRC's Steve Cabrera

(April 1, 2004) Funeral services have been scheduled for Steve Cabrera, a body repairer "A" in the Regional Rebuild Center Paint Shop, who died Sunday of a massive heart attack.



Steve Cabrera

A memorial service is planned from 7 to 9 p.m., Monday, April 5, at St. Edwards Church, 417 West Grand Blvd., Corona. Funeral services are scheduled at 9:30 a.m., Tuesday, April 6, at the church.

Cabrera, 45, had experienced some pain in his left shoulder and arm for the week prior to his heart attack, according to Equipment Maintenance Supervisor Albert Ramirez, but thought it was pain from throwing balls to the kids he coached in Little League.

Cabrera joined MTA in August 1998, starting as a painter and later became a body repairer.

"He was well liked and respected by management and his peers," says Ramirez. "Team work is essential in the paint shop and everyone who had the opportunity to work with him enjoyed working with him."

Cabrera, who lived in Corona, is survived by his wife, Sally, and 5 children.

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## 'Seniors on the Move' Program Promoted Transit Use

By JODY LITVAK

(April 1, 2004) Some 500 senior citizens were encouraged to take advantage of transit and stay active and healthy, March 29, during a "Seniors on the Move" program.

Sponsored by the Los Angeles County Commission on Aging and County Supervisor and MTA Board Chairman Zev Yaroslavsky, the program provided information about a variety of transportation alternatives.

Commission Chairwoman Nadia Powers encouraged seniors to learn how to use all the transportation options available to them to stay involved with friends, family and the community. "It's better than the alternative," she joked.

Yaroslavsky discussed many MTA initiatives to improve transportation throughout the County, including the new dedicated bus-only lane currently being evaluated on a portion of Wilshire Boulevard.

### Positive experiences

MTA Board Member Pam O'Connor related some of her positive experiences using public transit and encouraged the group to use transit to visit Los Angeles' many cultural institutions.

Held at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium, the day began with an Information Fair.

Representatives from Metro, Santa Monica's Big Blue Bus, Access Services, and Wise Senior Transportation all provided an overview on how to use their services.

A "how-to" session educated the group about trip planning, using a timetable and strategies for ensuring a safe trip.

The seniors were treated to a bus tour to see their new skills applied in a real-life setting. Many of the seniors also took advantage of the opportunity to have their picture taken and receive a free Metro pass to use during April.

PHOTOS: VALARIE HARRISON-BOYER/JOVAN OWENS



Senior citizens crowded the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium to participate in "Seniors on the Move." Below, many seniors toured a Metro Bus and received a free Metro pass for April.





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Green and orange fencing near the intersection of Alameda and Cesar Chavez, west of MTA Headquarters, marks a portion of the area where two residential buildings will be constructed on land adjacent to Union Station.



## \$34 Million Housing Project Slated for Union Station

By KIM SIM

(April 1, 2004) Union Station will soon be home to more than just transportation and businesses. Starting April 1, developers will begin work on making it a home to people as well.

Two residential buildings will be constructed on the northwest portion of the Union Station property, at the corner of Alameda Street and Cesar Chavez Avenue.

The \$34 million endeavor by Lincoln Property Company will result in a housing complex made up of 278 one- and two-bedroom units, complete with both aboveground and underground parking.

Lincoln Property Company of Dallas, purchased the 2.75-acre parcel of land from property owner Catellus Development Corp. The deal was reached last week.

The new complex's proximity to public transportation will be its main selling point, said Tim O'Brien, vice president of development for Lincoln Property Company.

### 'A real plus'

"We think that being located nearby the transportation line is a real plus and we have to believe that as the population grows in Los Angeles and Southern California, there's going to be a continued dependence on this type of transportation," O'Brien said.

The firm expects the complex to be finished by late summer 2005.

As construction begins on the housing complex, development continues



on the southwest corner of the Union Station property, where builders are making progress on a three-story, 47,000 square foot structure. The building will house Catellus as well as other organizations and businesses.

The project started in November and is expected to be completed by the end of this year.

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A cluster of palm trees in this architect's rendering of a proposed hotel/apartment complex marks the entrance to the Hollywood/Vine Metro Rail station. A luxury W hotel, shops and restaurants will surround the subway entrance plaza.



Apartment and condominium residences top a row of shops and restaurants along Vine Street and Selma Avenue in this architect's rendering of the proposed Hollywood/Vine development.

## Board OKs Plans for Hollywood/Vine Transit Center Complex

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(April 2, 2004) Plans for a huge transit-oriented hotel and apartment complex at the Hollywood/ Vine Metro Rail station took a major step, last week, with MTA Board approval of the developer's concept.

The development, which will dominate almost an entire city block in the heart of Hollywood, will include a 13-story condominium building, a 10-story luxury W hotel and a five-story apartment building all surrounding the Metro Red Line plaza.

At street level, the complex will have a 45,000-square foot grocery store and 67,000 square feet of space for stores and restaurants. There will be a 1,160-space below-ground parking lot and a Metro layover facility with bus parking and a lounge for operators.

The proposed development drew approval from Hollywood's "honorary mayor" Johnny Grant, who said the area needs an anchor. TV talk show host Jimmy Kimmel, Hollywood High School Principal Fonna Bishop and dozens of others who attended the Board meeting also supported the development.

## Metro Red Line entrance

The development will sit on 4.3 acres surrounding the entrance to the Metro Red Line. The block is bounded by Hollywood Boulevard, Vine Street, Argyle Avenue on the east and Selma Avenue on the south. A total of 2.8 acres is owned by MTA.

The deal includes a land swap in which MTA will exchange its interests in 1.09 acres of airspace above the condo parcel and subterranean rights

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Development  
Blooms at  
Metro Rail  
Stations

below the condo parking facility for 1.47 acres of land along Vine.

Once completed, the development will feature 300 hotel rooms, 262 apartments and 96 condos. Hotel guests will enter through a motor court driveway off Argyle. Apartment and condo residents will enter through lobbies on Vine and at the corner of Argyle and Selma.

The Taft Building, which has long stood at the southeast corner of Hollywood and Vine will remain and is not part of the development.

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## April 22 is 'Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day'

By KIM SIM

(April 2, 2004) Every April, parents are invited to bring their youngsters to work for "Take Our Daughters and Sons To Work Day" — a nationwide program geared to show girls and boys opportunities at an early age.

This year, the event is set for Thursday, April 22. MTA employees can bring their children — in grades three through eight — to work with them.

The theme for 2004 is "Today's Vision, Tomorrow's Reality." This is the 10th year MTA will participate in the program.

"What the MTA does is take the kids and show them what it's like to work here, in the transportation industry," says event coordinator Georgia Miller.

Several tours are being planned for the day, including tours of the operating divisions, the Design Studio, print shop and copy center. Other activities tentatively scheduled are workshops about setting career goals and job interviews, as well as visits with deputies in the Sheriff's Transit Services Bureau.

The goal is "to let children see what it's like to be out in the workplace, to show them the importance of doing well in school so they can move in the direction they choose for their career," Miller says.

Employees who are interested in participating in "Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day" must register with their department coordinators no later than April 14.

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## Roundtripper Shuttle Will Take Employees to Dodgers Opener

- **Employees asked to complete a shuttle survey**

(April 2, 2004) The Dodger Roundtripper Shuttle will provide pre- and post-game service between MTA Headquarters and Dodger Stadium for Opening Day, Monday, April 5.

**myMetro.net**

see> [Dodger Shuttle](#) March 26

The first bus will depart station 6 on Patsaouras Plaza at 10:40 a.m. and every 15 minutes until the last bus, which will leave the Plaza between 1:20 and 1:30 p.m.

Return buses will begin leaving Dodger Stadium at the beginning of the 8th inning and will continue until one hour after the game ends.

Employees who use the Roundtripper Shuttle on Opening Day will be asked to complete a short survey about the shuttle. Information from the survey will help ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the shuttle service for future games.

The names of those who return a completed survey will be entered into a drawing for a vintage Metro baseball jersey.

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## Long Day's Journey into Night... and the Next Day and Night

By DAVID HERSHENSON

(April 6, 2004) Alex Clifford knew he would be putting in some long hours in his new position as Gateway Cities general manager. But, he had no idea he would be practically working a 36-hour shift.

The long day (and night, and day, and night) began, not long after he became general manager, with two morning Gateway Cities Town Hall meetings at senior centers in the City of Bell.

Next, it was back to the office to check e-mail, phone messages and complete other tasks, before heading back out on the road for an evening Town Hall presentation in the City of Cudahy, which ended around 9 pm. Ordinarily, that would be the end of a long and busy day, but this was no ordinary day.

Clifford and his staff went back to the sector office to get a little more work done before taking a midnight bus ride. Gateway Cities Governance Councilmember Larry Nelson met Clifford and service development staff members, Dan Nguyen and Mike Sieckert, at 11:30 p.m.

## Rode the line

The group drove downtown to board Metro Bus Line 18, which operates owl service between midnight and 5 a.m. and is being considered for service changes. Clifford, Nelson, Nguyen and Sieckert rode the line for a few hours to evaluate the ridership levels on the line, before heading home early in the morning to get a few hours' sleep.

After grabbing some shut-eye, Clifford headed to the MTA Board meeting at 9:30 a.m., then back to his office for a quick staff meeting. Next, he joined community relations and scheduling staff to meet with a local high school principal and evaluate a Metro Bus stop near the school.

Then it was back to the office for about an hour before heading back on the road to the final Town Hall meeting at 6 p.m. in the City of South Gate. He arrived home about 36 hours from the beginning of the journey.

"Although it was a long day, I feel great about what our team was able to accomplish. It was a true team effort," said Clifford. "During this 36-hour journey, our governance council was very supportive – Councilman Nelson joined me on the midnight bus trip, Councilwoman Eros Delgado attended both senior meetings in Bell and helped out with translation for some of the attendees, and Councilman Wally Shidler attended every one of our meetings and did a fantastic job of answering questions and encouraging people to utilize our transit system."



Gateway Cities  
GM Alex Clifford

### **Pleased with staff**

"I was also very pleased by the contribution our staff made to and during the journey," he said. "Dave Hershenson and Cathy Manzo, our community relations team, planned, coordinated and handled all aspects of the four community meetings. Dan Nguyen, our service development manager, also attended each of the meetings and went on the midnight bus line check with Mike Sieckert, our planning manager, who also prepared and gave a presentation on our service improvements at the South Gate meeting. Both of them rode the line until 4 a.m."

"We were also fortunate to have the participation of Jinny Park from the Gateway Cities Area Team, who attended three of our meetings and was available to answer questions about projects not relating to bus service, and Arum Prem from ASI (Access Services), who offered information about transit options for people with disabilities at our two Bell meetings," he said.

"I also want to be sure to thank the members of our Division Advisory Committee who volunteered their time - Robert Rodriguez, Dyana Elorriaga, Maria Avila and Elizabeth Arellano," Clifford added.

The Town Hall meetings were effective in communicating the sector's plans and soliciting input and comments from current and potential Metro customers. More than 350 people attended the various meetings.

Clifford discussed the sector concept and what the Gateway Cities sector is doing to improve service in the Southeast LA County region. He gave a general description of his vision for the future and his short-range and long-range goals.

One of the short-range goals he didn't discuss, but achieved after the last community meeting, was to get a good night's sleep.

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San Gabriel Valley General Manager Jack Gabig, center, and Acting Transportation Manager Robert Holland, right rear row, join in the celebration of North Los Angeles Division 3's latest award in the How You Doin'? program.



## Division 3 Wins February's Transportation Award

By KIM SIM

(April 6, 2004) North Los Angeles Division 3 continued its winning ways for the third straight month, retaining the perpetual "How You Doin'?" trophy for Outstanding Transportation Division.

The transportation staff was honored, April 5, for its performance in February, when it had the fewest new Workers' Compensation claims per 100 employees.

Division 3 halved its ratio of new Worker's Compensation claims per 100 employees from January to February, going from 1.17 to 0.58. It was an improvement for the division, which had placed sixth in the same category in January.

In other judging criteria, it was second lowest in complaints per 100,000 boardings (3.36) and third lowest in accidents per 100,000 hub miles (3.05).

The division also ranked fourth in in-service on-time performance (68.33%) and seventh in running hot (11.16%).

"It's good for the morale and for the operators, (to) let them know that they're doing a good job and their deeds are not going unnoticed," says Assistant Transportation Manager Bob Holland.




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## Eastside Extension Funding Goes to Congress for Review

### • Timing was critical to keep project on schedule

(April 6, 2004) The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) sent a funding agreement for the Eastside Light Rail Extension to Congress, last Friday, to begin a 60-day review period – just in time to keep the \$898 million project on schedule.

Timing of the FTA's decision to release the Eastside Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA) to Congress was critical because the contractor's \$586.6 million bid for construction of the project expires June 2 – only a day after the 60-day congressional review is due to end.

"It is critical to connect the Eastside to the regional transportation system, and the FTA's endorsement of the project will help us achieve our goal," said Supervisor Gloria Molina. "The good news is that all the elements of the process are coming together, which means construction of this important line is finally in sight."

"This is a major step for the Eastside light rail project because it keeps the project on track for a mid-year construction start," said Los Angeles City Councilman Antonio Villaraigosa.

### Congressional briefings

MTA now will begin a series of briefings for members of the congressional committees that have jurisdiction over the FFGA review. The total federal commitment to the Eastside project is \$490.7 million. The remainder of the funding, already secured by MTA, will come from state and local sources.

In his FY 2005 budget, President Bush has requested \$80 million for construction of the Eastside project.

"I'm delighted with the progress we're making toward completion of the Metro Orange Line busway project across the San Fernando Valley," said Board Chairman Zev Yaroslavsky, "and as the Eastside extension moves forward, our plans for a truly regional integrated transit network are really taking shape."

The Eastside Extension will be a 5.9-mile, eight-station light-rail line that will serve the heavily transit-dependent area from Union Station eastward to a terminus at Atlantic Boulevard. The line is expected to reach 23,000 average weekday boardings in 2020.

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A Metro Blue Line train approaches a Los Angeles rail crossing with a left-turn warning signal like those now being installed in Long Beach.



## Long Beach Installing Left-Turn Warning Signals on Blue Line

By ADRIENNE FIGUEROA

(Apr. 7, 2004) The City of Long Beach recently began installing left-turn "TRAIN" warning signals along portions of the Metro Blue Line to alert drivers when a train is approaching a rail crossing.

Once the project is completed, the Metro Blue Line will have uniform traffic and train warning devices on all corridors where the trains run at street level, according to Abdul Zohbi, Metro Rail Safety manager.

Featuring state-of-the-art L.E.D (Light Emitting Diode) technology, the "TRAIN" signals illuminate the silhouette of a train when it is unsafe to make a left turn through a rail intersection. The city also is replacing all "T" train signals, which sometimes confused motorists, with bar signals visible only to train operators.

Signals are currently installed on Long Beach Boulevard at 7th and 10th streets, but will soon be integrated into all rail crossings where left turns are allowed in the city. Project completion is expected by summer.

### Safer signal system

The project was initiated more than a year ago when MTA approached Long Beach officials about installing a new, safer signal system.

"Our main goal is to reduce, if not eliminate, accidents," says Zohbi. "Safety is first."

For the past three years, MTA has experienced a great deal of success with the fiber optic, left-turn "TRAIN" warning signals installed along Los Angeles portions of the Metro Blue Line. The project served as a model for the Long Beach plans.

"Over 50 percent of train versus car accidents happen because people turn against a red left-turn signal," Zohbi says. "In Los Angeles, we found a big reduction in left-turn accidents following the installation of the fiber optic TRAIN signs."



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Riders at the Wilshire/Western Metro Rapid stop can now relax on uniquely contoured, all-concrete seats positioned on the station plaza.



PHOTOS BY GAYLE ANDERSON

## New Metro Art Projects Enhance Rapid Bus Experience

- Project is one of the first completed for Metro Buses

By DAVE SOTERO

(April 7, 2004) Three Metro Art projects that will make many Metro Rapid patrons' commutes more enjoyable and memorable have just been completed.

Local artist Beep'Inc. has partnered with Metro to develop specially designed concrete station seating for the Wilshire/Western Metro Rapid stop. Vibrant, graffiti-resistant bus seat fabrics and vintage overhead bus cards were designed as part of the Metro Rapid Bus Development Project.

It is one of the first Metro Art projects completed exclusively for Metro Buses. Metro's prestigious Metro Art Program has so far focused mainly on Metro Rail.

Riders at the Wilshire/Western Metro Rapid stop can now relax



Artist Pae White and architect Tom Marble of Beep'Inc. also designed the new graffiti-resistant fabric for Metro Rapid seats.

on uniquely contoured, all-concrete seats positioned on the station plaza. Unlike regular bus stop benches, the concrete seats provide individuals with a unique

sense of place.

### **Withstand heavy use**

The seats are rugged enough to withstand heavy use and can be cleaned easily. Colored floor medallions accentuate the concrete seating area.

Led by artist Pae White and architect Tom Marble, the team also redesigned Metro Rapid seat fabrics with a vibrant, updated look. The design team worked directly with the fabric company to create a wildly colorful, graffiti-resistant design that generates a lively, fun atmosphere on board Rapid buses.

Metro Rapid buses will be retrofitted with the new seat fabrics on an ongoing basis.

Finally, the team designed new overhead posters – bus cards – that feature symbols derived from transit passes of the 1930s and 1940s to describe romantic dramas carried out in locations throughout the City of Los Angeles.



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## Poetry in Motion

### Poets Will Give Readings Aboard Metro Rail Trains

- April is National Poetry Month
- ONLINE > [Schedule](#)

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(April 7, 2004) In a month-long series of live poetry readings aboard Metro Rail trains, acclaimed poet Elena Karina Byrne will lead bands of poets in live rush-hour readings in celebration of National Poetry Month in April.

The poetry readings, from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., are scheduled on Metro Red Line trains, Thursday, April 8; on Metro Blue Line trains, Thursday, April 22; and in the Metro Gold Line Mission Station plaza in South Pasadena on Thursday, April 29.

Breaking through the rush-hour monotone, the poets will be riding the rails, lifting the heart, and inviting Metro Rail riders to cherish the moment.

The schedule of poetry readings and poets is as follows:

- **April 8: Metro Red Line / Thursday, 4 p.m to 6 p.m.**  
Poets Elena Karina Byrne •Kate Durbin •Liz González •Eitan Kadosh •Larry Jaffe •J-son Wooi-chin •Gloria Vando depart from the Gateway Transit Center at Union Station at 4 p.m.
- **April 22: Metro Blue Line / Thursday, 4 p.m to 6 p.m.**  
Poets: Noah Blaustein, Elena Karina Byrne, Larry Colker, Dina Hardy, Regina O'Melveny, Elisa Pulido, and Karen Schumacher depart from the 7th Street/Metro Center/Julian Dixon Station at 4p.m.
- **April 29: Metro Gold Line Mission Station plaza /**

## Poets on board



Poets Dina Hardy, Elena Karina Byrne, Briony Bax and Danielle Cohn prepare to board Metro Red Line for National Poetry Month rush-hour readings in 2003.



Poet Gloria Vando reads to Metro Green Line passengers on the median platform.



Poets Richard Beban, above, and R. Skye Palkowitz, below, deliver purple passages to Metro passengers aboard Metro Rail trains and in stations during the 2003 event.

**Thursday, 4 p.m to 6 p.m.**

Poets Therese M. Bachand, Elena Karina Byrne, Catherine Daly, Michael C. Ford, Charlotte Innes, Alicia Portnoy and Antoineta Villamil read their published works and selected poems from a podium in a plaza adjacent to Metro Gold Line Mission Station in South Pasadena. The Metro Mission

Station plaza is located at 905 Meridian Avenue in South Pasadena



PHOTOS BY GAYLE ANDERSON

The rush-hour readings extend the experience of Poetry in Motion L.A. The work of a number of poets is inscribed on placards placed aboard nearly 2,400 Metro buses, bringing poetry to more than one million bus riders a day.

Poetry in Motion L.A. has staged rush-hour readings during National Poetry Month since its beginnings in 1999.

The month-long celebration of National Poetry Month will culminate in a staged reading and book signing at 4 p.m., April 29, in the courtyard adjacent to the Metro Gold Line Mission Station in South Pasadena. Poets Therese M. Bachand Elena Karina Byrne, Catherine Daly, Michael C. Ford, Charlotte Innes, Alicia Portnoy, and Antoineta Villamil will read their work during the free performance.

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## Milestones: Campo de Cahuenga

Los Angeles County, City and MTA officials joined in a colorful and festive dedication ceremony of the historic partial reconstruction of the original Campo de Cahuenga adobe building, where in 1847 the Signing of the Articles of Capitulation took place, ending the Mexican-American War. The original foundation has been rebuilt with river rocks and partial adobe walls were erected in the original way to replicate the adobe house structure and preserve the historic legacy. --from José Ubaldo



Members of the Carolina Russek Dance Company surround City of Los Angeles Councilman Tom LaBonge, L.A. County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky and Guy Weddington, member of the Campo de Cahuenga Historic Society.

The foundation and partial adobe walls are rebuilt on Campo de Cahuenga.



Fourth grade students from Lankershim Elementary School remove the covers of a plaque during the ceremony on Campo de Cahuenga.



- Photos by Luis Inzunza

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## New Library Page is Resource on Board Actions, Policies

By MATT BARRETT

(April 8, 2004) The MTA Transportation Library and Research Center has posted a new page on its Intranet web site to help those researching MTA Board actions, policies, by-laws and administrative code.

The resource page provides users with actions taken by the MTA Board of Directors, Board committees, other MTA organizations and the predecessor organizations LACTC, SCRTD and RCC.

Linking to the page give access to four resources: The Board Action Archives, Board Policy Summaries, Administrative Code and MTA By-Laws.

The Board Action Archive allows employees to use the Google search system to access full-text searchable MTA agendas, minutes, reports, legislative briefs and communications (also known as the Board Box) from 1993 to the present.

## Predecessor agency reports

Included in this system are reports from other board committees, such as SAFE and PTSC and predecessor agency board meeting minutes. These include the SCRTD from 1976-1993, the LACTC from 1976-1993 and the Rail Construction Corporation (RCC) from 1986-1994.

Bringing these documents together in one place should make the "how did we get here?" questions much easier to answer, as well as provide key information for locating related resources either within the Library, through Records Management or within individual department records.

Users can even copy and paste text from previous board reports into new reports and spend less time reinventing the wheel.

Employees may be familiar with the Board agenda information via metro.net web pages, however, it only includes full reports for a rolling twelve-month period. The Google system allows access to information as far back as 1976.

The intent is to maximize the information available directly to employees and enable employees to perform research and their jobs better.

## Board Policy Summaries

The Board Policy Summaries are easy-to-read reference documents for the public policy decisions made by the MTA Board. Each includes a summary, a historic perspective on the action taken, the Board's last action on the subject, full-text links to supporting policy documents and

### [Check it out!](#)

Click on link to go to MTA Library and Research Center's resource page

For more information about the new resources described here, or about using the Google board archives system, contact Joanne Kawai, Monica Del Toro, or Matthew Barrett.

links to other related policies.

The Policy Summaries are updated on-line within 30 days of Board adoption and also published annually in a book for the Board of Directors. Previously, researching the Board's policy decisions would require a time-consuming hunt for documents.

Often times it would be difficult to verify the first and last time action was taken.

**Administrative Code**

The Administrative Code is the Board's adopted ordinances, which function as MTA's legal code governing its operation pursuant to the legislation in California's public utilities code that created the MTA and its predecessors.

The ordinances cover the offices of the Board, the resolution of jurisdictional disputes between municipal operators, public hearings, contracting, ethics and Propositions A and C.

**MTA By-Laws**

By-Laws of MTA organizations are the rules of internal governance each has adopted in support of their incorporation, their powers, rights, obligations, officers and members.

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## SGV Sector Employees Were Stars at School's Career Day

(April 8, 2004) Six San Gabriel Valley Service Sector employees and a Metro Bus were stars, recently, at the Griffin Avenue Elementary School's 10th annual Career Day.

Eight classes, from kindergarten to 5th grade, were ushered aboard the bus to hear presentations on safety, courtesy and pride in Metro Buses since "they belong to all of us."

Making presentations were Sam Saucedo, Body Repairer, RRC; Louie Peralta, Division 3 Mechanic; Armando Smalling and Socorro Alvarez, Division 3 Operators; Cathy Hardway, Division 9 Operator; and Liz Armijo-Holbrook, the sector Community Relations Officer.

During her presentation, Alvarez who attended Griffin kindergarten was recognized by one of the teachers as a former schoolmate.

## Stressed importance of school

Presenters took turns talking about their area of expertise, how long they have worked for MTA and what they like about their jobs. They stressed the importance of staying in school.

Armijo-Holbrook talked about the many different jobs at Metro. The children had lots of questions and also requested the employees' autographs after each session.

The children kept the presenters on their toes. When one student asked if the employees use rulers in their jobs, the teacher explained that her class had just had a lesson in rulers.

PHOTOS BY ADRIENNE FIGUEROA



RRC's Samuel Saucedo and the Metro minibuss makes an appearance at Griffin Avenue Elementary's Career Day.



Operators sign autographs for fourth grade fans.



Division 9 Bus Operator Cathy Hardway answers questions about working for the MTA.

Smalling had his hands full, but managed to keep order while the children waited their turn for the presentation. Saucedo entertained the kids with Metro's mini-bus.



Division 3 Bus Operator Socorro Alvarez-Mitchell talks with Griffin Avenue Elementary students about the importance of readin', writin' and 'rithmetic to prepare for future jobs.



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## Greater Los Angeles Vendor Fair to be held April 13 at L.A. Convention Center

- **County's leading business outreach expo to help small businesses tap billions of dollars of local contract opportunities**

By DAVE SOTERO

(April 8, 2004) Small businesses interested in contracting with five major Los Angeles area agencies are invited to attend the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Greater Los Angeles Vendor Fair, April 13, at the Los Angeles Convention Center.

This day-long business outreach exposition is sponsored jointly by Metro, Metropolitan Water District, L.A. Unified School District, City and County of Los Angeles. It is the largest of its kind in the county.

Small- and medium-size business owners will receive valuable information on how to compete for agency contracts collectively worth billions of dollars.

Participants will be able to meet directly with contract administrators, buyers, managers and other procurement officers from host agencies.

The fair will provide excellent networking opportunities for business owners interested in partnering with other business owners to compete for contracts. The fair will also include hundreds of exhibitors offering a variety of products and services.

The fair will feature guest speaker Mimi Donaldson, co-author of the book "Negotiating for Dummies." Donaldson will give a presentation entitled "Men and Women: Can We Talk?."

Admission to the Greater Los Angeles Vendor Fair is \$65 and includes entry to all exhibit areas, admission to all workshops, luncheon and buyers guide that includes a staff directory of all sponsoring agencies' procurement departments. A \$15 ticket includes all of the above but does not include the luncheon.

For more information about the Greater Los Angeles Vendor Fair or to obtain a schedule of workshops, visit [www.lavendorfair.com](http://www.lavendorfair.com).

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Katie Bennett of Flexcar Member Relations, right, shows MTA's Lynn Goldsmith how to use her membership SmartCard to activate the car's computer system and open the doors. Below, Goldsmith punches her membership pin number into the on-board computer system. Once she's recognized by the system, she's ready to drive away.



PHOTOS BY BILL HEARD

## Flexcar an Option for Employees Who Commute to Work

Special for Metro > [Flexcar Enrollment Deal](#)

By BILL HEARD

(April 9, 2004) Angela Pina, a Metro Rail document control assistant, and Lynn Goldsmith, a transportation planning manager, are both members of Flexcar, the car-sharing service.

Pina commutes to her job at Metro Red Line Division 20 from the Inland Empire. She checks out one of Flexcar's Honda Civic gas/electric sedans about twice a month to drive to doctors' appointments in Redondo Beach and Westchester.

Goldsmith, who commutes to MTA Headquarters from Simi Valley, has never used the service.

So, earlier this week, Goldsmith went down to the P-1 level to have a look at the two Flexcar vehicles parked there for members' use. She wanted a refresher on how to check out and use the cars. For her effort, she received \$20 in "Flexbucks" for two free hours' use.

"I'd like Flexcar to be an option," says Goldsmith. "It could be used during lunch hours, because I don't have my car here."

## Reservations needed

Flexcar charges \$10 an hour – all gasoline, insurance and other expenses – are included in the hourly rate. The vehicles must be reserved ahead of time by phone or e-mail. The cars also can be kept overnight and members are not charged the hourly rate between 9 p.m. and 7 a.m.

"This is the best thing since pantyhose," says Pina, who spends about \$35 a month to use Flexcar. "I'll tell anyone, if you live out of the city and need to go somewhere during the day, just take Flexcar."

Since its introduction at MTA last July, 61 employees have joined Flexcar, says General Manager Ryan Grady. The company has begun a drive to bring more employees into the system, with enrollment sessions planned within the next few weeks at the Regional Rebuild Center and at Division 20.



"We're pleased that many of our employees see the benefit of car-sharing and how the Flexcar program can work for them," says Jami Carrington of Program Service and Development. "We encourage new and existing members to take advantage of the free time bonuses offered to learn how to use the cars."

#### **Flexcar Enrollment Deal**

Any eligible MTA employee who signs up for Flexcar membership can enroll for a one-time \$15 lifetime charge. Employees will not have to pay the annual \$25 membership fee. Employees who enroll by May 31 will receive \$20 in Flexbucks. For more information, contact Irma Rivera at 922-4683 or Flexcar Member Relations, Katie Bennett at 213.482.FLEX (3539). More information> Click here <http://www.flexcar.com/losangeles/> or go to Flexcar web site, select Los Angeles region, then "MTA employees" under Los Angeles Area Specials.

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## South Bay Sector Schedules April 17 Open House

By RICK JAGER

(April 9, 2004) The South Bay Service Sector will hold an open house and transit safety fair at Carson Division 18 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Saturday, April 17.

The Service Sector Governance Council will hold its regular monthly public meeting at the Carson Division beginning at 9:30 a.m. the same day.

As part of the open house activities, the public will receive information on transit safety. The safety fair will feature several information booths, safety presentations and bus tours of the facility.

"We are proud to open our doors to the public and hope they will attend this open house and transit safety fair," said General Manager Dana Coffey. "The public will get a first hand look at our bus operating division in Carson as well as receive information about the South Bay Service Sector."

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[Click here](#) to get an early start on the Workforce Census or go to >  
[http://intranet1/elisten/surveys/Workforce\\_Census/census.html](http://intranet1/elisten/surveys/Workforce_Census/census.html)

## Workforce Census Will Help Determine MTA Employee Diversity

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(April 13, 2004) A high proportion – about 83 percent – of MTA employees are members of a minority group.

It's an attribute the agency has monitored closely over the years as a matter of MTA policy and to comply with federal affirmative action laws. The laws require the agency's employee population to mirror the population of the area it serves.

Now it's time, says MTA's Diversity and Economic Opportunity Department (DEOD), to do another headcount.

Beginning Thursday, April 15, the department will distribute a short survey called the 2004 Workforce Census. It is intended to cover all 9,973 employees, including full- and part-timers, as-needed employees and interns.

"We're asking everyone to stand up and be counted in the Workforce Census," says Lucille Coleman, EEO programs manager for DEOD.

### Affirmative Action Plan

Information from the census of MTA employees will be incorporated into the agency's 2004 Affirmative Action Plan. The Plan will be submitted to the U.S. Department of Transportation for approval.

Some will complete the Workforce Census on-line; others will fill out a paper form to be distributed by 70 work location coordinators. Completed forms are to be dropped into a locked "ballot box" or handed back to the coordinators.

The census officially ends April 23, but DEOD will continue to accept both on-line surveys and completed paper forms for another two weeks to accommodate employees who were off work during the census period.

The survey gives employees an opportunity to indicate their ethnicity and racial category. The categories have been expanded to match the federal Year 2000 census.

PHOTO BY BILL HEARD



Ready with a "ballot box" for the Workforce Census are Lucille Coleman, center, and, from left, Jay Fisgus and Linda Wright of the Diversity and Economic Opportunity Department, HR Director Stefan Chasnov and Cynthia Shavers of Organizational Development and Training.

Where there previously were five racial groups to select from – Caucasian, African American, Asian, American Indian and Pacific Islander – there now are nine choices, as well as a category for “other.”

### **Nine ethnic categories**

The new categories, in order of appearance on the census form, are American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, African American (Black), Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, Caucasian (White), American Indian or Alaska Native and Black, American Indian or Alaska Native and White; Asian and White, Asian and Black, or Other.

Employees also will be asked to enter their badge number, indicate gender, sign and date the census form.

Because DEOD is seeking 100 percent response to get an accurate analysis of MTA employee population, “we ask that you sign your name,” says Coleman. “This is to help us determine who has not responded.”

The Workforce Census is important as a means of illustrating MTA’s commitment to and compliance with federal affirmative action regulations covering fairness in hiring practices.

“This (census),” says Coleman, “will establish a new baseline of information about MTA’s diversity.”

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Transit display shows, from upper left clockwise, traffic conditions on LA County streets and freeways, a close-up of traffic conditions in a selected area, Metro Rapid Bus movement, and real-time video of traffic.



PHOTOS BY BILL HEARD

## Transit Information Display Mounted at MTA H.Q.

- Provides real-time traffic information
- Shows Metro Rapid Bus movement

(April 13, 2004) A video and digital information display of transit information and highway conditions has been mounted on the east wall of the third-floor lobby at MTA Headquarters.

Currently in testing, the display will be formally dedicated, April 21, by officials of the three agencies that provide the information and video – Metro, Caltrans and LADOT. Federal and state transportation officials also are expected to attend.

One panel of the display will show the minute-by-minute movements of buses along the Metro Rapid Bus lines. This panel will be upgraded within six months to include information from the Advanced Transit Management System (ATMS).

Two of the other three screens will provide real-time digital presentations of traffic conditions on the region's streets and freeways.



Senior Security Officer Loretta Ferem points out traffic moving along a section of Los Angeles County highway as Roger Dames of Metro Construction looks on.

The fourth screen will show video from five Caltrans cameras of current traffic movement on various highways. Eventually, the system will be expanded to provide coverage by 50 cameras.

Controllers in Bus Operations Control use the information to ensure efficient operation of the Metro Bus system. Caltrans and LADOT use it to monitor the flow of traffic and respond to problems.

Local media also use the information to inform motorists about traffic conditions on area highways.

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The law enforcement sweep through the San Fernando Valley concluded with a news conference attended by most of the county's TV stations. Pictured are, from left, Los Angeles City Councilman Tom LaBonge, LASD Capt. Dan Finkelstein, Metro San Fernando Valley GM David Armijo, Los Angeles City Councilwoman Wendy Greuel, City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo, and Los Angeles City Councilman Dennis Zine.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF LOS ANGELES SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

## SFV Tagger Task Force Sweeps Up 24 in Anti-Graffiti Raid

(April 13, 2004) A multi-agency law enforcement task force swept through the San Fernando Valley, last Friday, conducting searches and arresting 24 suspects in a raid targeting graffiti vandalism and its associated violent crimes.

The 70-member task force charged three suspects with felony vandalism, 13 with probation violations and seven with more serious charges that included attempted murder and drug possession. One juvenile also was charged.

The raid, led by the LAPD's North Hollywood Community Tagger Task Force, also turned up graffiti implements, narcotics and a number of weapons.

Officers also confiscated a grenade, an assault rifle with bayonet stolen in Las Vegas, a .38 caliber handgun possibly used in a recent drive-by shooting and two knives.

How the day went...



Deputies convene at dawn.



Task force teams prepare to search



Agencies cooperating in the raid, which began at 7 a.m. and concluded by mid-morning, were the Sheriff's Transit Services Bureau, LAUSD Police, Burbank Police and the LA County Probation Department.

### 'Hit 48 locations'

"This was very successful," said Sheriff's Lt. Pat Jordan. "We hit 48 locations (and) gathered evidence to help clear up an attempted murder with a drive-by, and evidence that helped clear a serious home-invasion robbery."

The LAPD scheduled the operation for early morning to catch the suspects before they headed off to school. That meant an early wakeup call for some as officers searched their rooms for graffiti tools, weapons, narcotics or other illegal material.

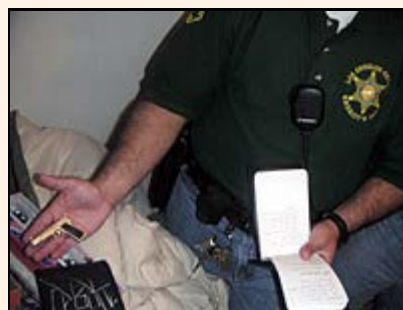
"We also gathered intelligence on other taggers working in the San Fernando Valley," said Jordan. "We expect to make arrests based on that intelligence in the near future."

The day's events concluded with a news conference attended by most of the county's TV stations.

"Today was a strategic initiative...they're going to be doing on an on-going basis," said San Fernando Valley Sector General Manager David Armijo. "The cost savings for (Metro) means more service we can provide."

-- Story by Bill Heard, Jose Ubaldo and Lisa Huynh

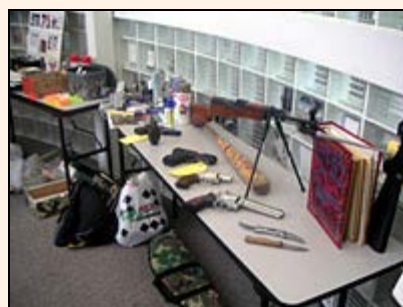
residence.



Deputy bags evidence.



Tagger suspects are rounded up.



The bounty of graffiti tools, weapons, narcotics or other illegal material

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## Champions in training...



PHOTO BY JENNIFER YEH

## 2004 Raildeo Competition Set for Saturday, May 1

- Employees, family members and guests invited!

(April 14, 2004) The 2004 Raildeo – the annual competition to select Metro Rail's top train operators and maintenance specialists – is set for Saturday, May 1.

All employees, family members and guests are invited to the Raildeo to be held this year at Metro Red Line Division 20, located at 320 Santa Fe Ave., Los Angeles.

Twenty train operators are signed up for the operators' competition, which begins at 7 a.m. A dozen maintenance specialist will begin their event at 10 a.m.

The first and second place train operators and the winning maintenance team will represent Metro at the APTA International Rail Competition, June 2-9, in Miami.

The 2003 winners were Operators Tu Phan, Robert Rodriguez and Linda Sardinha and Maintenance Specialists Eric Czintos, Ronnie Burt, Glenn Abraham and Jose Rodriguez.

## Family activities

Various family activities, including information booths, the "Metro Experience" mobile theater and entertainment for the kids, are planned from 9 a.m. until the winners' ceremony at about 3 p.m. Lunch will be hot dogs, links, fries and soda.

The band, "El Chicano," will provide live music from 11:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. A DJ also will be on hand to keep the music going throughout the day.

The operators' competition includes troubleshooting, a pre-departure inspection, a rulebook test and an obstacle course designed to test driving skills.

Operators planning to participate in the event can schedule practice sessions from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m., daily, from April 17 to 24.

The maintenance contest includes a written test, identification of defective electrical and electronic components, wheel gauge application, use of measuring devices, parts identification and use of safety equipment.

Members of the Raildeo planning committee are Duane Martin, Tim Porter, Angela Pina, Esther Pippins, Chris Medina, Byron England, Tom Lingenfield, Manuel Precie, Anita Coleman and Maria Tapia.

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MTA CEO Roger Snoble addresses Metro Rail security at news conference called by U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer, at right. He was joined at the podium by MTA Chairman Zev Yaroslavsky, center right, and Metrolink Chairman William "Bill" Alexander.



PHOTOS BY GAYLE ANDERSON

## Senator Barbara Boxer Calls for Efforts to Increase Rail Security

- Senator calls for legislation to improve security against terrorist attacks on Amtrak, freight rail, and local mass transit facilities at a press conference held today at Union Station.

April 14, 2003 - Senator Barbara Boxer visited Union Station today for a press conference to build support for the Railroad and Mass Transportation Public Protection Program Act (S.2276) that she introduced earlier this month. The bill would provide \$500 million in rail security grants for Amtrak, other rail carriers, and providers of mass transportation for improvements to the security of the nation's rail and mass transportation system. She was joined at the press conference by MTA Chairman Zev Yaroslavsky, MTA CEO Roger Snoble, Metrolink Chairman William "Bill" Alexander and Amtrak Superintendent for the Southwest Division Richard Phelps.



Senator Barbara Boxer fields questions from media.

In addition to discussing

her rail security bill, Senator Boxer expressed her support for the Rail Security Act of 2004. That bill, authored by Senator John McCain of Arizona, was passed by the Senate Commerce Committee last week. The McCain bill would provide over \$1 billion in funding to meet immediate security needs for intercity and freight rail transportation providers.



Senator Boxer pauses with transit officials following the news conference. Pictured are, from left, Metrolink Chairman William "Bill" Alexander, MTA Chairman Zev Yaroslavsky, and MTA CEO Roger Snoble.



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## Greater LA Vendor Fair Draws 1,400 Business People



PHOTO BY DAVE SOTERO

## Vendor Fair Celebrates Diversity of Agencies' Contractors

- MTA sponsors huge booth to showcase services.

BY DAVE SOTERO

(April 14, 2004) The 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Greater Los Angeles Vendor Fair held Tuesday at the LA Convention Center drew 1,400 attendees interested in learning how to tap into billions of dollars of local contract opportunities in Los Angeles County.

CEO Roger Snoble, addressing a packed luncheon crowd, said, "By your attendance, today, you are proof that LA is home to one of the most culturally and ethnically diverse business communities in the country."

Snoble said MTA has dedicated itself to open competition and equitable treatment of all potential business contractors.

The agency's Diversity and Economic Opportunity department, for example, has conducted monthly orientation and certification workshops, hosted design and construction industry roundtables and participated in the Transportation Business Advisory Council (TBAC), which advises the agency on ways to increase small business participation in its procurement and contracting programs.

### \$600 million in contracts

Last year, MTA awarded approximately 14,000 purchase orders and contracts worth in excess of \$600 million.

This year, in spite of a harsh budget environment in California, the



agency will offer millions of dollars in new contract opportunities for such high-priority transportation projects as the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension and the San Fernando Valley Metro Orange Line.

During the Vendor Fair, MTA hosted a huge booth that included tables and staff from Community Relations, Procurement, Commute Services, Diversity and Economic Opportunity, TBAC, Facilities, Prequalification, and Ethics.

The Community Relations Department made the "Metro Experience" mobile safety theater available to exhibit attendees.

The department also sponsored the production of a special six-minute video program spotlighting minority-owned businesses working with Metro.

### **Grew their businesses**

While waiting to board the safety theater, attendees could see and hear culturally diverse owners from Metro Video Systems, Microlink Enterprise and Barrio Planners tell how they successfully contracted with MTA and grew their businesses.

The day-long business outreach exposition, sponsored jointly by MTA, Metropolitan Water District, L.A. Unified School District, City and County of Los Angeles, gave small business owners the opportunity to meet directly with contract administrators, buyers, managers and other procurement officers from these host agencies.

The fair also provided excellent networking opportunities for potential prime- and sub-contractors to meet. More than 200 exhibitors offered a variety of products and services.

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## Bus Simulator Gives Trainees a High-Tech Driving Experience

By KIM SIM

(April 15, 2004) Bus operator training is about to get high-tech.

That's because with Metro's new bus simulator, operators will soon be able to polish their defensive driving skills without ever leaving the classroom — embarking instead for a practice drive in virtual reality.

The machine, housed in the Simulator Room at Operations Central Instruction, creates a virtual world for the person operating it.

It is similar to a video game, but much more realistic. Instead of a joystick, there are full controls, brake and gas pedals, a driver's seat and a steering wheel. There are also five connecting video screens that wrap around the driver, creating a panoramic, almost 360-degree view of the world "outside."

"It's a little bit disorienting when you're first starting out because the whole world is moving around you," says Mark Anderson, director of Operations Training.

Anderson expects the bus simulator to be in full use by next month.

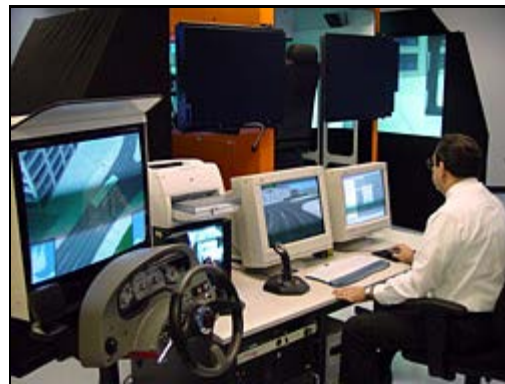
### Reinforce driving skills

The device will be used more for reinforcing defensive driving skills taught in the classroom than for teaching a new bus operator how to drive a bus.

"There's really no substitute for

See also> [Intern Learns It's Not That Easy to Drive a Bus](#)

PHOTOS BY BILL HEARD



TOS Carlos Baez controls the interactive program for the bus driving simulator. Using the steering wheel console at left, an instructor can replicate the actions of a bus or other vehicle on the trainee's simulator screen.



From the driver's seat, Operator Trainee Reggie Russell has a near 360-degree view of roadways, traffic and passing buildings.



Russell can even look back into the simulated bus he's driving.

getting on a real bus and going out on the street," Anderson says. "It's a simulator. It's never a bus. We were never interested in this to take the place of what we do on the bus."

Instead, he envisions that operators in the future, "once they learn a concept, they'll go over to the simulator and actually practice those things."

Software called the Scenario Toolbox can create different weather conditions, such as rain, snow and fog, as well as different lighting conditions. The program can also add in traffic and people to produce a variety of bus driving scenarios.

The simulator will also be used for creating emergency-type situations for operators to handle.

"Through the operating system, we can create fire on the bus ... tires that blow up, (things) that, frankly, we don't do on a bus," Anderson says. "Here we can actually safely do that (and) see how our operator actually responds."

### Reports of violations

One of the gems of the simulator is that it has the capacity to do "exercise scoring." After a session, it can provide detailed reports of traffic violations committed, speed traveled and other useful information.

It can also recreate real accidents, allowing operators to see their errors and giving them an opportunity to react in the virtual world.

To maximize its benefits, Anderson says there are plans to install auditorium-like seats behind and two large monitors above the simulator, so that students can watch and learn from others' driving experience.

Also on the horizon is the creation of a new virtual world setting for the driving scenarios — downtown Los Angeles. The software currently depicts Washington, D.C.

Metro has options to buy three more of the \$420,000 machines. But for now, Anderson says, the focus is on seamless integration of the one simulator into the curriculum.

"We're still training ourselves, trying to get everything to work the way we want it to," he says. "We're trying to figure out how to get the most out of it."



Russell has a clear view of the road ahead, which can include traffic signals, railroad crossings and other vehicles on the road

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The Division 8 maintenance team gathered to celebrate their latest in a string of "How You Doin'?" contest victories.



PHOTO BY ERIC RAPP

## Clean Buses Help Division 8 Maintenance Continue Winning Ways

By ERIC RAPP

(April 15, 2004) West Valley Division 8 Maintenance has continued its string of victories in the "How You Doin'?" program.

Tying with Division 9 for Best Maintenance Division for February 2004, Division 8's win came right on the heels of a win for the newly combined Best Division of the Quarter.

Maintenance Manager Jim Pachan attributes some of the continuing success to Division 8's consistently high bus cleanliness records.

During the celebration of the award, held in the early evening to recognize the work of Division 8's second shift, Pachan pointed out to the service attendants that they had a hand in this victory.

"Our buses are always very clean, and it's your hard work that keeps them that way," said Pachan. "Our mechanics work hard to keep the buses running and in good shape, but your diligence in cleaning them is also an important part of what we do, and you deserve recognition for that."

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## Intern Learns It's Not That Easy to Drive a Bus

By LISA HUYNH

(April 15, 2004) I'm not cut out to be a Metro Bus operator.

I got my first taste of what it's like to drive a bus when I got behind the wheel of the bus simulator at Operations Central Instruction.

I ran six red lights, drove over too many curbs to count, crashed into a parked car, drove against traffic and went airborne after speeding on a sharp left turn.

Good thing this wasn't real, because I broke every traffic law in existence.

The simulator had many high-tech features. For example, every time I hit a curb or drove over train tracks, it emitted sounds that made it feel like I was really driving a bus.

The simulator also has a feature that can manipulate or change the environment.

For instance, Mark Anderson, director of Operations Training, made it rain and snow on me. He also was able to make it day or night and control the flow of traffic, like how many cars would be on the road.

### Most difficult thing

The most difficult thing I encountered while operating the simulator was making clean right turns.

There's a certain way to turn so that you don't end up on the curb or drive against traffic, which I did plenty of. It takes coordination and the right timing to safely execute a right turn.

It was also hard to get full control of the steering wheel because it's so big. My five-foot-two inch frame was barely able to turn the steering wheel while making right turns.

Another challenge was staying in one lane. I often found myself drifting from lane to lane, or should I say, lane to curb.

During my simulator adventure, I decided to challenge myself even though I knew my career as an operator had died when I went airborne. I pulled into a bus yard, found a parking space and parked my bus.

### Caused some damage

Well, at least I thought I did. Even though I caused some damage to the parked buses while trying to maneuver my bus in the tight space, I

PHOTOS BY KIM SIM

#### Communications

Intern Lisa Huynh learned that piloting a Metro Bus – even in OCI's simulator – is not for amateurs.

See also> [Bus Simulator Gives Trainees a High-Tech Driving Experience](#)

thought I did a good job.

However, a computer monitor would later reveal that my bus not only was sticking out of its parking space, but also was crooked. I decided to retire from my short-lived career after ten minutes of service.

I did so poorly that Anderson didn't even reveal my score.

I don't know how Metro Bus operators do it, but I commend them for the work they do. I discovered that it takes a lot of skill, precision, stamina and patience to drive a bus.

I think I'll just stick to writing.

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## 'Operation Rapid Storm' Hits Metro Rapid Line 720

By DAVE MIKLIC

(April 15, 2004) More than 20 transportation managers and supervisors from three bus operating divisions executed "Operation Rapid Storm," April 1. It was a concerted effort to improve safety and customer satisfaction on Metro Rapid Line 720.

Managers, assistant managers and transportation operations supervisors from West Hollywood Division 7, Gateway Division 10 and Central City Division 1 met operators at all the scheduled stops along the 28-mile route.

Most bus operators appeared surprised to find division managers greeting them at bus zones as early as 5:30 a.m. But, they were well received by both operators and passengers.

"This operation was good for our riders, our operators and the MTA," said Jim Mc Elroy, Westside/Central general manager. "It really demonstrates the critical partnership between operators and supervisors. This partnership is key to ensuring quality service for our customers."

During their time aboard the buses, the Rapid Storm participants discussed safety, bus schedules and actions the operators could take to help the line move safely and efficiently.

## Watched for safety problems

They also were alert for violations of Metro's electronic device policy and for such safety problems as improper lane changes and excessive speed. Supervisors logged times, bus numbers and bus runs, gathering data for analysis of schedule and operational issues.

The operation also targeted the problem of bus bunching – when two or more Rapid buses are traveling together. Supervisors took action when they saw this happening, directing the operators to maintain better spacing.

Transportation managers are considering adding time points along Line 720 to help the operation run more smoothly. A supervisor also will be stationed at Wilshire/Westwood to ensure that buses maintain proper intervals.



TOS Charlie Square greets Division 1 Operator Luis Caceres aboard his Metro Rapid bus during "Operation Rapid Storm."

"Operation Rapid Storm brings into focus how critical it is for us to operate safely," said Mc Elroy.

As the day wore on, it wasn't long before the benefits of "Operation Rapid Storm" began to show. Buses moved more smoothly and had more even passenger loads.

And operators left the each zone with a reminder to drive safely.

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The Chinatown Abatement Team, from left, LAPD Officer Ken Lew, Deputy Eric Jaime, Sgt. Steven Morris, Officer Michael Fiola, CHP Officers John Martin and Richard Langsdale, Officer Armando Alvarez, Deputies Robert Anderson, Richard Faulk, James Johnson, Ed Ohandjanian and Craig McClelland, and Nurse Suzanne Newberry of the LA County Department of Mental Health.



### Chinatown Abatement Team Clears Encampments Near Metro Gold Line Station

- Safety and crime were issues for area
- Help offered to those who would accept it

By KIM SIM

(April 16, 2004) For at least a decade, transients and homeless people lived on the hill at the 1300 block of North Broadway Avenue.

But it wasn't until the Metro Gold Line opened in June 2003 that authorities realized the potential safety and crime issues that could be associated with the large number of transients in the area.

The hill is just west of the tracks, less than a mile away from the Gold Line's Chinatown station at the intersection of Spring and College Streets.

To minimize the problems, Sheriff's deputies, along with LAPD and CHP officers, launched the Chinatown Abatement Program in mid-February.

The project — an effort to clear and



The Chinatown Abatement Team takes down a temporary homeless shelter in the shadow of the Chinatown Metro Gold Line station.

clean up the location — has been a success, according to team leader Deputy Eric Jaime of the Sheriff's Transit Services Bureau.

### 'Heeded the warnings'

"People living there have moved on," Jaime says. "They heeded the warnings that were coming in."

Although the abatement program has concluded, the task force still visits the site two to four times a week, during either the early morning or night hours, "just to see if anyone's taking up shop in what was an encampment area," Jaime says.

"We have to continue to monitor it and work with the community and make sure it stays clear of transients," he says. "So far (the program)'s very successful in the sense that we've got these people out, but that's only half the work. The rest of the work is cleaning up and keeping them out."

The cleanup phase could take up to a month to complete.

In addition to hauling trash and other debris away from the site, Jaime says a "cave" dug by transients under the hill for shelter needs to be filled in with concrete and dirt to discourage other transients from living there.

### Encampments sparked concerns

The encampments had sparked concerns about safety and criminal activity.

The safety of both the transients and rail patrons became a major issue because of the Chinatown station's proximity to the encampments. From a law enforcement perspective, there was also the concern about having a possible place for criminals to gather and hide.

But because of the nature of the operation, Jaime says, "We also have to tread lightly and consider the human factors where people are down and out and they need help. Our purpose in doing this is not so much to disrupt these people or to hurt them, it's really to give them an opportunity and also to clean up the area."



Workers struggle to collect a mound of trash discarded by homeless people living alongside the Metro Gold Line tracks. Below, two homeless people gather up their belongings and prepare to abandon a cave built beneath a roadway near the Metro Gold Line tracks.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF SHERIFF'S TRANSIT SERVICES BUREAU

Along with the 15-member Chinatown Abatement Program team, the Crisis Response Unit — Sheriff's Deputy Craig McClelland and registered nurse Suzanne Newberry from the Department of Mental Health — was dispatched to offer help to those willing to accept it.

The Crisis Response Unit puts the homeless in touch with social services that range from medical care and shelter to drug and alcohol treatment.

"My goal is not to take them to jail...", says McClelland. "Jail, itself, is not going to change the person or fix the problem. Social services are designed to do that."

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## Transit Village Opens, Monday, Hollywood/Western Station

By DAVE SOTERO

(April 16, 2004) The Grand Opening of Metro Hollywood Apartments, a 60-unit development at the Hollywood/Western Metro Red Line station, is set for noon, Monday, April 19.

The first mixed-use transit village to provide affordable housing in Hollywood, the innovative housing development offers low-income housing, 9,100 square feet of retail space, a daycare center and easy access to the Metro Red Line and seven Metro Bus lines.

It is the second phase of a two-phased development. Phase one involved another 60 low-income family units.

Metro partnered with developer McCormack Baron Salazar and the Hollywood Community Housing Corporation, the City of Los Angeles Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA/LA) to develop Metro Hollywood Apartments.

Board Chairman Zev Yaroslavsky and CEO Roger Snoble will participate in the event along with L.A. City Councilman Eric Garcetti, Councilman Tom LaBonge, William Harris of the Hollywood Community Housing Corp., Zeeda Danielle of Fannie Mae, Tony Salazar, president of McCormack Baron Salazar, and others.

The 1.68-acre parcel is part of the Metro's Joint Development Program. It seeks to secure the best private and public sector development of agency-owned property at and adjacent to transit stations and corridors within Los Angeles County.

The Metro Hollywood Apartments development also helps to increase the number of affordable housing units for low-income households in the city.

FILE PHOTOS COURTESY OF MCCORMACK BARON  
SALAZAR



Phase 1 of the Metro Hollywood Apartments has 60 low-income housing units. Below, architect's model of Phase 2 of the development.





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Celebrating the San Fernando Valley Governance Council's first anniversary are, from left, council members Jesus Ochoa, Bart Reed and Brad Rosenheim, Service Sector staffers Teresa Yung and John Roberts, and Council Member Kymberleigh Richards.



PHOTO BY ERIC RAPP

## SFV Governance Council Celebrates First Anniversary

By ERIC RAPP

(April 16, 2004) Metro San Fernando Valley's Governance Council celebrated its one-year anniversary, April 7, with a traditional birthday cake.

After a year of getting their feet wet, council members feel good about what they have accomplished so far.

"We've accomplished quite a bit in our first year," said Chairman Coby King. "The Council has worked hard to improve transit service in the Valley by eliminating duplicative service and increasing service where needed. At the same time, we are getting up to speed on the details of this complex transit agency."

"I'm looking forward to another year of working with the public, the staff, and the rest of the Council in making sure the transit system in the Valley best serves Valley residents," he added.

### 'An excellent job listening'

San Fernando Valley General Manager David Armijo agreed that the governance council has been hard at work. "The council has done an excellent job listening to and addressing the concerns of MTA transit patrons."

One member of the public who chose to speak at the April 7 meeting, Sheldon Walters of North Hollywood, gave the council a "A grade, so far."

King and other council members also recognized the hard work of the San Fernando Valley staff over the year of the Governance Council's existence.

"Metro San Fernando Valley staff has been very helpful to me personally and to all the council members, and they should be commended," said Council Member Jesus Ochoa.

"If anything," Ochoa said, "the first year is the most challenging, and staff made ours a memorable one."

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## 60 Volunteers Needed for Bike to Work Day 'Tune Up' Event

- Volunteer deadline is Thursday, April 22

(April 16, 2004) In preparation for [Bike to Work Day](#), May 20, Metro is planning a "Tune Up & Challenge" event on Wednesday, April 28. Sixty more volunteers are needed for the event.

It'll be a fun thing for employees to do, says Communications Assistant Jennifer Salamanca. Volunteers should bring their bicycles and helmets and be prepared to ride at least two "warm-up" laps around Patsaouras Transit Plaza.

The bike warm-up will begin following a news event featuring Deputy CEO John Catoe, actor Ed Begley Jr. and others. Also on hand will be Charlie Chaplin, Marilyn Monroe and Elvis look-alikes, along with a barbershop quartet and the wrestler from Metro's current ad campaign.

Booths placed along the Plaza will provide bike safety checks, bike route planning and information about bike locker locations and usage.

Employees who want to participate in the Tune Up & Challenge should contact Salamanca at 922-2263 or at [salamancaje@metro.net](mailto:salamancaje@metro.net) by Thursday, April 22. Volunteers will be expected to arrive on the Plaza for a briefing at 9:30 a.m., April 28. The event begins at 10 a.m. and should conclude by 11 a.m.

The purpose of the Tune Up & Challenge is to generate awareness of Metro's bike programs, publicize free rides on the Metro System for those who bike to work, May 20, and to promote bicycle commuting as a viable, money-saving, safe and healthy alternative.

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## Div. 1 Health Fair Screened Employees' for Physical Fitness

By FRANKLIN A. HOLMAN

(April 20, 2004) The Central City Division 1 Health Fair earlier this month was a great way to ensure that operators are physically fit and health conscious.

The fair offered screenings for eyesight, body fat content, blood pressure and back problems. It also featured energy and exercise information.

"We have unhealthy operators out there who don't get themselves checked out, and this Health Fair is a great chance to do that in front of a live, captive audience," said Operator Manuel Guzman Jr. "It's definitely a good idea."

Operators and mechanics both participated in the fair.

### Maintain a healthy lifestyle

"Mechanics have the same concerns as the operators," program coordinator Joycenda Bowers said. "We want employees to stay interested in their health and have the tools to maintain a healthy lifestyle."

Retired Operator Ricardo Perez attended the event and told operators what he is doing to stay healthy.

"Being an operator for 23 years, I know what we need," Perez said. "Unfortunately, not all operators are health conscious, but we want them to stay in shape, and that is why we are here."

Division 2 will also be having its annual Health Fair soon.

"We want all sector employees to know if they have a health problem," Bowers said. "The Health Fair is a means to let employees know if they have a health concern so that they can take care of it and stay healthy."



Operator Jose Sandoval gets his vision checked at the Division 1 Health Fair. Below, Operator Gracie Ayala discusses back issues with a chiropractor.



PHOTOS BY FRANKLIN A. HOLMAN

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## Div. 9 Maintenance Shares February 'How You Doin'? Award

By KIM SIM

(April 20, 2004) El Monte Division 9 was honored as the co-winner of the February 2004 "How You Doin'?" award for Outstanding Maintenance Division.

The April 6 award ceremony came two days before Chatsworth Division 8 was also honored for their high marks.

Division 9 ranked first in new Workers' Compensation claims per 100 employees. In the month of February, it registered no new claims.

In other categories, Division 9 placed third in bus cleanliness (7.59) and fourth in attendance (96.85%)

The staff might have to share the award, but that doesn't make it any less sweet.

"We have a very dedicated group of employees and they're very proud," Maintenance Manager John McBryan said. "They worked really hard. They have to work hard to get those numbers."

McBryan said the maintenance staff's award was a good reflection on the entire division and all of the employees.

Both maintenance staffs had their divisions engraved on the perpetual trophy and will share it before passing it on to the next winning division.



The Division 9 Maintenance team takes a moment to admire their "How You Doin'?" trophy.



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**Foothill Won't Accept Metro Tokens Beginning May 1**

By RICK JAGER

(April 20, 2004) Metro bus tokens are being phased out on Foothill Transit buses and will no longer be accepted as fare payment effective Saturday, May 1.

Foothill Transit will continue to honor Metro's monthly EZ Transit Pass, which sells for \$58 and its \$29 seniors/disabled passes.

Metro Tokens sell for \$1.10, a 15-cent discount off the regular case fare of \$1.25, and are good for one-way travel on Metro buses and trains as well as various municipal operators.

The tokens will be phased out entirely over the next year as Metro begins implementation of a new Universal Fare System (USF) in 2005.



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With the Santa Anita Racetrack as a backdrop, operators must swerve through the cones and maneuver quickly and precisely to keep the competitive edge in the Metro Bus Rodeo.



PHOTO BY FRANKLIN A. HOLMAN

## Metro Bus Rodeo Set for July 31 at Santa Anita

- Safe Driving programs are new element
- Recognition for safe operators

(April 21, 2004) The 29th Annual Metro Bus Rodeo is scheduled Saturday, July 31, at the Santa Anita Gate 6 Parking lot in Arcadia.

This year's event includes a tough obstacle course for Metro Bus operators, a demanding set of mechanical challenges for division maintenance teams, a classic car show, new bus display, catered barbecue, information booths and family entertainment.

The deadline for registering for this year's Bus Rodeo is June 25. Four days of practice sessions are scheduled from July 15 to 18 at Santa Anita.

Operators also can schedule practice sessions on the OCI bus simulator by contacting Robert Ellison at 922-6774. The simulator's programs include a realistic obstacle course.

The preliminary competition is set for Wednesday, July 21 to Saturday, July 24 at Santa Anita. The 30 top-scoring operators will compete in the finals the following Saturday.

The winners of the operator and maintenance contests will represent Metro at a Southern California event, Sept. 18, in Hemet and at the American Public Transit Association international finals, Oct. 9, in Atlanta.

### **New: Safe Driving Program**

A new element – the Safe Driving Programs – is being added, this year, to give recognition to operators who are safe drivers but who don't wish to compete in or may not meet all the qualifications for the Bus Roadeo.

Operators who meet certain eligibility requirements and have had no avoidable accidents in the previous 12 months can qualify as Safe Operators. Each will receive a Safe Driving pin to wear on his or her uniform.

Every operator who qualifies for the Bus Roadeo, whether they compete or not, also may participate in a "Knowledge Roadeo." By passing a 50-question exam on defensive driving, traffic rules and laws and Metro safe driving rules, an operator may qualify as a division's Most Knowledgeable Operator.

Safe Operators with no more than two years' service may apply for a division's Rookie of the Year award. Selections will be based on the best overall driving record.

There also are "Safest Operator" designations for each division and service sector. Selections will be based on best overall driving records.

In addition to the Safe Driving pins, other recognition includes a certificate and personal award for those named the Most Knowledgeable Operators and Rookie of the Year.

The safety quiz will be offered from May 16 to 29. The Safe Driving pins, certificates and other Safe Driving Program awards will be presented in mid-June.


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## Buses With TV Programming to be Displayed Thursday

- System informs passengers, can generate revenue

(April 21, 2004) Two Metro Buses equipped a passenger information system that features TV travel advisories, news, weather and other programming, will be on display from 8 a.m. until 3:30 p.m., Thursday, on Patsaouras Plaza.

Called OPIS, for Operations Passenger Information System, the idea is getting favorable feedback from operators and passengers on Metro Rapid Line 720. One OPIS unit also has been installed on a Metro Red Line train.

The OPIS installation on the test buses includes two 15-inch TV monitors. One is mounted above the front, curbside wheel well. The other is mounted near the rear door.

The TV system can be set for news, sports, weather, travel advisories, public safety information, Metro ads, transit information and other programming.

A contract with an outside programming contractor will generate revenue for the agency in the same way that advertising bus cards and king ads do now, says John Drayton, Vehicle Acquisition manager.

"The overriding concern is we wanted programming that will be informative and entertaining for passengers," he says. "I think this system satisfies a lot of needs."



Two 15-inch TV screens provide information and entertainment for passengers aboard the two OPIS test buses. One unit also has been installed in a Metro Red Line train car.



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## Fundraisers



North Los Angeles Division 3 maintenance employees raised \$670 to provide lunch and gifts for the 35 youngsters expected to tour the division during Thursday's "Take our Daughters and Sons to Work Day" event. The employees sold 67 tickets in a raffle for a weekend getaway at a condo in Rosarito, Mexico. Front row, left, are Ruben Goytia, who donated his condo, LeLan Chui and Rich Herpers. In the back row are Yvonne Kukuczka and Rayetta McNeese. In addition to Division 3 employees who supported the fundraiser, the group also thanked colleagues at Gateway Division 10 and the Regional Rebuild Center. (4/21)


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## Westside/Central Community Fair Set Saturday, April 24

By RICK JAGER

(April 21, 2004) The Westside/Central Service Sector has scheduled a community fair from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, April 24, in the parking lot adjacent to the Target Store at La Cienega and Rodeo.

"We encourage residents of the area as well as Metro patrons to stop by and visit with us as we showcase various aspects of what Metro is all about," said General Manager Jim McElroy.

Various information booths will be set up as well as displays that will include a new state-of-the-art Metro Rapid Bus, a vintage transit bus and a Culver City Transit bus. The Los Angeles Unified School District will co-sponsor a bike safety rodeo for kids.

The Westside/Central staff will be on hand to provide information on Metro services and projects, including a planned light-rail line that would run along the nearby Exposition right-of-way.

Historical information, prepared by the Metro Library, will be on display and information on job and contracting opportunities at the MTA also will be provided.

Prizes donated by McDonalds will be given out to the first 150 kids to successfully complete the Bike Safety Rodeo. A grand prize of a brand new bike and bike accessories, offered by Target, will be up for grabs in a raffle.


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## Draft FY 2005 Budget Includes Pay Hike, 224 Fewer Positions

- Public hearing, possible Board adoption in May
- RIF affects all major departments
- Metro service to increase, but capital projects are cut

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(April 22, 2004) MTA's FY 2005 budget is poised to go to a public hearing May 20, and to the Board for adoption May 27, but some elements of the proposed \$2.88 billion spending plan – including the final number of employee layoffs – probably won't be decided until the new fiscal year already is under way.

There's both good news and bad news in the budget laid out for Board approval. It includes a 2.5 percent "pay for performance" increase for non-contract employees and dollars for pay and benefits increases included in union contracts.

But, the draft budget targets at least 233 mostly non-contract positions for elimination by June 30. Total savings from the job cuts are tagged at \$13 million, but the FY 2005 budget may have to be revised after July 1 to reflect further position closeouts and other spending reductions.

Budget cuts will mean "we'll do about the same amount of work with less people," says Chief of Staff Maria Guerra. "We also told the Board that there would be some things that either will take longer...or that we may not be able to do at all, based on the number of people we have."

About 175 of the 233 positions to be eliminated in the FY 2005 budget are currently filled, says Guerra, and 49 are vacant. Among the 233 are some TCU and AFSCME jobs. Layoffs of union employees will comply with current contract language.

## RIF affects all departments

The reduction in force (RIF) affects all major departments. Construction Project Management will cut 29 positions, Countywide Planning will cut 18 positions, Board of Directors staff will cut 8 positions, Communications will cut 29 positions, Chief of Staff will cut 20 positions and Transit Operations will cut 81 positions.

The RIF also calls for a reduction of 49 positions in Support Services, which includes Procurement, Management Audit, Finance, Risk Management and Information Technology Services. Management is reviewing this area to determine if further cuts are needed.



On the upside, the agency plans to hire more front-line operations employees in FY 2005 to support an increase of 290,000 Metro Bus service hours in the new fiscal year. Although not specifically in the proposed budget, the Board is expected to approve funding for the additional hours to comply with the Consent Decree.

The Metro Orange Line transitway project in the San Fernando Valley will move forward, more Metro Rapid lines will be added and construction of the Eastside Light Rail Extension will remain on schedule.

### **Bus, rail car spending down**

On the downside, bus procurements will drop by \$46.8 million from \$178.4 million in FY 2004 to \$131.6 million in FY 2005, an indication to some degree that the bus fleet is reaching optimum size. The agency plans to spend \$31.8 million for new rail cars, \$16.5 million less than the \$48.2 million budgeted for FY 2004.

The draft capital budget calls for spending \$13.3 million less on IT communications projects, rail facilities and vehicle maintenance, and other projects. The budget includes \$3.1 million for the Exposition Light Rail project in FY 2005, down \$5.5 million from FY 2004, and only \$905,764 for Universal City station enhancements, down \$2.2 million from FY 2004. Spending for other corridor projects will drop by \$39.7 million.

Reductions in such capital projects as rail facilities maintenance and less spending for the Exposition Light Rail project and other corridor projects influenced the closeout of 29 jobs in Construction Project Management. The 81 jobs lost by Transit Operations are mostly from administrative ranks.

"We're losing a lot of good people," says Guerra. "This is a budget-driven exercise, due to lack of funds. We know this is not a good time, but we're going to try to make this as comfortable for everyone as we can."


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## Gardena High Students Plant Earth Day Trees

(April 22, 2004) Gardena High School students celebrated Earth Day a little early this year by planting 150 trees alongside the Dominguez Channel.

During a short program before the tree planting and landscaping work started, South Bay Division TOS Debbie Vanderploeg congratulated the students on making the world both beautiful and healthy. She also explained how Metro is helping improve air quality with its CNG bus fleet.

Meanwhile, TOS Robert Brown, who graduated from Gardena High, exchanged memories about campus experiences with some of the students.

PHOTOS BY RICH MORALLO



Gardena High School students workers prepare to water the 150 trees they planted. Below, from left, Division 18 Transportation Operations Supervisors Debbie Vanderploeg and Robert Brown, and Gardena High School juniors Maria Rubio, Lisette Magana and Lisa Gastelum.




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## Severance Pay, Benefits, Outplacement Services to Help Ease RIF

- [Up to six months' severance pay](#)
- [Some to get 2 + 2 or new CalPERS option](#)
- [Outplacement seminars, computer use](#)

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(April 22, 2004) A severance package with up to six months of pay and benefits, a series of outplacement seminars and temporary office services for job hunters are planned to help ease the separation for employees caught up in MTA's FY 2005 reduction in force.

"We're affecting a lot of people's lives and families," says Chief of Staff Maria Guerra. "We're going to try to do this...with as much compassion as we can."

The basic severance package is two weeks of salary following an employee's layoff date. But, the package also provides for six weeks of pay if the employee has worked less than three years, and up to 24 weeks of pay if the employee has worked six or more years at the agency.

Completed Years of Service	Supplemental Pay
Less than 3	6 weeks
3 but less than 4	11 weeks
4 but less than 5	15 weeks
5 but less than 6	19 weeks
6 or more	24 weeks

Employees who are at least age 50 and are vested in the LACMTA Non-Contract Employee's Retirement Income Plan may choose, instead of the severance pay package, an option giving them two years of age and two years' service credit toward retirement.

## New CalPERS option

And for the first time, MTA will offer affected employees an option to accept two years' additional service credit toward retirement under the CalPERS plan. The option, which replaces severance pay, is open to those who have at least five years' CalPERS service credit and who have completed six or more years of service with MTA/PTSC.

Employees who choose to retire when their severance packages expire will receive all retirement benefits for which they are eligible.

The updated [Human Resources reduction in force policy, 3-14](#), outlines the benefits provided employees from the effective date of the layoff until their final separation date.

These include group life and medical/dental insurance, pension plan and the 457 and 401(k) plans, the flexible spending plan for medical expenses, and continued use of the transportation pass for the employee and his or her dependents.

### **Outplacement services**

Beginning with an orientation session, May 10, MTA will offer a series of 13 outplacement workshops for employees affected by the layoff.

Topics for the workshops, which will continue sometimes twice daily through May 25, include career transition, self-assessment, job search planning, job applications and resumes, interviewing and self-marketing, and what to look for in a job offer.

Providing information at the workshops, which will be held in the University Conference Room on the fourth floor at MTA Headquarters, will be representatives from the City of Los Angeles, the state Employment Development Department, U.S. Department of Labor Pension & Welfare Benefits Administration and a number of job placement professionals.

### **Office services**

For former employees who need a place to work during their job search, the Organizational Development & Training Department's Learning Resource Center and computer training room will be open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., weekdays, for Internet job searches and updating employee resumes.

Former employees may apply through the normal job selection process for any vacant jobs at the agency, but don't have automatic rights for re-employment in those jobs.

The revised reduction in force policy notes that an employee rehired within a year won't lose earned benefits, but TOWP won't accrue during the time the employee was laid off. Any severance pay the employee has remaining when re-hired would be terminated.


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## Q & A: CEO Roger Snoble Looks at FY 2004, 2005

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(April 22, 2004) FY 2004 was a year of progress – the opening of the Metro Gold Line and construction of the Metro Orange Line come to mind – but it also was a year that saw MTA struggle with escalating costs.

Expenses for labor, material and fuel soared. Last fall's 35-day work stoppage and the failure of ridership to bounce back to pre-strike levels have hurt revenues.

The agency was battered by new Consent Decree demands and a lack of state and federal transportation funding.

A reduction in force is under way and it appears further budget adjustments will have to be made after the new fiscal year begins.

More work must be done this month and next to wrap up the FY 2005 budget in time for MTA Board consideration in May.

In a Q and A conducted Tuesday, April 20, CEO Roger Snoble looked at the budget process, the reduction in force and the prospects for FY 2005.



CEO Roger Snoble

## Where are we in the budget process and how do you see FY 2004 wrapping up?

We'll spend the rest of this fiscal year getting through the remnants of the work stoppage. It had a huge effect on our ridership and that has to be dealt with because our revenue is down as a result of it. We have a lot of other expenses for things like fuel that we're going to have to deal with. We're going to have to find some money this fiscal year to balance this year's budget, even before we get into next fiscal year.

**It seems that a lot of employees were surprised by the size of the RIF even though they knew budgets were tight. Can you put that into perspective for us?**

It's bigger than I wanted to see. I didn't want to see any RIFs. But the fact of the matter is that the money just isn't there. In area after area, costs are going up and, at the same time, we have less money to work with. So, trying to balance all that has resulted in deep cuts in the number of personnel.

The RIF is bigger than we anticipated, but I have to tell you, there was

a time when I thought it would be a lot more. I think we've hit a pretty good balance now, and I hope we can hold it. There are a lot of things we're still very tentative about, still cautious about going forward into the future.

#### **What's the timing for the RIFs?**

As a matter of practicality, we're going to have to start the RIFs earlier, rather than later. The longer we wait, the more money it costs us and we have to keep that in mind.

#### **One of the things that's not resolved yet is the situation with Support Services – Procurement, ITS, Management Audit, etc.**

As far as Management Audit is concerned, we do have some policy changes we can take back to the Board. If they want to change some of the more restrictive provisions, we may be looking at more personnel reductions in that area.

We have a procurement expert coming in to review our Procurement Department to see if it's the right size or whether our regulations are too onerous, or whether we need state legislation or something to help us streamline our procurement processes.

The same is true in ITS. We're doing more of a self-examination there to see what more we need to accomplish, to see what we need to maintain what we have and what opportunities we actually have for improving some things.

#### **Will you get that finished up before the new fiscal year?**

I think we'll have a fairly good handle on it, but I don't think it will be finished by then. It probably will go into next year as a budget amendment.

#### **What do you want to say to employees about how to look at the RIF on a personal level?**

That's the hardest part. We don't hire people and expect to lay them off. It's always difficult to do that. The thing that strikes me is that we've been able to develop a very good severance package for employees and we have the outplacement service. That's something that's really worthwhile taking advantage of.

As the economy recovers, and it certainly is, there are opportunities out there. I hope our employees will take advantage of the package we're offering, keep a positive attitude and go out and find a good job. It may take some time, and it may be difficult, but with the severance package they'll have some months to do it in. And those who find jobs quickly, will have some savings from the severance pay. So, that could be a positive aspect.

We're certainly going to miss them here. These are not performance-based layoffs, we just can't afford these positions any more and we had to make some hard decisions.

#### **What do you see going forward in the first six months of FY 2005?**

We're really going to be focused on our major projects. Hopefully, we'll have the Metro Gold Line extension to the Eastside under construction. We've got the Metro Orange Line under construction. We'll be continuing with the Metro Rapid program and we'll be putting more Consent Decree service on the street.



But, because of the state budget crisis, we're going to have to pay a lot more attention to managing our budget. We'll have to spend a lot of time making our internal operation better. And then you've got things like the Universal Fare System and the ITS projects we're trying to finish up.

It'll be a pretty busy year, plus we're going to have to be as clever as we can be about getting riders back onto the Metro system. We lost a lot of riders during the strike and they've been slow in coming back.

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## Suddenly, Development Blooms at Metro Rail Stations

IN THIS REPORT:

- [Metro Hollywood Apartments at Hollywood/Western](#)
- [Wilshire/Vermont Station](#)
- [Westlake/MacArthur Park](#)
- [Mixed-use complex at Hollywood/Vine](#)

(April 23, 2004) After years of lying dormant, Metro Rail stations and the areas around them recently have become fertile ground for housing and retail developments.

Four such transit-oriented developments made news this month – Alvarado Station at Westlake/MacArthur Park, Metro Hollywood Apartments at Hollywood/Western, Wilshire/Vermont Station at the Wilshire/Vermont subway stop and a hotel, apartment, condominium and retail complex at the Hollywood/Vine station.

McCormack Baran Salazar, Inc., the firm that built the development at Hollywood/Western also is responsible for the newly-approved development at Westlake/MacArthur Park.

The developer of Wilshire/Vermont Station also is building a similar project at the Metro Gold Line Del Mar station in Pasadena.

And a fourth firm is converting a former high-rise office building at the intersection of Wilshire Boulevard and Western Avenue into housing units to take advantage of Metro Bus and Metro Rail connections.

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**The Future Revealed** - from left, Regional Transportation and Development EO Jim de la Loza, County Supervisor and MTA Board Member Mike Antonovich, Deputy CEO John Catoe, Ceo Roger Snoble, LADOT Asst. Gen. Mgr. James Okazaki and Caltrans Deputy Director Frank Quon dedicate real-time video display panel.



## Officials unveil technology partnership at dedication of video panels

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(April 23, 2004) If seeing is believing, then the high-tech video wall flashing in the MTA Headquarters third-floor lobby has been playing to the faithful since its installation April 12.

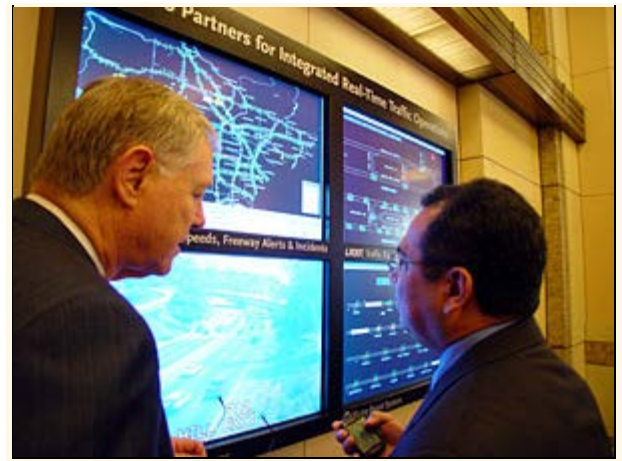
So, when officials gathered, Wednesday, to christen the wide-screen display panels, the unveiling revealed something more than a real-time map of traffic systems. There in a blinking, flashing, moving minute was the next generation of ITS technology poised like a can of Raid at the traffic pests of congestion, delays, and too many cars.

But, what exactly does it do? Countywide Planning EO Jim de la Loza explained, "The panels are a demonstration of the technology that allows agencies to coordinate real-time information between the individual systems managed by Metro, CalTrans and LADOT."

Each panel, he said, covers different ground and spouts continuous information that helps control 500 miles of freeway, the entire Metro Rapid fleet and 3,100 arterial traffic signals.

The coordinated effort is a budding

County Supervisor Mike Antonovich and Countywide Planning EO Jim de la Loza study the stream of information.



PHOTOS BY GAYLE ANDERSON

partnership that will welcome nine more agencies in the coming months, including Metro Rail, CHP, municipal transit operators from around the county, the Fire Department and Sheriff's Department, the World Airports, and the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, he said.

Principal partners Frank Quon of CalTrans and LADOT's James Okazaki, present for the unveiling, spoke in praise of the partnership of advancing technology, as did MTA CEO Roger Snoble.

"This is a very big step in an important future," said Snoble. "With this system, we're on the brink of technology that can solve traffic problems."

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[E-Mail Webmaster](#)**Scenes from "Bring Your Daughters and Sons to Work Day"**

Photographer Mark Clifford documented the adventures of Metro kids on the job in Creative Services.

**Metro's "Daughters and Sons Day" Excels in Innovation and Fun**

By CEAN COLLIER

(April 27, 2004) Nearly 700 youngsters were excused from school, last week, to get a behind-the-scenes look at what their parents do during Metro's 10th annual "Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day."

As part of a national program created by the Ms. Foundation, Metro kept in theme with the program's motto, "Today's Vision, Tomorrow's Reality," by scheduling events that focused on professionalism, creativity, technology and safety.

"Including Gateway Plaza, we had 15 different divisions planning events for the children," says Georgia Miller, Sr. Administrative Analyst in Human Resources. "All of the departments that participated developed programs that not only gave the children insight into what the department does but also presented the information in a fun way."

Senior Human Resources analysts Jeanette Bell and George Lee presented informative lectures on professional interviewing skills and how to find your dream job.

**Learned rail safety**

Tours of the Metro Experience mobile theater, hosted by the Community Relations Department, helped the children learn rail safety, while tours of the Regional Rebuild Center gave the kids an opportunity to wear safety vests, operate the bus simulator and tour the robotics area.

Creative Director Michael Lejeune, Production Manager Carolynne Clifford and Senior Marketing and

Four groups of Metro kids met with Creative Services to teach them about the work of graphic design professionals and copywriters. Each group was given an assignment to develop a corporate campaign about transit safety. The results are presented here.





Communications Officer Donna Lafont gave a demonstration on how to create bus ads from conception to print. They wowed the children with bus billboards that included headlines written by the children and a photo of each group.

"They were really excited to see the process of making ads," said Carolynne Clifford, "and they really liked seeing themselves on a billboard."



Design Studio illustration: Photoshop composition by Volker Durre, senior designer; digital photography by Volker Durre and Laura Woodward; campaign coordination by Michael Lejeune, Design Studio Creative Director and marketing campaign by Donna Lafont, Marketing AE.

The boys and girls flocked to the 15th floor Copy Center to see the giant copy machine and receive note pads made of scratch paper with their names on them.

Donain Martinez of Copy Services leads visting children from Risk Management/Worker's Comp group through the copy-making and binding process. Crystal Martinez, at right, picks up a memo pad printed with her name.



PHOTOS BY GAYLE ANDERSON

Metro Rail' document control assistant, Angela Pina, hosted tours of the Metro Red Line cars. The kids and their chaperones boarded at Union Station and rode the subway to a place passengers never go – the Division 20 rail yard.

"The children seemed to really like this tour because they got to go down in the tunnel and ride underground on a train," said Miller.



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## Pedro Gomez Makes the Cut for City of Hope

By FRANKLIN A. HOLMAN



(April 27, 2004) Central Division 1 Operator Pedro Gomez has been a long-time blood and plasma donor, but now, he's taking his giving one step further. He plans to donate his hair to City of Hope, an organization dedicated to the prevention and cure of cancer.

Pedro Gomez While he was giving blood at City of Hope, an employee noticed that Gomez had cut his hair.

"She told me I had nice hair and that I could do something better with it," Gomez says. "I asked her what I could do with my hair, and she told me, 'You could donate it.'"

In October that's just what he plans to do.

Gomez encourages other to donate blood, or hair, to organizations like City of Hope. "These organizations are really seeking donors, so if people have a chance, they should participate."

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Celebrating the San Gabriel Valley Service Sector Governance Council's first anniversary are, from left, Council members Dave Spence, Harry Baldwin, Bruce Heard, Bart Doyle, Rosie Vasquez, Henry Lopez, Sharon Martinez and Sid Tyler. Emile Bayle did not attend the meeting.



PHOTO BY LIZ ARMIJO-HOLBROOK

## SGV Governance Council Marks First Anniversary

(April 27, 2004) The San Gabriel Valley Service Sector celebrated a milestone, April 13 – the first anniversary of its nine-member Governance Council.

The sector staff marked the event by presenting the Council with a cake to commemorate the occasion.

Governance Council members have been busy over the last year educating themselves on all aspects of Metro bus operations and business practices.

They have toured transportation and maintenance facilities at North Los Angeles Division 3 and San Gabriel Valley Division 9. They acquainted themselves with the Regional Rebuild Center, toured Bus Operations Control and received a hands-on demonstration of the Advance Transportation Management System (ATMS).

Each month, the Council is briefed on at least one Metro program and receives updates on sector financial and performance indicators.

Presented with the "birthday" cake, Chairman Bart Doyle expressed disbelief that the Council had been in existence for a year.

"The year went by so fast," he reflected in amazement.

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## Bus Operator Fulfills Dream of Serving in Iraqi War

By KIM SIM



Operator Walter Brady  
is an Army Reservist

(April 27, 2004) When his unit headed out to Iraq last May, Specialist Walter Brady was forced to stay behind. The Army Reservist and Metro Bus operator was deemed unfit for war service after he suffered a knee injury during training.

Less than a year later, Brady is finally getting a chance to represent his country in the field.

Brady, 50, rejoined his unit, Transportation Company 1498 in February. He is currently in Kuwait as a driver, transporting soldiers, retrieving disabled and damaged vehicles and making trips north into Iraq. Unless his duty is extended, he is scheduled to return at the end of May.

"It's about doing my part," Brady said, in a phone interview from Kuwait with the Los Angeles Times. "It's about me coming here and doing my part."

### 'He's holding up'

His wife, Juanita, says he sometimes calls home twice a day and that "he's doing pretty good, he's holding up."

Brady, a 17-year Metro veteran assigned to East Valley Division 15, enlisted days after the Sept. 11 attacks.

He wasn't called up until February 2003, when he checked into Camp Roberts, near Paso Robles, Calif.

But during a practice in March 2003, he jumped into a 5 ½-foot deep foxhole and injured his knee. His companions left two months later in May; he had to stay behind.

### Still hoped to serve

Brady's hopes were dashed, but he never gave up trying to fight for his country.

The Palmdale resident had served during the Vietnam War, but because he was stationed in Alaska, never saw actual combat. He tried twice after that to enlist as an Army Reservist, but was denied both times because of his weight.

When he finally made it to Camp Roberts in 2003, he told the Antelope Valley Press, "This is what life is about — protecting your fellow citizens."

As Juanita Brady says, "He was determined to go back at some point. It was worth anything he's going to go through."

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## Rail Safety, Metro Experience is Popular with Earth Day Crowd

By JOANNE LONGSDEN

(April 28, 2004) The weather was warm and the crowds flocked to the Los Angeles Zoo, last weekend, to celebrate Earth Day.

The Metro Community Relations Rail Safety Education Staff took advantage of the opportunity and provided rail safety information to thousands of participants.



Still wearing their 3-D glasses, Earth Day participants at the Los Angeles Zoo emerge from the Metro Experience mobile theater.

"We thought this would be an excellent event at which to share our vital rail safety message with the residents of Los Angeles," said Barbara Burns of the Rail Safety Team.

A total of 1,476 people attended the Metro Experience mobile theater to experience the 3-D "thrill ride" and see the APTA Award-winning film "Look, Listen and Stay Alive."

The Safety Team received many positive comments from Earth Day participants, youngsters and seniors alike, as they exited the Metro Experience. Hearing about the mobile theater, zoo personnel also visited the Metro site, taking turns during their lunch breaks.

MTA offers the Metro Experience free for large events with an expected attendance of 2,000 to 5,000 people. One-month advance reservations are required for the mobile theater, which is booked on a first come, first served basis by Team member Carlos Valdez.



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The Pow Wow trade show featured more than 1,400 travel and tour operator exhibitors from around the world.



## International Pow Wow Convention 'Goes Metro' in L.A.

BY DAVE SOTERO

(April 28, 2004) International Pow Wow, referred to as the world's premier international travel trade show, came to Los Angeles this week, and Metro was there to welcome nearly 5,000 travel industry representatives from more than 65 countries.

This year's Pow Wow marked the first time public transportation was highlighted and showcased as a part of the international convention.

Staged at the Los Angeles Convention Center, the convention consisted of three days of intensive business appointments, exhibitions and press briefings intended to generate close to \$3 billion in future travel to the United States.

Metro, as a sponsor of the convention, worked closely with L.A. Inc., (the Los Angeles Visitor and Convention Bureau), to welcome tour operators and journalists -- many of whom had not been to Los Angeles in years

PHOTOS BY DAVE SOTERO



On the trade show floor, Warren Morse, at right. Donna Lafont, center, and members of Metro's Marketing Department welcomed delegates and handed out information at a booth shared with L.A. Inc.

-- and show them how Los Angeles' Metro Bus and Rail system has transformed into a world-class transportation system capable of taking them, and more importantly, their travelers, to L.A.'s best destinations easily and cost-effectively.

### **'Don't need a car'**

"Los Angeles is the car capital of the world, but you don't need a car to discover all of the destinations that L.A. has to offer," CEO Roger Snoble said at a Pow Wow press conference. "You can get around L.A. much easier by jumping aboard Metro Bus and Rail."

Metro hosted a "Public Transit Tour" for convention delegates over the weekend to acquaint them with the Metro system.



Metro welcomed Pow Wow delegates on the Metro Red Line for the Hollywood/Highland Evening Celebration at the Kodak Theater. For many delegates, it was their first time riding the Metro Red Line subway.



Delegates got a Metro Art tour on the Metro Gold Line, arriving at the Memorial Park Metro Gold Line Station for a tour of the Huntington Library and Botanical Gardens.

Starting at Union Station, Dan Miller, a veteran Metro employee and member of the Metro Art Docent Council, gave delegates an art tour of MTA Headquarters and Union Station before boarding the Metro Gold Line for a ride via Memorial Park Station to the Huntington Library and Botanical Gardens and, later, to Southwest Museum.

Following the tour, delegates jumped aboard Metro Rapid for a first-hand experience of how the buses are improving mobility on high traffic corridors within L.A. County.

### **The 'New Hollywood'**

Metro also pulled out all the stops in guiding delegates to the Hollywood/Highland Metro Red Line Station, Monday evening, for an event celebrating the "New



Delegates were treated to a live Hollywood Walk of Fame ceremony for actor Mickey Rooney, at left.

Hollywood." The event was timed to coincide with the Hollywood Walk of Fame ceremony for actor Mickey Rooney, and featured a live performance from musical artist Lionel Richie.

Metro Rail Operations managers and staff and L.A. County Sheriff's Department and fare

inspectors, facilitated by Fran Curbello of the Communications Department, welcomed delegates at station platforms and ensured they got to and from the Metro Hollywood/Highland Station.

On the trade show floor, members of Metro's Marketing Department welcomed delegates and handed out information at a booth shared with L.A. Inc. Warren Morse, deputy executive officer, Marketing, worked with L.A. Inc. to spearhead Metro's involvement in Pow Wow.

By all accounts, the convention was a smashing success.

The Los Angeles Times reported: "Several tour operators said they would put urban Los Angeles at the top of some lists, citing the Metro light-rail line as a key attraction for foreigners comfortable with traveling by subway."



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## Bicyclists Line Up for 'Bike to Work Day' Promo

- Bicycling enthusiasts and local media turned out, Wednesday, morning for Metro's "Bike to Work Day" promotional event. Details of the event will be posted on Thursday.



**Ready All Bikers!** Actor Ed Begley Jr., center red shirt, signals the start for bicyclists lined up for two laps around Patsaouras Plaza.

Wednesday's media event promoted Bike to Work Day, scheduled Thursday, May 20. Among the bikers were Elvis, Charlie Chaplin, a barbershop quartet on tandem bikes, Metro employees, Sheriff's deputies and members of several bicycling clubs.

**Here They Come!** Elvis, riding a classic Schwinn bicycle, is one of the first to make it around the Plaza during Wednesday's bike rodeo.

**Photo Credit:** Bill Heard

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PHOTOS BY BILL HEARD

With bikers poised for a ride around Patsaouras Plaza, actor and "coach" Ed Begley Jr. told local media the bicycle "is the most energy-efficient vehicle science has ever invented."

## Metro Tells LA Commuters: Don't Overlook the Bicycle

- Bike to Work Day is Thursday, May 20

By KIM SIM

(April 29, 2004) When it comes to choosing an alternative form of transportation, don't overlook the bicycle.

That was the message of "Tune Up & Challenge," an hour-long event held on Patsaouras Plaza, Wednesday, to promote next month's Bike to Work Day.

The morning kicked off with a press conference featuring Deputy CEO John Catoe and television actor Ed Begley, Jr., but the real stars of the day were the volunteer bicyclists who showed up to ride warmup laps around the Plaza.

MTA employees, along with members of bicycling clubs and others in the community, came out with helmets and bikes in tow to boost awareness about Bike to Work Day, May 20.

### 'A viable alternative'

The event also was used to promote bicycling as "a viable

Also see>

[An Eventful Day on Patsaouras Plaza](#)



Some 70 bicyclists and Segway riders push off for a two-lap circuit of Patsaouras Plaza. The event promoted "Bike to Work Day," May 20.

alternate means of transportation," said Bob Rainey, MTA transportation planning manager and bike warmup coordinator.

"This is fun, but it is a serious promotion," Catoe said, citing the county's traffic congestion and poor air quality.

"It is critically important that we get people to use various modes of transportation other than the single-occupant car to get to work, to go to visit the doctor, to get to school and go to recreational activities," he said. "And one of the modes of doing that is a fun one, and that is a bicycle."

Begley called bicycling "the best way to get around."

#### **'Energy-efficient vehicle'**

The ardent environmentalist and star on the ABC drama series "Stephen King's Kingdom House," said, "It is the most energy-efficient vehicle science has ever invented. It cuts down on traffic, it cuts down on pollution."

People were also encouraged to combine bicycling with Metro, especially if they are traveling long distances.

"You can put your bicycle on that front rack (of the bus) and you can ride the major part of the way and then get your exercise the last five or six miles," said Frank Roberts, mayor of Lancaster and MTA Board first vice chairman.

For Alfred Portillo, a Metro Bus operator at Central City Division 1, Bike to Work Day is every day. He rides his bike to and from work every day — and has for about 22 years.

"I think it's a great thing," Portillo said of the day's event. "It's beautiful to see people congregating, riding bikes. You've got your helmet on here and people know you're a bicyclist."



Among the participants in Wednesday's "Bike to Work Day" promotional event were, from left, George Campbell, LA Airport; Alfonso Valleza, Downtown Center Business Improvement District; Alfred Portillo of Metro; Stephen May, broker, Downtown Residential Real Estate; Deputy David Sivard, LA County Sheriff's Department; and Harvey Hetland, Los Angeles Wheelmen bicycle club.



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Charlie Chaplin, played by look-alike Audrey Ruttan, rode with police escort, from left, Sheriff's deputies David Sivard, Dave Neill and Shawn Dubusky.



Mounted on bicycles "built for two," the barbershop quartet Nickelodeon sang their way around Patsaouras Plaza.



PHOTOS BY BILL HEARD

## Bike Event: An Eventful Day on Patsaouras Plaza

By LISA HUYNH

(April 29, 2004) At age 55, actor and environmentalist Ed Begley Jr. is living proof that a person is never too old to ride a bike.

Begley, who rides his bike every day, was more than happy to help MTA kick off the Bike to Work Day promotion. He gave the signal to begin a two-lap mini marathon on Plaza.

Also see>

[Metro Tells LA  
Commuters: Don't  
Overlook the Bicycle](#)

Among the many participants in the two-lap ride was Michelle Mowery, manager of the City of Los Angeles Bicycle Program.

"I ride my bike to work at least once a week," said Mowery. "I think it's important to get everybody onto their bikes because not only is it good for your physical health, it's also good for the community."

Several booths, including a repair station, were set up on the Plaza to help bikers learn about safety. Tom Devane, manager of Bikestation in Long Beach, was on hand to talk about commuter preparedness and to demonstrate how to properly repair bikes.

## Adjusting the brakes

For example, Devane showed commuters how to adjust their brakes and chain derailleurs.

The Executive Director of the Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition also was there to hand out bike maps and safety fliers.

Celebrity impersonators Elvis, Marilyn Monroe and Charlie Chaplin were very much alive. They energetically worked



Elvis has left the building, on a bike.

the crowd and also took part in the two-lap ride.

The wrestler from Metro's current ad campaign showed up. He traded in the "ring," for a Segway scooter. He cruised around in a bright yellow cape and was definitely an attraction.

Although it was an eventful day, it was hard to escape the smooth harmony of Nickelodeon, a barbershop quartet. Not only did they perform at the microphone, they pedaled their way around the Plaza on old-fashioned tandem bikes singing:

- "Daisy, Daisy, give me your answer, do.  
I'm half crazy, all for the love of you!  
It won't be a stylish marriage,  
I can't afford a carriage,  
But you'll look sweet upon the seat  
Of a bicycle built for two."


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## Sector Governance Councils Schedule May Meetings

By RICK JAGER

(April 29, 2004) Metro's five service sector Governance Councils have scheduled their monthly public meetings for May.

The Governance Council meeting times and locations are:

- San Fernando Valley Sector, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., Wednesday, May 5, Marvin Braude Constituent Service Center Community Room, 6262 Van Nuys Boulevard, Van Nuys
- Westside/Central Service Sector, 3 to 5 p.m., Thursday, May 6, La Cienega Tennis Center, 325 S. La Cienega Boulevard, Beverly Hills
- San Gabriel Valley Sector, 5 p.m., Tuesday, May 11, San Gabriel Sector Office, 3369 Santa Anita Avenue, El Monte
- Gateway Cities Service Sector, 2 to 4 p.m., Thursday, May 13, The Gas Company, 9240 Firestone Boulevard, Downey
- South Bay Service Sector, 9:30 a.m., Friday, May 14, Carson Community Center, Room 209 A/B, 801 E. Carson St., Carson
- Westside/Central Service Sector, (second meeting), 7 p.m., Thursday, May 27, La Cienega Tennis Center, 325 S. La Cienega Boulevard, Beverly Hills

Governance Councils work closely with Metro's service sectors to study and plan service to improve the efficiency of Metro Bus operations.



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## Westside/ Central's Fair Drew Crowd of 400-Plus

(April 29, 2004) A community fair featuring a bike safety rodeo with prizes for kids, vintage buses and information booths drew more than 400 people to the Westside/Central sector's community fair, April 24.

Also on display was a new state-of-the-art Metro Rapid bus and a booth on Metro job and contracting opportunities. Other booths showcased a transit history display and information about the planned light-rail line that would run along the nearby Exposition right-of-way.

McDonald's donated prizes to all the kids who participated in the bike safety rodeo. Target provided a new bike and bike accessories as the grand prize in a raffle.



Metro's miniature bus was just the right size for these kids, who enjoyed the Westside/Central sector's community fair.



Westside/Central sector employees staffed an information booth during the community fair.



A child wends his way through a pylon-marked obstacle course during the bike safety rodeo.



Todd McIntyre of Mayor James Hahn's office gets a lesson on how to use a Metro Bus bike rack during the community fair.



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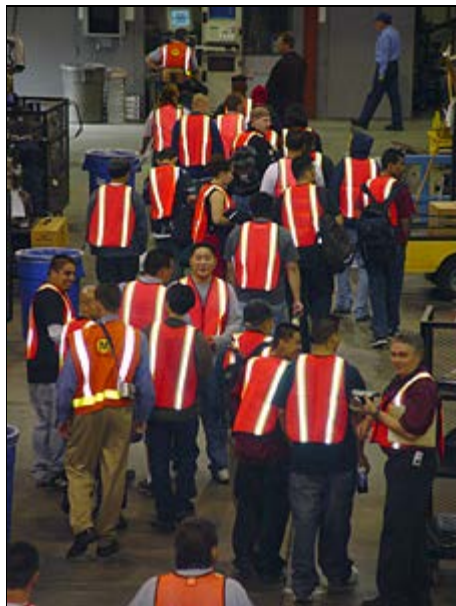
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photos by bill heard

(April 30, 2004) Twenty-eight automotive students toured Metro's Regional Rebuild Center, Thursday, and discovered that the lessons they're learning at Pasadena City College have an everyday, practical application.

The majority are studying transmissions – both automatic and manual – just now, says their instructor, Wayne Houlihan. But, they also can specialize in engine repair, brakes and suspensions, air conditioning and other areas.

Many enroll at the school for a year, earn a specialty certificate and go right to work in a local repair shop or auto dealership. Some stay for a full two-year course and learn the mechanics of a vehicle from "end to end," says Houlihan. Several graduates now work for Metro.

At the RRC, the students toured the welding shop, machine shop, paint shop and other areas that help support as many as 5,000 buses.

"When you're in the classroom

## Automotive Students See Their Lessons Applied at RRC



Alberto Hinojos II, at left, and equipment maintenance supervisor Bill Dellosa, at right, examines metal cut on a plasma cutter by welder Jeff Barton. Below, PCC students study RRC's engine dynamometer analysis of bus engines under loads.

listening to a lecture, you can only imagine how you would apply that in the field," says Mike Singer, equipment maintenance manager. "Here, they're getting a first-hand experience."



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Among the 22 rail safety specialists who graduated from the Rail Incident Investigation class, Friday, were Metro employees Carlos Razura-Anaya, Eddie Boghossian, Eric Petersen, Gary Dewater, Jaime Pulido, Joseph Daniels, Kirk Davis, Luis Castillo and Michelle Brown.



PHOTO BY BILL HEARD

## Rail Accident Investigation Class Stressed Consistent Procedures

(April 30, 2004) It's important for investigators probing the causes of a rail accident to faithfully follow the same procedures, says Metro Rail General Manager Gerald Francis.

Francis was on hand, Friday, for the graduation of a group of 22 rail safety specialists who completed an intensive week-long Rail Incident Investigation class co-sponsored by Metro.

The students – nine from Metro Rail, 12 from the California Public Utilities Commission and one from Sacramento Regional Transit – studied methods of investigating collisions, highway grade crossing accidents, fires and derailments.

Francis notes that several agencies, including Metro and state and federal rail safety authorities, might be involved in a rail accident investigation. "This class will get everyone on the same page, following the process and procedures involved in accident investigation."

The federally approved course included lectures, table-top exercises and a field exercise, which involved a simulated train-automobile collision investigation.

Metro Rail Supervising Engineer Wyman Jones, a certified Transportation

Safety Institute (TSI) instructor, taught the class. Jones frequently teaches such classes around the country.

"We deem this class to be so important that we're willing to lend our own staff to TSI to teach it," says Vijay Khawani, director of Rail Operations Safety. "That helps with consistency not only within Metro, but within the regulatory agencies that are responsible for investigating rail accidents."

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