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## Bus Rodeo Fun: The Kids Were Playing for Keeps



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By SHANTAY IOSIA

(Aug. 3, 2004) While the bus operators and maintenance workers were battling for titles in the 2004 Metro Bus Rodeo, the children of the Rodeo were playing for keeps.

Families, friends and Metro employees enjoyed a day of barbecue, games and competition at the annual event, Saturday, at Santa Anita Race Track in Arcadia.

As Operator Luduvico Castro was working to secure his spot in the APTA Internationals, Aaron Gretch, 10, and David Hunt, 9, teamed up a few feet away to champion the water sports.

Aaron laid flat on his back holding a water bottle above his forehead as David raced back and forth fetching water with a paper cup. They were the first to fill their bottle to the rim. David took home a super soaker and Aaron left with a CD case.

"It feels good to be a champ," David said.

PHOTOS: SHANTAY IOSIA



David Hunt, 9, left, took home a super soaker while Aaron Gretch, 10, won a CD case in a grueling water carrier competition.

## A snake on his arm

Some passed the games and ventured other featured attractions. Daniel Pedemonte, 6, sat under a tent while Blinky the Clown painted a snake around his arm.

Daniel's father, Marco Pedemonte, a Division 10 equipment maintenance supervisor, says



Blinky the Clown paints a snake around Daniel Pedemonte's arm.

he brings his family to the event every year. "I used to come as a competitor," the former International champion says. "Now I come as a supervisor."

People were encouraged to enter their cars or motorcycles in the annual Classic Car Show. The visitors voted for their favorites ranging in categories from best import to best work in progress.

Mike Flores, a Metro Gold Line maintenance worker, showcased his Harley Davidson. And, although he didn't take home a medal, he says he hasn't missed a Roadeo since he started.

Winners of the Bus Roadeo raffle for two tool carts were Division 9 Mechanic Javier Castro and Mechanic Joe Leach of the Regional Rebuild Center. The raffle raised \$940, which will be donated to the Bob Hope USO facility at Los Angeles International Airport.



### Classic Car Show

- Best of Show, Car – Rodger Klinkinberg, 1934 Dodge Coupe
- Best of Show, Truck – Antony Johnson, 1969 Chevy Longhorn Pickup
- Best of Show, Motorcycle – Milo Victoria, 1992-98 Eldorado
- Best of Show, Import – Jose Barajas, 1962 VW
- Best of Show, Muscle Car – Ray Legorretta,

1969 Dodge Coronet

- Best of Show, Custom – Mike Tanori, 1995 Harley-Davidson
- Best of Show, Classic – Virgil Boley, 1962 Cadillac
- Best of Show, In-Progress – Robert Ortiz, 1970 VW



Mike Flores, a Metro Gold Line maintenance worker, showcased his Harley Davidson.

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Winner's Circle> At left, top operator Luduvico Castro; at right, winning Division 18 mechanics Luke Logan, Javier Soria and Mina Ros. Below, Division 1 Operator Marcos Mejia-Portillo, center left, came in third with 561 points and Division 3 Operator Juan Navarro, center right, came in second for the second year in a row with 566 points. The winning operators are joined by Division 1 Transportation Manager Sonia Owens, Metro Gateway Cities GM Alex Clifford, DEO John Catoe and Division 3 Transportation Manager Dan Frawley.



## Div. 9 Operator Castro; Div. 18 Mechanics Win 2004 Bus Rodeo

- Team will represent Metro at APTA Internationals in Atlanta

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Aug. 3, 2004) Division 9 Operator Luduvico Castro came out of fourth place in the preliminaries to win the 2004 Metro Bus Rodeo operator's trophy. The Division 18 team of Javier Soria, Mina Ros and Luke Logan won the maintenance competition.

Together, the four-member team will represent Metro in October at the APTA International Bus Rodeo in Atlanta.

Some 500 employees, their families and friends turned out for the annual event held, Saturday, at Santa Anita Racetrack. The day included a barbecue, fun and games for the kids, the Metro Experience mobile theater and a classic car show.

But, most attention was focused on the competitors. Scoring a total of 580 points, Castro finished a mere 14 points ahead of the 566 compiled by Division 3 Operator Juan Navarro, runner-up for the second year in a row.



Division 9 Transportation Manager Mike Greenwood, left, congratulates Rodeo winner Operator Luduvico Castro. Castro left the event before he knew he had won.

### Didn't know he had won

Eager to attend a wedding, the 58-year-old Castro – a 32-year veteran driver – left the event before he knew he had won. “I did terrible; I knocked over two cones,” he lamented just after his run. “Next time, I’ll go slower so I won’t hit anything.”

Navarro, 29, who has competed in each of his six years with Metro, wasn’t satisfied with his second-place finish. He really wants to represent Metro at the international competition.

Capturing the number three slot with 561 points was Division 1 Operator Marcos Mejia-Portillo. Division 1 Operator Sam Morales, a two-time Metro Bus Rodeo winner, followed in fourth place with 556 points.

In fifth place with 539 points was last-year’s champion, Division 9 Operator Mark Holland, who has won the local competition five times. He represented Metro at international finals in Montreal in 1988; San Antonio, 1995; Orlando, 1999; Philadelphia, 2001; and in Salt Lake City in 2003.



Division 10 mechanics team, David Klinkenborg, left, and Saul Sanchez race to crank up an idle bus engine.

### Maintenance results

In the maintenance competition, the Division 18 mechanics scored a blistering 1,030 points – 220 points ahead of runners-up Doug Creveling, David Klinkenborg and Saul Sanchez of Division 10 with 810 points. Taking third place with 795 points was the Division 5 team of Andrew Warren Jr., Rommel Vargas and Frank Forde.

This year's maintenance competitors upended last year's results. The Division 5 maintenance team won the 2003 Bus Rodeo. Division 10 finished in second place and Division 18 finished third.

Rounding out the maintenance competition were the Division 6 team of Naren Desai, Jesus Guerra and Jose Ramirez in fourth place with 675 points and the Division 1 team of Fred Hines, Gustavo Sanchez and Sergio Barron in fifth place with 670 points.

In sixth place was the Division 3 team of Tim Wong, Arnold Del Toro and Cristobal Hurtado with 645 points. The Division 9 team of Omar Numara and Ricardo Hernandez placed seventh with 400 points, while Division 7's Jesse Romero, Christopher Valenzuela and Baldemar Gonzalez placed eighth with 300 points.



Gentle Giant>

Operator brings Metro Bus through the obstacle course.

### Bus operator results

Final results in the operator's competition showed Jesse Cervantes, Division 9 in sixth place with 537 points; Julio Flores, Division 8, 536; Aubrey McGlory, Division 7, 528; Juan Serrano, Division 8, 516; Agustin Confesor, Division 8, 507; and Ralph Jeffrey, Division 5, 503.

Also, Guadalupe Quiroz, Division 9, 468; David Aguilar, Division 1, 442; Luis Martinez, Division 2, 438; and Fernando Calderon, Division 1, 436; Ricardo Martinez, Division 9, 434; Roberto Ramirez, Division 1; 433; Jose Sierra, Division 2, 427; and Wendell Rush, Division 18, 415.

Also, Jeffery Wilbanks, Division 2, 414; Manuel Guzman, Division 3, 399; Alberto Hinojuz, Division 9, 397; Conrad Noriega, Division 9, 395; Armando Romualdo, Division 8, 390; Dan Jenkins, Division 5, 385; Hugo Mercado, Division 1, 373; Juan Romo, Division 7, 349; and Hugo Repreza, Division 15, 347.

-- Reporter Shantay Iosia contributed to this story.



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PHOTO: BILL HEARD



## Five-Time Winner Mark Holland: A Force to Be Reckoned With

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Aug. 3, 2004) Although he didn't win this year's Bus Rodeo, Division 9's Mark Holland had been in the winner's circle more times than most any other Metro Bus operator – five times to be exact.

As Metro's champion, he first represented the agency at the APTA International finals in 1988 in Montreal. Then, there was San Antonio in 1995, Orlando in 1999 and Philadelphia in 2001.

During the 2003 event in Salt Lake City, Holland found himself competing against operators from across the U.S. and Canada while maneuvering over an unfamiliar and difficult obstacle course. He went over the time limit, but managed to capture third place. "I was fortunate to get it," he recalls.

A 21-year Metro veteran, Holland, 44, is a tall, lanky man with a brash manner. He faces each competition with full confidence that he will walk away with the trophy. "You can't come in with, 'I might win.' You have to come in with, 'I will win!'"

## Man with a plan

Beyond the confidence, however, Holland is a man with a plan.

He works hard all year long to keep his driving and personnel records clean so he's eligible to compete. And, realizing that he only has to be among the top 30 to make the local finals, he doesn't overreach himself in the preliminary round that precedes every Bus Rodeo.

- "I'm always thinking about the Rodeo."

-- Rodeo champ

Mark Holland

When he wins, he usually has come from somewhere back in the pack. "It's a deliberate act," he says. "I function better under pressure."

And pressure is what he – and other champs like Division 1's Sam Morales, who carried Metro's banner in San Francisco in 2000 – have found at the International finals.

Both men agree that the local Bus Rodeo is easy compared to that event. In Salt Lake City, last year, Holland was given a map of the obstacle course to memorize and joined other competitors for an orientation ride around the course.

### **A mental game**

That was it until he took his seat behind the wheel for the real thing. "It has to be more mental than anything else," he says.

In fact, it's pretty much a mental game all year long for Holland.

"To me, driving a bus day-to-day is like a form of the Rodeo," he says. "It's always on my mind. When I make my stops, when I make turns, when I'm pulling out of bus zones, I'm always thinking about the Rodeo."

This year's Holland's plan went awry and, despite his best efforts, he never moved beyond the fifth place he scored in the preliminaries. Instead, his Division 9 colleague Luduvico Castro rose from fourth place to win the 2004 Metro Bus Rodeo and the right to attend the International finals in Atlanta.

Still, Mark Holland is always a force to be reckoned with – whether at the local level or at the International finals. And he isn't kidding when he says, "I'm pretty intense when it comes to this competition."

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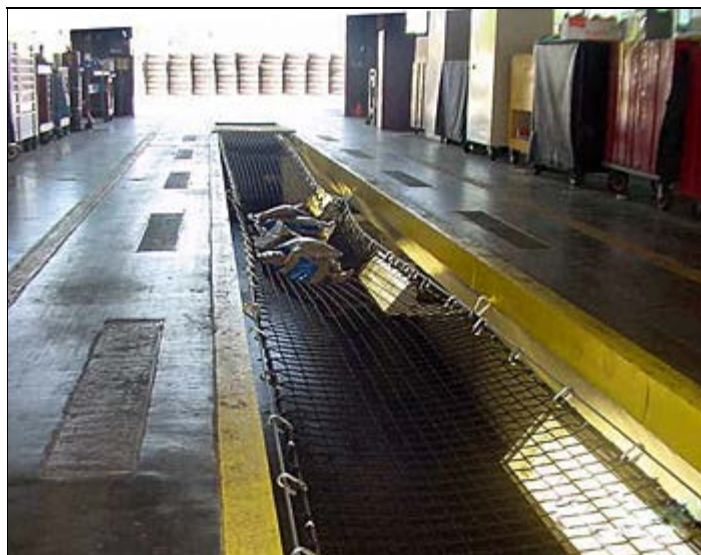
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## Safety Nets Installed to Prevent Falls at Division 15 Maintenance



The safety netting covers the maintenance pits at Division 15 and is supported by a steel cable strung through welded eyelets.

- Nets cover five-foot-deep pits where mechanics work on buses ; harness and cable system are used when working overhead

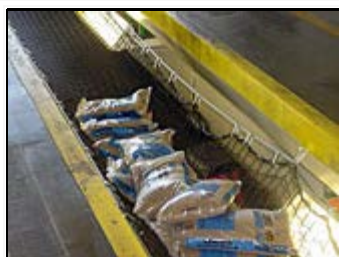
By JESSICA TYERMAN

(Aug. 4, 2004) Many of the service bays where division mechanics work on Metro buses are, literally, holes in the floor. And, a moment's inattention can easily lead to a fall into one of the five-foot-deep pits.

But, at East Valley Division 15, the maintenance team recently installed two safety mechanisms to decrease the risk associated with working near the pits.

The division is the first to permanently put safety netting across the maintenance pits. In addition, a harness and cable support system was installed to protect employees from falling into the pits and sustaining injuries.

Several other divisions have had test nets installed and now await full installation.



- Bags containing 1,000 pounds of sand were used to conduct a weight test on the netting. After two hours, the netting was tested for any deterioration or loss of strength.

**Several injuries have resulted**

"Our shops each have between two and six service bays with pits," says Maintenance Manager John Roberts. "These pits have resulted in several injuries over the years when personnel have fallen into them."

The netting, which covers the maintenance pits when they're not in use by a mechanic, is supported by a steel cable strung through welded eyelets. Tests using sandbags have shown the netting should support up to 6,000 pounds.

Although the netting will not eliminate injuries entirely, it is expected to significantly reduce the risks.

"Its purpose is to catch anyone who may fall into the pit area," says Michael Lambeth, member of the Division 15 Communications Safety subcommittee.

### **Cable system supports mechanics**

The harness and cable system supports mechanics while they work on top of buses or overhead. The harness, which is strapped around a mechanics' body, is connected to the cable suspended from the ceiling and strung between welded, reinforced steel tubing.

Lambeth says the harness and cable system will "prevent people from falling to the floor if they slip."

Metro staff first began to look into the use of the safety system five years ago. The devices were installed at Division 15 during the week of July 15.

"With just a few days in service," says Roberts. "We were encouraged that the safety of our employees has been enhanced with this easy-to-use system of securing our pits."



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**Funeral Services, Thursday, for TOS James Fuller**

(Aug. 4, 2004) Funeral services are scheduled at 10 a.m., Thursday, Aug. 5, for Transportation Operations Supervisor James C. Fuller, who died July 27.

Services will be held at Solomon's Mortuary, 10625 South Broadway, Los Angeles.

Fuller joined SCRTD in 1956 as a bus operator and was promoted to supervisor in 1975. After working at divisions 5 and 2 and in other departments, he retired in 1985. He was rehired in 2000 and worked in Bus Operations Control.




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## Metro Intern Places 4th in North America Miss Pageant

After completing an application for the North America Miss pageant, Jacqueline Ramirez, intern in Customer & Vendor Services, placed fourth out of 35 young women who competed in the event July 29-31.

As a recent graduate of John Glenn High School and a participant in Metro's Transportation Career Academy Program (TCAP), she plans to continue to intern with the agency while attending Cerritos College in the fall.

"From the first day Jacqueline joined our department, we knew she would be an asset to us and Metro," said Manager Gail Harvey "...We truly look forward to her working with us again through the Metro College Intern Program."

Ramirez's goals are to major in Business Administration at Cal State Long Beach and to pursue a career with Metro.

"This experience helped boost my self esteem and confidence level," said Ramirez.



Customer & Vendor Services  
Intern Jacqueline Ramirez

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## New Employee ID Badges to be Issued This Week

(Aug. 4, 2004) Most employees will receive a "surprise" when paychecks are handed out this week – a new employee badge with an updated appearance and some additional high-tech security features.

Metro's new logo will be featured on the badges, along with the employee's name and ID number – all highlighted over a new background color. Designations for employees who have accident response or other special clearances will be printed on the front of the badge.

The new ID badges even have something in store for the future. They're already programmed for Transit Access Pass (TAP) smart card use when the Universal Fare System goes active. In fact, some employees will be involved in a TAP pilot project beginning this fall on Metro Bus lines in the San Gabriel Valley and on the Metro Gold Line.

About 500 employees won't receive the new badges in the first round. Two hundred of those were hired after the badges were printed. The photos of another 300 were lost when the old system was merged with the new system.

### Call if you don't get a new badge

Employees who don't receive a new ID badge should call Employment Services Clerk Monica Uyan at 922-7159 to arrange for a photo and a new badge.

Embedded in the ID badges is a microchip containing access codes that will admit employees to the appropriate secure areas and to stairwells, elevators and some computer applications. The access codes will be in effect after Saturday, Aug. 14, when security will be switched over to the new system.

After that, employees should turn in their HID access cards to their supervisors, who will return the cards to General Services. Although the new badges should be properly programmed for access, employees should report a non-functioning badge by sending an e-mail to General Services.

Consultants, temporary employees and interns will continue to use the current ID cards and HID access cards for the remainder of 2004. ID badges for dependents and retirees will be honored through the end of this year, when they will receive new ID badges.



Scott Lloyd, a supervisor in Human Resources, holds samples of new ID cards.

Because the new badges include security access codes, employees should take pains to safeguard them. A \$25 fee will be charged the first time a badge is lost; \$50 the second time one is lost.

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Paul McCoy, one of several Metro operators commended by the public.

## Rider Commendations for Division 18 Operators

By RICH MORALLO

(Aug. 5, 2004) "The operator is always neat and well dressed. He represents Metro well." So wrote a bus passenger in a letter of commendation for Paul McCoy, one of 12 Carson Division 18 operators recognized by Los Angeles riders recently.

"It feels good when a passenger recognizes the extra time and effort I put into grooming," says McCoy, who picks up passengers on Metro Rapid Line 710 traveling along Crenshaw Avenue.

In May the division led the agency in the number of kudos received from the public for various reasons such as operators being courteous or staff displaying professionalism on the job.

In the case of Line 710 Operator Lee Sillemmon, a resident wrote, "I want to thank the operator for being on time."

### Special attention to service

Says Sillemmon, "I pay special attention in performing service and I encourage our passengers to acknowledge our work."

Operator Latanya West was congratulated by one passenger who wrote, "She is always on time...after riding your buses with these good drivers I know I won't be late for work and dinner."

A patron recognized Reginald Shaw's excellent driving skills as he described how a motorist cut the Metro Bus off and how Reginald was able to stop on time to avoid an accident.

Other Division 18 operators who were complimented for doing a good job were Kimberly Birdsong, Joy Johnson-Sanders, Melvin Taylor, Kathy Vaughn, James Amos and Loretta Shorts.

"It is always a pleasure to receive commendations from our customers and we take great pleasure informing the operator and his/her colleagues about each event," said Craig Smith, assistant transportation manager. "We know we have exceptional employees."

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PHOTOS: JUAN OCAMPO



Metro CEO Roger Snoble announces recommendations developed at the breakout sessions of Mobility 21 transportation summit. From left, California Assemblyman Keith Richmond, Metro Board Chairman Frank Roberts, Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce Chairman George Kieffer, Los Angeles Mayor Jim Hahn, Snoble, Burbank Councilwoman Stacey Murphy and Harry Baldwin, Mayor of the City of San Gabriel.

## Mobility 21 Approves 'Traffic Busters' Plan, Transportation Recommendations



Metro CEO Roger Snoble: "The cuts to transportation in the most recent state budget would have been the worse without the hard work of Mobility 21."

The Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation was named as winner of the 2004 Julian Dixon Award for successfully securing a \$490.7 million full funding grant agreement needed to begin construction on the Eastside Extension of the Metro Gold Line. The award is named in honor of the late Congressman who was an early champion of Los Angeles County's rail and bus systems.

(Aug. 5, 2004) Some 400 government, business, labor and community leaders attending the third annual Mobility 21 transportation summit, this week, approved recommendations aimed at improving the region's transportation infrastructure.

The summit also was the occasion for kicking off a \$9 billion plan to fund LA County's "Top Ten Traffic Busters." The list includes expansion of light rail lines, more carpool lanes, street and highway and freight corridor improvements.

The Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation was named as winner of the 2004 Julian Dixon Award for successfully securing a \$490.7 million full funding





Metro CEO Roger Snoble, at left, presents the 2004 Julian C. Dixon Award to the Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation for successfully securing a \$490.7 million full funding grant agreement for the Eastside Extension of the Metro Gold Line.

Among the recommendations approved by Mobility 21 participants were: support the state's proposal to integrate infrastructure planning for housing and transportation under one agency; and support a constitutional amendment to allow a 55 percent vote requirement to pass a local transportation sales tax and support an additional local ½ percent sales tax for transportation.

Also, to support Gov. Schwarzenegger's efforts to repay transportation loans with Indian gaming revenues while looking for long-term solutions; support Operation Traffic and the Watch the Road campaign to reduce unsafe driving behaviors that contribute to accidents and traffic congestion and to establish a grassroots educational campaign to create a better understanding of the links between transportation, economic growth and quality of life.


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## Orange Line Construction Halted, Crews are Laid Off

(Aug. 5, 2004) With construction on the Metro Orange Line temporarily suspended by court order, the contractor has halted all construction work and has laid off its craft workers.

The California Court of Appeal ordered all construction work on the \$330 million project halted on Monday, and ordered Metro to complete its Environmental Impact Report by studying the feasibility of the Metro Rapid system as an alternative to the transitway.

On Tuesday, the court issued a clarification of its order that permits Metro and its contractor, Shimmick-Obayashi, to take "interim actions...to protect the public from safety risk and hazards."

Project Manager Roger Dames reports that while construction has been totally shut down, a directive has been issued to the contractor to continue to maintain pedestrian and traffic control and to eliminate any public hazards along the alignment.

Of primary concern are 11 intersections, which are in a partial state of reconstruction. Two are completely closed to traffic, while nine others are partially closed.

Metro attorneys plan to file papers with the Court of Appeal, Monday, asking for permission to continue construction while the Metro Rapid study continues – a process that could take a number of months.

At its July meeting, the Board of Directors also voted to appeal the Court of Appeal's rulings to the California Supreme Court.


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Metro Chairman and Lancaster Mayor Frank Roberts, at podium, introduces new 45-foot Metro Bus to be placed into service. Also pictured, from left, North American Bus Industries executive Cliff Henke, Metro Deputy Executive Officer John Catoe and Metro Board Member and County Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke.



PHOTO: SHANTAY IOSIA

## Dawn of a New Era: CompoBus Introduced to Area Media

By ELIZABETH A. CRAIGG

(Aug. 6, 2004) Leading the nation in new bus technology, Metro introduced the new "CompoBus" to the public, this morning, by providing a short bus ride for media assembled at Arthur Winston Division 5.

The lightweight 45-foot bus, which can carry 16 percent more passengers than conventional buses, will be in service within the next few weeks. It is the first of 100 "CompoBuses" expected to be in service by the end of June 2005.

"We can truly say that this is the bus of the future as we continue in our pursuit of high-tech solutions to provide the best service we can for the region," said Board Chairman Frank Roberts.

North American Bus Industries designed the "CompoBus" to look like a metal frame bus, however, it is made from fiberglass and carbon fiber.

### Collision and corrosion resistant

This design makes the bus lighter and resistant to collision and corrosion damage, while reducing maintenance and fuel cost and enhancing safety by using power disc brakes. Each bus costs \$370,000.

Metro also is scheduled to introduce 200 60-foot articulated buses, seating 50 percent more passengers, in 2005. The buses are to be used

on the Metro Orange Line in the San Fernando Valley, and on other high-volume bus lines.

Supervisor Yvonne Burke expects that, “the introduction of these new high-capacity buses into our system will greatly improve service to our communities.”

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Speaking Monday in Van Nuys, Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky tells local media why he believes the Metro Orange Line should be completed. He was joined by from left, U.S. Congressman Brad Sherman (D-Sherman Oaks, CA) and Los Angeles City Council Members Dennis Zine and Tom LaBonge, among others.



PHOTOS: NED RACINE

## City Council Supports Orange Line Completion, Lifting of Stay

- Court expected to rule Wednesday;  
\$189 million already spent on project

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Aug. 10, 2004) The Los Angeles City Council unanimously approved a motion, Tuesday, supporting completion of the Metro Orange Line and asking the California Court of Appeal to lift a temporary stay that halted construction Aug. 2.

The action on the motion by Councilman Tom LaBonge came after city and county officials joined San Fernando Valley community leaders in Van Nuys, Monday, for a news conference in support of the 14-mile cross-valley transitway. A Tuesday morning media event on the steps of City Hall was a further call for action to keep the project moving.

The Court of Appeal is expected to rule later this week on Metro's request for a



City Councilman Dennis Zine, who represents the western San Fernando Valley, speaks at Monday's news conference in Van Nuys.



rehearing and lifting of the stay which has idled some 120 construction workers on the \$330 million project.

The court had imposed the stay following an appeal by COST, a Valley group opposed to the Metro Orange Line. The Metro Board has voted to appeal an adverse court ruling to the California Supreme Court.

### **Project 35 percent complete**

In a presentation to the City Council, CEO Roger Snoble noted that, although the project is 35 percent complete, all work on the transitway was stopped except for that needed to ensure public safety.

"It is a breach of the public's trust to stop work on this long-studied and greatly anticipated...transportation system linking North Hollywood to Woodland Hills..." Snoble said.

Metro Construction Chief Rick Thorpe told the Council the construction delay is costing taxpayers \$70,000 each day and that more than \$189 million already has been spent or committed to the project.

The cost of a long-term delay "could exceed \$100 million, plus the potential loss of \$68 million in state funds," Thorpe said.

Also calling for construction to resume was Assemblyman Lloyd Levine (D-Van Nuys), who has sponsored a bill (AB-1798) that would ensure the project could move forward.

Since construction was halted, a number of residents along the Metro Orange Line right-of-way have written LaBonge, Council members Wendy Greuel, Dennis Zine, Grieg Smith and others to support completion of the project.

### **'Let's hope common sense prevails'**

"I am angry that a small group can (wreak) such havoc on a major public works project which would be of great benefit to all of the communities along its corridor and beyond," wrote Judy Price, secretary of the Valley Glen Neighborhood Assn. "Let's hope that common sense prevails when the court makes its decision."

"The owners in my condo complex who have heard that work has been stopped are aghast!" wrote homeowner Mary Ann Hurst. "It is silly to stop everything just when you were really starting to make progress."

"I fully support your motion and offer any personal assistance in the effort to get the Orange Line completed," wrote Carlos Ferreyra of Valley Glen.

The Court of Appeal earlier had found that Metro's Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the transitway was incomplete because it did not include a study of the Metro Rapid system as an alternative.

At the time the EIR was being written, the Metro Rapid system was still a pilot project whose benefits were not yet fully known. A study of the system is now under way and will be included in the updated EIR. That process could take as long as nine months.


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## Gateway Sector Staff, Operators Work Together to Solve Problems

By DAVID HERSHENSON

(Aug. 10, 2004) It's all about attention to detail.

Gateway Cities Service Sector management and staff conduct frequent line rides, inspections of buses leaving the bus yard. They also convene small focus groups in an effort to experience the rides as the customers do and to hear firsthand from operator and mechanic team members.

"The beauty of this approach is that no one holds back on their thoughts and opinions," said General Manager Alex Clifford. "When the customers, operators, mechanics, service attendants, and other employees take their valuable time to express an opinion or concern, the sector is listening and ready to act."

For example, Operator Gregory McCoy had issues with running time and pullout on Line 265 (Paramount-Whittier-Cerritos), as a result of schedule problems. The running time complaint was forwarded to the Gateway Cities scheduling department.

### Made the adjustments

After validating the running time and pullout problem, the Gateway Cities scheduling department, working with McCoy, were able to make adjustments in the line to improve pullout and running time. As a result of that improvement, layover on this line was improved to the appropriate standard.

In another instance, the sector staff quickly remedied a safety issue reported by Operator Teresa Thomas, who drives Line 362 (LA-Santa Fe Springs-Norwalk-Hawaiian Gardens).

The operator explained to Clifford that it was difficult to see the traffic light from a particular bus stop location because both the light and the stop were located on the near side. The stop was moved to the far side within a week.

"They need to have more staff riding along on selected Metro Lines so management can look for themselves," said Thomas. "It's great for managers and supervisors to get involved."

Clifford also was able to respond to a safety concern on Line 254 (Imperial-Wilmington Station-Gage Ave.-Lorena St.) relayed to the sector office by Supervisor Gloria Molina's office. The problem involved bus movements on a narrow and congested street adjacent to Graham Elementary School in unincorporated LA County.

### Did a site visit

Clifford and the sector team met with the school principal, did a site visit, and determined that bus movements on the street served to only aggravate existing non-MTA related problems caused by parents double

parking when dropping off and picking up their kids.

The sector scheduling team devised a detour route and, after getting approval from the Gateway Cities Governance Council, rerouted the bus away from the congested street.

Molina's office and Graham Elementary School Principal Mary Harris expressed their gratitude for making the change to help relieve congestion on the street.

The bus ride-along program has provided Clifford with a better working knowledge of the issues operators and customers face on a daily basis. The ride-along program also gives operators the opportunity to be actively involved in the process of making running time and safety adjustments.

Line 362 Operator Thomas was grateful for the action taken. "I was relieved that the stop was fixed. It made me feel like somebody cared and did something rather than saying okay and ignoring it."

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RRC safety honorees were, from back row left, are David Chan, Robert Pfile, Charles Powell, Mark Vester, Donald Caswell, Arthur Martinez and Mike Singer. Front row, from left are Harold Peterson, Carlos Morales, Tom Sintoplert, Carlos Favela, Raymond Bozyk, Alfred Soto, Thi Nguyen and Milo Victoria.



## RRC Maintenance Honors 25 for Long-Term Safety Records

(Aug. 10, 2004) Regional Rebuild Center Maintenance Shop employees were recognized, recently, for their hard work and commitment to safety.

Special achievement awards were presented to 25 employees for their contributions to the department's success. The mechanics, painters, machinists, body repairers, welders, and service attendants were recognized for working at least five years without an injury.

Tom Sintoplert, a mechanic leader in the Power Plant Assembly Shop, was honored for working 24 years without an injury. Terrance Diederichs has 22 injury-free years' service; Carlos Morales, 21 years; and Freddy Steger, 20 years.

Others honored were Carlos Favela, 18 years; Frank Hernandez, 16; Cristobal Gomez, 16; Oscar Benavente, 14; Raymond Bozyk, 11; David Chan, 11; Fred Wenzel, 10; Arthur Martinez, 10; Thi Nguyen, 9; Brian Takamiyashiro, 9; Salvador Castillo, 6; Robert Pfile, 6; Phil Martinez, 6; Mark Vester, 6; Jessie Ramsey, 6; Donald Caswell, 6; Efrain Garcia, 5; Charles Powell, 5; Anthony Herumin, 5; and Alfred Soto, 5.



From left are David Chan, Gabriel Valdivia, Javier Magdaleno, Dave Santillanez, Ernie Ramos, Steve Grossman and Mark Vester.

The RRC has continued to make significant reductions in the number of recordable injuries incurred each year. In FY 2003, the RRC reduced the number of injuries by 22 percent from the prior year. The Central Maintenance Shops are on target to make another 20 percent reduction in FY 2004.

A study of recordable injuries at the RRC showed such injuries dropping from 113 in FY 1999 to 77 in FY 2000, 73 in FY 2001, 36 in FY 2002, 28 in FY 2003 and to only 14 in FY 2004.

"All of our employees have played a significant role in helping make the RRC a safer place," said Mike Singer, RRC equipment maintenance manager. "As a team, we have been able to reduce the number of injuries and keep up with production demands."



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PHOTO: SONIA VELVERDE

Metro's 98-year-old Arthur Winston, center, was honored by the California State Senate for serving L.A. "with great dedication and distinction." With him in the Senate chambers, from left, are South Bay General Manager Dana Coffey and State Sen. Kevin Murray (D-LA).

## State Senate Honors Service of Metro's Arthur Winston

By RICH MORALLO

(Aug. 11, 2004) Metro legend Arthur Winston, recipient of countless awards for his 70 years of service to the agency, received another accolade, Aug. 9, when the California State Senate recognized him for a lifetime of achievement.

"I'm just real happy that all of this is happening to me," said the 98-year old service attendant.

Winston still drives to work at 5:30 a.m. every day to lead a crew of service attendants in cleaning and maintaining buses at the Chesterfield Square bus facility named after him - Arthur Winston Division 5.

On Monday, Winston, accompanied by South Bay General Manager Dana Coffey, flew to Sacramento to be recognized on the Senate floor at the start of the day's Session.

### 'Ded ication and distinction'

In a resolution, State Sen. Kevin Murray (D-LA) praised Winston "...for serving the Los Angeles community with great dedication and distinction as an employee of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority..." and commended him for improving the lives of the people of the Los Angeles and the State of California.

"Arthur's inspiration continues to be recognized and honored both inside and outside Metro," commented Coffey, who oversees both the Arthur Winston Division and Carson Division 18. "Arthur has such dedication to work and loyalty to Metro - there is no one like him in the industry."

In 1924, at age 17, Arthur Winston started cleaning trolley cars for the Los Angeles Railway Company, which later evolved into today's Metro. In

70 years he has missed just a single day of work - the day his wife died in 1988. Records show Winston has never been late and never left early.

"I go to work every day, get along with my co-workers, and I do my best to raise my family and do my job," says Winston.

He was also recently recognized by the Los Angeles City Council. In 1996, he received a Congressional Citation from President Bill Clinton as Employee of the Century.

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PHOTOS: BILL HEARD



## CEO Outlines Metro's Goals and Directives for FY 2005

- Directives range from "safety's first" to "pinch every penny"  
> [Top Ten Directives](#)
- Customer surveys show an improving Metro image

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Aug. 12, 2004) Using a top-ten format for his discussion, CEO Roger Snoble outlined his directives for FY 2005, last week, during an all-staff meeting.



CEO Roger Snoble's  
Top Ten Directives

- **Safety's First**  
We will continue our safety efforts, reducing accidents and lowering costs.

Ranging from the Number 1 "safety's first" to the Number 10 "pinch every penny," the list of directives summarized Metro's operating strategies for the year ahead.

"The strategies really involve many of you," Snoble said. "In many areas of the strategic plan, there are specific strategies that you'll be working on."

Metro's values, Snoble said, are safety, employees, fiscal responsibility, integrity, innovation, customer satisfaction and teamwork.

The CEO also touched on Metro's accomplishments for the fiscal year just passed.

These included the reduction in employee



- **Make 'em love us**  
We will improve services to meet the expectations of our customers and the general public.
- **Get in sinc**  
We will integrate all capital planning, financial and operational plans.
- **Go east**  
We will set an example in managing the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension.
- **Think Orange**  
We will stay on schedule and within budget in building the Metro Orange Line.
- **Finish what we started**  
We will implement new technologies, close out contracts and streamline internal processes.
- **Keep an eye out**  
We will increase security efforts throughout our system.
- **Look ahead**  
We will create a realistic vision for the future mobility of LA County.
- **Work together**  
We will improve employee relations throughout the agency.
- **Pinch every penny**  
We will manage our budget to ensure financial stability for years to come.

injuries, a new fare structure, the arrival of new buses, federal funding for the Eastside Extension, an increase in security, the opening of the Metro Gold Line and others.

### Improving customer image

And he took a moment to highlight Metro's improving customer image.

Recent customer surveys show 82 percent of Metro Bus riders and 94 percent of Metro Rail patrons are satisfied with the service. Ninety percent said service is improving and 81 percent said Metro's public image is improving.

The agency's five goals for FY 2005 are to improve transit services, deliver quality capital projects on time and within budget, exercise fiscal responsibility, provide leadership for the region's mobility agenda and develop an effective and efficient workforce.

Snoble's list of Top Ten Directives support those goals. Metro's objectives for the year are outlined in a brochure available to all employees.

### Goal Number 1

To fulfill the goal of improving transit services, the objectives include improving service quality and capacity for bus and rail systems; improving, expanding and adding operating facilities; and improving security on the bus and rail systems.

Strategies under that goal include improving and maintaining cleanliness of buses, rail cars, stations and other facilities, improving transit service reliability and on-time performance, implementing the Advanced Transportation Management System (ATMS), implementing the Universal Fare System and launching the Transit Access Pass (TAP) system.

### Goal Number 2

Under the goal of delivering quality capital projects on time and within budget, Snoble's plan calls for Metro to streamline the project delivery system and to achieve substantial completion of the Metro Orange Line project despite delays incurred due to contaminated soils and a court stay that has temporarily halted construction.

The agency also will start construction of the Eastside Extension, build new bus facilities to accommodate the growing fleet, and begin improvements at Metro Blue Line Division 11 and Metro Green.

### **Goal Number 3**

To ensure that Metro exercises fiscal responsibility, the agency must manage the FY 2005 budget, improve the procurement process, introduce a multi-year fare restructuring program, and identify areas to increase efficiency and accountability in managing the agency's assets, among others.

### **Goal Number 4**

To provide leadership for the region's mobility needs, Metro must take such steps as to plan and coordinate regional transportation programs, and program and secure federal, state and local funding for such projects and services countywide. The long and short-range transportation plans also should be updated, along with implementing other actions.

### **Goal Number 5**

In developing an effective and efficient workforce, the CEO's plan includes continued emphasis on building a safety-conscious culture within the agency, investing in employee development and strengthening the working relationship between labor and management.

"Strategies don't mean anything unless there's performance," Snoble noted during his staff presentation. "Results are what really matters. That's how we judge how we're doing against our goals."

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## 9 New Operators Graduate from Metro Rail Training Class

[Full story](#)



Metro Blue and Green Line graduates and their instructors are, back row from left, Arnold Johnson, John Cabanas, Ruben Flores, Jun Soliven, Teresa Haywood, Felipe Perez and Freddie Marlowe. Front row from left are Jeffery Fontanez, Michael Santillan, Rodney Smith and Pedro Ayala.

PHOTOS: DAVIDE PUGLISI



Metro Gold Line graduates and their instructors are, back row from left, Gerald Harper, Arnold Johnson, Thomas Adkins, Calvin Hayes, Charles Garyson and Freddie Marlowe. Front row from left are Hilgard Tatum, Glenda Murrell, Katy Bustamante and Aaron Beckett.

## 9 New Operators Graduate from Metro Rail Training Class

By SHANTAY IOSIA

(Aug. 12, 2004) After 10 weeks of extensive training, Metro honored 16

new rail operators in two ceremonies.

The first, on July 30, recognized the Gold Line operators at Division 21. The second ceremony, held at Metro Blue Line Division 11, acknowledged the Metro Blue and Green Line operators.

The Gold line graduates are: Calvin Hayes, Aaron Beckett, Katy Bustamante, Glenda Murrell, Charles Grayson, Hilgard Tatum and Thomas Adkins, all of Division 21; and Teresa Haywood, Division 2.

The Blue Line graduates include: Pedro Ayala, Ruben Flores, Felipe Perez, Jun Soliven, all of Division 1; John Cabana, Division 6, Jeffery Fontanez and Rodney Smith, Division 18; and Michael Santillan, Division 2.

During the ceremony, the operators were given their keys, badges and certificates.

"They worked really hard to make it here," says Orleatha Smith, rail instructor and training coordinator. "It's a long road and they sacrificed a lot to make it."

The hiring process for the new rail operators began long before the official 10 weeks of training. Metro requires all rail applicants to have at least two years of experience as a bus operator.

After the employees applied to work as rail operators, a thorough screening process evaluated everything from their safety records to attendance. After making it through the screening process, they had to pass an agility test.

### **10 grueling weeks**

Once the employees were qualified, they began 10 grueling weeks of study, testing and training. Their day began at 6 a.m. and ended at 2 p.m. Each day was important and every test was imperative. The trainee had to pass with a 90 percent average or be dropped from the class.

"It's like going back to school," says Byron England, rail integration and instruction manager. "They were really committed and many of them put their families on hold to complete this."

Traditionally, Metro retains 75 percent of a rail operator training class. This class represents Metro's goals of maintaining qualified candidates to complete the demanding training process.

"We have not only been able to keep all of them, but they are also the highest-scoring class," says Smith. "Some of them only missed two of over 200 questions."

"They are very special," says England. "We want them to know that we appreciate all their hard work."


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## Revamped Metro Store Opens Tuesday with New Merchandise

By SHANTAY IOSIA

(Aug. 13, 2004) The redesigned Metro Store will re-open Tuesday, Aug. 17, with new merchandise and a new design.

The Metro Store's customer service hours will be Monday-Friday 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. It will be closed for lunch from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.

The interior changes include repainted walls, new carpets, revamped signage and restocked fixtures.

Everything from apparel to lunch pails will display the new Metro logo. Metro employees will receive a 20 percent discount from the retail price on all logo gift items. More merchandise is expected to arrive in the weeks following the re-opening.

Danielle Boutier, executive manager, Communications Services, is excited about the changes. "It's a completely different store."

The Metro Store web site will also be available for customers to browse merchandise and check the inventory of discounted tickets. The public will be able to purchase Metro gift items from an external web site beginning in the fall.

The Metro Store will celebrate its reopening by offering refreshments to customers all day Tuesday.




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## 3 Division Construction Projects on Ops Committee Agenda

(Aug. 13, 2004) Metro is planning substantial construction projects at three operating divisions in coming months. Motions to approve the projects will come before the Operations Committee, Aug.19.

The agency wants to build a new transportation and sector office building at San Gabriel Valley Division 9; build repair and car wash facilities and expand parking at Non-Revenue Division 4; and build a vehicle cleaning facility at Metro Green Line Division 22.

In other business, the Planning and Programming Committee will consider a motion to seek LA City Council approval for permanent bus-only lanes on Wilshire Boulevard. The Executive Management and Audit Committee will hear a report on the feasibility of a Metro transit court similar to one operated by New York City's MTA.

**Division 9 Transportation Building, Item 29:** The Operations Committee will consider a motion for approvals needed prior to awarding a contract to build a three-story, 41,891-square foot building to house the Division 9 transportation staff, the San Gabriel Valley Service Sector office and a substation for Sheriff's deputies.

The new offices would be built adjacent to the east side of the El Monte Transit Center parking structure.

Construction of the proposed transportation building, under the supervision of Metro's Facilities Operations Department, is scheduled to begin in December, with a completion date of March 2006.

Construction of the new building is the first phase of a master plan for Division 9. Phase II, currently unfunded but planned for future fiscal years, calls for construction of a new maintenance building, improvements to the Transit Center and expansion of parking to accommodate about 300 CNG buses. Division 9 was built in 1974 and has a current fleet of 192 buses.

**Division 4 Expansion, Item 28:** The Operations Committee will consider a motion to expand Non-Revenue Division 4 by constructing a new repair building with two vehicle maintenance bays, office and storage space, and a new automatic car washer capable of handling an average of 40 cars a day.

An adjacent vacant parcel north of the division would be cleared, paved and striped to expand non-revenue vehicle parking from 258 to

## Board committee meetings

### Planning and Programming

1 p.m., Wednesday, Aug. 18

### Executive Management and Audit

9:30 a.m., Thursday, Aug. 19

### Finance and Budget

10:30 a.m., Thursday, Aug. 19

### Operations

1 p.m., Thursday, Aug. 19

### Construction

no August meeting

500 spaces. The extra parking is needed due to the planned closing of South Park and the consolidation of non-revenue maintenance.

This project, scheduled to begin in October with completion in May 2005, also would be under the supervision of the Facilities Operations Department.

**Metro Green Line Facility, Item 30:** The Operations Committee will consider a motion to construct a vehicle cleaning – or “blow-down” – facility at Metro Green Line Division 22 in Lawndale.

The 3,500 square foot building would accommodate one light-rail car. A pit will provide undercarriage access to the cars so rail maintenance crews can clean the wheel assemblies, components and other parts.

With construction of the “blow-down” facility, Metro Green Line cars can be cleaned at their own division, rather than transferring them to Metro Blue Line Division 11. The project is under the supervision of the Metro Rail’s Wayside Systems Department.

**Wilshire Bus-Only Lanes, Item 9:** The Planning and Programming, and Operations committees will consider a motion to direct the CEO to work with LADOT to obtain City Council approval for permanent bus-only lanes on a one-mile stretch of Wilshire Boulevard west of I-405.

The motion also calls for Metro to evaluate which other Metro Rapid corridors might be appropriate for bus-only lanes.

The Wilshire Boulevard lanes, which have been under study since last March, are showing average bus travel time savings of up to 6 percent in the morning peak period and up to 14 percent during the afternoon peak.

**Metro Transit Court, Item 13:** The Executive Management and Audit Committee will hear a report on a proposed Metro transit court that would rule on citations issued for such transit-related offenses as fare evasion, vandalism and smoking, eating or littering on the Metro Bus and Metro Rail systems.

“The general belief,” says a Board report prepared by Metro Police Chief Capt. Dan Finkelstein, “is that transit matters tend to receive insufficient attention and focus...” from Superior Court judges in 20 different courts who hear a wide variety of matters in LA County.

Over the past six year, according to the Board report, Metro collected \$3.9 million from 309,980 citations issued – an average of \$12.62 per citation.

In 2002, New York City’s MTA – the only property with a transit court – collected \$6.2 million in fines, while spending \$4 million to conduct transit court hearings and collect fines.

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Steve Noonan of Catellus Corp., Metro General Services Director Brian Soto and Jessica Velarde of Five Star Parking discuss the opening, Monday, of the P-4 parking level.



PHOTOS: BILL HEARD

## P-4 Level of Parking Structure Opens to the Public on Monday

By ELIZABETH A. CRAIGG

(Aug. 13, 2004) Having parking woes at Gateway? Help is on the way.

Parking level 4 of the Gateway Center parking structure will reopen, Monday, Aug. 16, to accommodate 200 vehicles in a 70,000 square-foot area.

Parking level 4 was opened for a short time after the Gateway Center was built in 1995. It later was closed to the public to save energy and maintenance costs.

More traffic began to come into the parking structure when the Union Station parking lot was closed for construction of new buildings and AMTRAK and Federal Bureau of Prison employees needed a place to park.

Brian Soto, director of General Services, is excited about the opening of P-4. "This will assist people who are experiencing difficulties with finding parking spaces."

P-4 parkers should use the southwest elevator to reach the East Portal and the Plaza level of Gateway Transit Center.

Due to the construction on the Plaza level, the main entrance and exit to the parking structure currently are closed. The North Vignes, Cesar Chavez and helical entrances and exits to the parking structure remain

in use.

Portions of P-4 will continue to be used as storage space. The north side of that level, however, will remain closed to the public due to minor construction needed to eliminate non-hazardous sulfur that is seeping between the cement and the ground.

The construction and storage areas will be roped off to prohibit use of that area.

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## CEO Offers \$5,000 Reward in Assault on Division 5 Manager

- Seeks arrest and conviction of two assailants
- Extra security measures in place

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Aug. 13, 2004) CEO Roger Snoble has authorized a \$5,000 reward for information that would "lead to the arrest and conviction of the assailants" who attacked the transportation manager at Arthur Winston Division 5 earlier this week.

Two unidentified men entered the transportation building, Wednesday, and burst into the office of Michael Williams-Carr. They beat him, leaving him unconscious.

Williams-Carr, 44, was transported to an area hospital with facial injuries, but later was released. He returned to work on Thursday. Williams-Carr has been employed by Metro since March 2003.

A Metro Security officer has been assigned to the Arthur Winston Division to ensure building security and to challenge strangers.

Since Wednesday's incident, two assistant transportation managers – one at Division 5 and one at another division – have received telephone threats. Additional security also is being provided for these employees.

### 'Very aggressive' investigation

"We're going to be very aggressive in pursuing every aspect of this case," said Snoble. "We're not going to tolerate this kind of behavior."

Sheriff's Lt. Leo Norton said Transit Services Bureau investigators are reviewing videotapes and contacting witnesses in hopes of identifying suspects in the assault on Williams-Carr and the threats against the other two employees.

The CEO said Metro plans to expand the security camera network to include more areas around the operating divisions. Grant money is available to install video surveillance systems.

In a memo to the Board of Directors, Snoble said a reward program policy has been drafted for presentation to the Board in September. The policy would establish guidelines for offering rewards for information about crimes against Metro employees or property.



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San Fernando Valley General Manager David Armijo (center) joins Division 8 Maintenance Manager Jim Pachan (left), Transportation Manager Maria Reynolds (center) and their team, August 10, to celebrate being the best division in FY '04.



PHOTO: ERIC RAPP

## Division 8 is Doin' Great as Division of the Year

BY JESSICA TYERMAN

(August 17, 2004) After winning in both the second and third quarters of FY 2004, what team better deserves to be named the Division of the Year?

West Valley Division 8 Maintenance and Transportation claims the title. The team won the "How You Doin'?" award for Outstanding Division of FY 2004.

This is the first year the annual award was given jointly to an entire division. The transportation and maintenance teams will split the \$2,000 reward.

"We have a great group of people," says Transportation Manager Maria Reynolds. "We work together very well."

### First in cleanliness

Division 8 ranked first in cleanliness and third in reducing new Worker's Compensation claims.

"This is recognition of all of the employees and all the hard work that they do in maintaining the buses' excellent condition and keeping them the cleanest in the agency," says Jim Pachan, Maintenance Manager.

The division also excelled in the Running Hot category, finishing in first place, for staying on schedule and not leaving stops too early.

"We're very proud of our employees," says Reynolds. "They work very hard to maintain the great work and performance that we do every day. It's fantastic they're being recognized for their achievements."

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San Gabriel Valley General Manager Jack Gabig (4th from left), together with Division 9 Transportation Manager Mike Greenwood (center) and the division's employees met for the presentation of their third "How You Doin'?" award in the last seven months.



## Division 9 Keeps Up the Pace in June's 'How You Doin'

BY JESSICA TYERMAN

(August 17, 2004) El Monte Division 9 Transportation won June's "How You Doin'?" award for Outstanding Transportation Division. This is the third award the division has received in the last seven months.

"We're still trying to keep pace with Division 3," said Division 9 Transportation Manager Mike Greenwood, referring to the counterpart team in Cypress Park under the management of Dan Frawley. Division 3 won the award for the last six months.

Division 9 had the lowest accident rate in the agency at only 2.21 accidents per 100,000 miles. The division has reached about 40 days without a lost workday injury.

The division also took seconds in the Worker's Compensation Claims and Running Hot categories.

"Our careful, seasoned operators and outstanding instruction staff have embraced the new Safe Driving VTT Program which has stressed avoiding accidents," says Greenwood.


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## El Monte Busway, Metrolink Projects Will Affect Commutes

(Aug. 17, 2004) Reconstruction projects starting later this month will impact commuter service on the El Monte Busway and on Metrolink's San Bernardino line.

Caltrans plans to resurface almost six miles of the Busway between the I-710 and Mission Street in Los Angeles. The \$1.6 million project is expected to begin Friday, Aug. 27, and could continue until Dec. 13, according to Resident Engineer Anthony Kim.

Metrolink plans to replace 27,000 wooden ties with concrete crossties along an 11-mile stretch of track between El Monte and the Los Angeles River.

Work on the \$5.88 million project, which will be restricted to weekends, begins Friday night, Aug. 20, and will last for eight weekends, ending in mid-October. The east- and westbound carpools on the I-10 also will be closed during weekend work hours.

No work on the project is scheduled over the Labor Day weekend, Sept. 4 - 5.

## Regular weekday service

Metrolink will continue to operate regular service on the San Bernardino line Monday through Friday. Beginning Aug. 21, Metrolink will provide bus service between Union Station and the El Monte Transit Center.

Resurfacing work on the El Monte Busway project will be done at night and on weekends. It will begin at 10 p.m. on weeknights and will wrap up at 4 a.m. the next morning. On weekends, the busway will be closed from 10 p.m. on Fridays until 4 a.m. on Mondays.

Signs in English and Spanish detailing times for the resurfacing work will be posted at the entrance of the Busway at Alameda Street, at County-USC Medical Center, at Cal State LA and at the El Monte Transit Center.

During the resurfacing, the El Monte Transit Center will remain open, but Metro Buses won't have access to County-USC Medical Center or to the Cal State LA bus station. Buses will operate on the freeway during the work periods.

Metro Bus Lines 484, 485, 487, 489 and 490 will be affected by the Busway work and patrons can expect some delays.

Foothill Transit Lines 480, 482 and 486 will be affected on weekdays between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m., while Line 480 will be impacted on weekends. Foothill Transit buses will not serve the Cal State LA or the County-USC stations during resurfacing work periods.

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## Revamped Metro Store Opens for Business

New web address: [http://intranet1/metro\\_store](http://intranet1/metro_store)



- Longer daily hours
- New line of merchandise

Property Maintainer Jojo Ocampo made the very first purchase – a Metro logo shirt – from Intern Kenitra McCovery, Tuesday morning, in the newly reopened Metro Store. Store hours are 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Friday. The store is closed for lunch from 12:30 until 1:30 p.m.

Administrative Analyst Karen Kern checks out the Metro Store's line of logo coffee mugs. In the foreground are new insulated lunch bags. Metro employees will receive a 20 percent discount from the retail price on all logo gift items. More merchandise is expected to arrive soon.



Having a look at the new logo merchandise in the Metro Store are Luz Garcia, assistant administrative analyst, and Rick Owens, contract administrator. The store also has a small stock of candy, greeting cards, pen sets and other merchandise. Discounted event tickets also are available.

Graphic Designers Theresa Renn and Melissa Rosen admire the Metro posters in the refurbished lobby of the Metro Store. Other interior changes include repainted walls, new carpets, revamped signage and restocked fixtures.



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PHOTO: SHANTAY IOSIA



Division 2 service attendants Glenn Lujan, left, and Samuel Williams, right, here with Maintenance Manager Donnell Harris, earned certificates of appreciation for their quick response in catching a purse snatcher.

### Division 2's Williams and Lujan Chase Down a Purse Snatcher

- Celestine Johnson got her purse and keys back

By SHANTAY IOSIA

(Aug. 18, 2004) "Keeping an eye out" was all it took for Crossroads Depot Division 2 service attendants Samuel Williams and Glenn Lujan to prevent a bad situation from getting worse.

It all started about 4 a.m., Sunday, July 25, when Metro Bus Operator Celestine Johnson parked her car and headed into the Division 2 transportation building. Before she could make it in, a man rushed past her and snatched her purse and keys.

Williams, who was some distance away, saw the incident and moved toward Johnson. As he got closer, he noticed her entering the yard, distraught over her loss.

Johnson briefly explained what happened and Williams made sure she was safe before starting after the purse snatcher. He motioned for Lujan and they both went after the stolen purse.

#### 'Didn't have time to think'

"It happened so quick. We really didn't have time to think," Lujan says. "I just knew that if we called the cops they would have never made it on time."

Williams and Lujan caught up to the culprit farther down the street and yelled for the man to return the purse. After a few loud exchanges, the man dropped the purse and ran.

The two men returned the purse to a grateful Johnson. "After that, I went right back to work," Lujan says.

Division 2 Maintenance Manager Donnell Harris says it was the first time an employee had been attacked.

**'Always that danger'**

"When you're out here after 10 p.m. and before 4 a.m. it's eerie, but when you've worked here so long you get used to it," Harris says. "But, it doesn't take away from the fact that there's always that danger around the corner."

CEO Roger Snoble says Metro plans to use grant money to install video surveillance systems at the operating divisions.

In the meantime, Harris says that although Metro is a big agency, it feels more like family and he knows that employees will help each other out in times of need.

"These two gentlemen are the epitome of some of the people we have around here," he says of Samuel Williams and Glenn Lujan.

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San Fernando Valley General Manager David Armijo (center left) with Division 15 Maintenance Manager John Roberts (center), and proud team display their hard-earned "How You Doin'?" trophy.



## Hard Work Pays Off for Division 15 Maintenance

BY JESSICA TYERMAN

(August 18, 2004) East Valley Division 15 Maintenance won June's "How You Doin'?" award for Outstanding Maintenance Division.

"This is a very significant achievement for Maintenance Division 15," says Maintenance Manager John Roberts. "It took 100 percent involvement from all the employees to compete with the other 10 divisions and be selected as the top division for the month of June."

Division 15 ranked high in several categories during June. The team placed first in the number of new Workers' Compensation claims filed and ranked second in attendance and miles between mechanical failures.

General Manager David Armijo visited the division, Aug. 12, to present the team's trophy. Approximately 60 employees from the first and second shifts attended the presentation.



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San Gabriel Valley General Manager Jack Gabig (center), together with Division 3 Transportation Manager Dan Frawley (center right), Maintenance Manager William Grunwald (left) and the entire team to honor them as recipients of two impressive "How You Doin'?" awards.



## Division 3 Shows Improvement in 'How You Doin'?' Win

BY JESSICA TYERMAN

(August 18, 2004) North Los Angeles Division 3 came a long way this year, receiving two significant "How You Doin'?" awards.

The Division's transportation and maintenance teams earned the "How You Doin'?" Most Improved Division award for FY 2004 and Best Division award for the fourth quarter of FY 2004.

Together, the awards amounted to \$3,000, which was presented in two big checks, Aug. 9. Each department, transportation and maintenance, will receive \$1,500.

"It was great having the trophy here for six months in a row, but I have to say that the check for \$3,000 looks even better," says Transportation Manager Dan Frawley. "We appreciate the recognition."

Division 3 showed improvement in three categories during FY 2004. The division had cleaner buses, fewer new Workers' Compensation claims, and lower accident rates from the prior year.

### 'Particularly proud'

"I am particularly proud of the 'Most Improved – FY 2004' award," says Maintenance Manager William Grunwald. "The employees at Division 3 have worked hard to overcome many difficult challenges over the past year. These efforts are now beginning to show results."

For the fourth quarter of FY 2004, both transportation and maintenance ranked first in having the fewest number of new Workers' Compensation claims.

The division also had the second-best in-service, on-time performance at 72.61 percent, the third-fewest complaints per 100,000 boardings (2.84), and the fourth-most miles between mechanical failures with

9,347.

"This has been a team effort where everyone has contributed," says Grunwald. "My thanks go out to the Division 3 employees."

"I congratulate all of our employees – Maintenance and Transportation – for a spectacular job," says Frawley. "It's a team concept here at Division 3 and we enjoy working together to provide the best possible service to our customers."

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Pictured with one of Metro's new heavy-duty tow trucks are, from left, Welder Frank Hernandez, Welder Rene Perez, Machinist Manuel Macias, Welder Doug Campbell, Sheetmetal Machinist Art Martinez, Welder Jamie Cover, Welding Leadsman Phil Martinez, Welder Jeff Barton, Sheetmetal Supervisor Robert Kang, Machinist Fred Wenzel and Machinist Chris Patrizio. Not Pictured are Machinist Terry Diederichs, Quality Assurance Technician Paul Rankin, Mechanical Engineer Dale Zielinski and Equipment Instructor Walt Graham.



### Quality Assurance Recognizes Team of RRC Craftsmen

(Aug. 18, 2004) The Quality Assurance Department has given special recognition to a team of Regional Rebuild Center craftsmen.

The team engineered specifications and is manufacturing 12 sets of lift adapters that will permit Metro tow trucks to more easily and safely tow any bus in the fleet.

"With these adapters, which are specific to each type of bus," says Equipment Maintenance Superintendent Mike Stange, "our mechanics can hook up securely. And, we'll have more lifting and towing options."

PHOTO: BILL HEARD

The adapter devices – which can provide wheel, axel and conventional chain lift – are constructed of heavy metal. The metal is specially cut and welded to fit the tow truck lifting arms and the attachment points on the different types of buses.

Project Engineer Dale Zielinski and Warranty Equipment Mechanic Paul Rankin designed and developed the adapters, which are now being built by

the team of highly skilled welders, machinists and sheet metal technicians.

The specially made adapters are required because the tow truck manufacturer provides only a standard tow bracket.

Deputy Executive Officer Milo Victoria of Central Maintenance recently presented a plaque to the team to recognize their work.



The adapter devices designed and manufactured by the team are attached to a tow truck's lifting arm like the one pictured.


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## Exercise Shows Employees What to do When Train De-Rails

(Aug. 19, 2004) When a Metro Rail car goes off the tracks, what do you do? Metro Gold Line employees answered that question, recently, during a mock derailment exercise.

The scenario: A single car train entering the yard runs over a large piece of wood that has fallen off a truck crossing an overpass. It derails near a switch.

First, a transportation team investigated the "accident." Next, the Traction Power crew went to work, locking out and grounding the overhead contact wire.

The Rail Fleet Services group then moved in to lift the front of the train, which weighs about 25,000 pounds, and move it with specially designed hydraulic jacks.

### Keeping the car level

Large body jacks, meanwhile, were deployed at the sides of the car to keep it level during the simulated re-railing.

To move the car back onto the rails, the crew used an aluminum re-railing "bridge" supplemented with hardwood blocks. The main support jack is fitted with a moveable carriage equipped with a hydraulic displacement jack that allowed the crew to move the car sideways.

The entire re-railing process takes about two hours. Rail Fleet Services Senior Instructor Russell

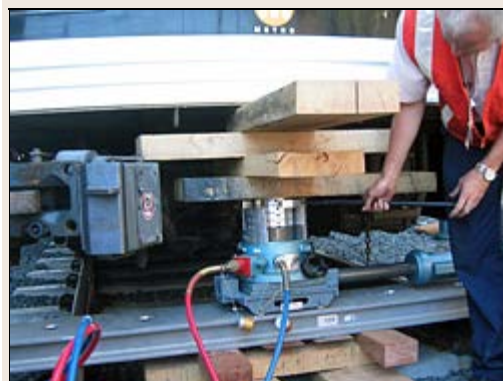
PHOTOS: DUANE MARTIN AND RUSSELL BRADSHAW



The Metro Gold Line team practices repositioning a train during a derailment exercise.



Maintenance Specialist Randy Mittan signals to the operator of the hydraulic jack as the Metro Gold Line train is set back on the tracks.



Senior Instructor Russel Homan demonstrates how to raise a 66-ton multistage jack during the derailment exercise. Hardwood blocks are used to increase the lift of the jack, which is mounted on a roller carriage that allows the car to be moved sideways.



Homan supervised the procedure.

Participating in the re-railing exercise were Dave Bonzell, Robert Dimerin, Jason Lam, Sonny Dang, Randy Mittan, Thanapon Satit, Sean Lopez, Steven Dang, Henry Ponce, Russell Bradshaw and Ernie Campos.

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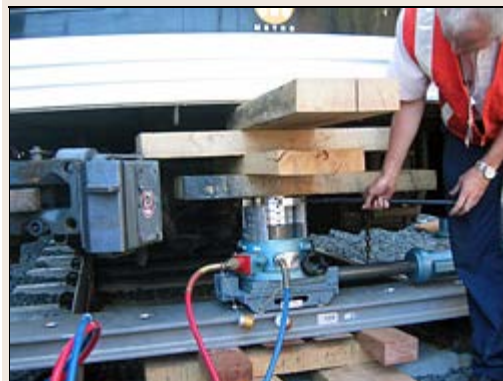
PHOTOS: DUANE MARTIN AND RUSSELL BRADSHAW



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## Metro's 'Best Friend' to Retire

- Working alongside sight-impaired programmer analyst Agustin Moreno, Guide Dog Liza has put in 5 years at Metro. In dog years, we're talking 35 years of being happy at your job.

By GAYLE ANDERSON

August 19, 2004 - She's Liza with a z, and an aging but timeless beauty. She has four legs, a wet nose, an industrial-strength harness and a demure but regal manner. Liza, guide dog extraordinaire and constant companion of programmer analyst Agustin Moreno, is retiring from service on Friday.

Now 12 years old, Liza is slowing down. "She is still very good, but her responsiveness is declining and she is getting tired," says Moreno. Next week, he will interview a couple of candidates from the Guide Dog organization that originally provided Liza 11 years ago.

"When I come back to work, I'll be with a new dog," says Moreno.

Parting may be sweet sorrow, and soon Moreno will cross this very emotional bridge. "I'm afraid Liza will have anxieties if another dog begins to take care of me. She will worry about me every time I leave the house without her, even if a new dog is wearing the harness."



Agustin Moreno, above, gets a kiss from Liza, his Guide Dog for 11 years.



Liza gets around: Above, at work with Agustin Moreno...



... working the crowd at Universal City Station

## A happy retirement

Yet, Liza can look forward to a happy retirement. It is likely she will return to her original trainer, Meri Foreman, who raised Liza as a puppy.

Now a Guide Dogs of America executive, Foreman has maintained a special relationship with Liza over the years, even taking care of her, on occasion, when Moreno vacations with his family.

"Of all the dogs she raised for training as a Guide Dog, Liza was her favorite. When Liza passed the Guide Dog test with flying colors, I became the fortunate one to have her in my home and my life."

The sweet-faced yellow Labrador joined Metro when her sight-impaired owner came on board as a programmer analyst in June 1999.

Liza, who proudly wears a Metro ID badge, has contributed to the success of many Metro projects: Among them, working crowd control at the openings of the Metro Red Line to North Hollywood and the Metro Gold Line, as well as frequent guest appearances at community expos where the duo offers transportation advice to sight-impaired and physically-impaired patrons.

## Liza's big break

Liza's big break came when she auditioned for the Operations ADA training video and got the part.

"Liza had three scenes," says co-producer Monique Ramos. "Her job was to teach bus operators how to handle guide dogs."

In the 16-minute video, Liza played a seeing-eye dog waiting for the bus with Moreno and also rode the lift as a service animal in the company of a physically-impaired patron.

During her years at Metro, Liza has made many friends. Once she was crowned a princess, complete with a tiara and a royal jewel



... crowned princess in Risk Management by Alicia Grondin



...and, in a starring role as Guide Dog in Operations ADA training video.



around her neck, as she made the rounds. "We were going down the hall in Risk Management. Always, people love to see her. It's a special occasion."



Picture of Liza as a puppy, above, hangs in Moreno's cubicle.

### Attention never strays

She is also good friends with Deputy Hero, the black Labrador Search & Rescue dog on duty with the Sheriff's Department. "Hero would like to romp on occasion, but Liza always politely declines. She never lets her attention stray from taking care of me," says Moreno.

"We'll miss her," says good friend C.J. Lewis, a senior contract administrator. "When Agustin walks by, she always wants to come to my cubicle and say hello."

Helen Cosner, a senior administrative analyst, is one of many friends stopping by the cubicle that has been Liza's working home for past five years. "I came to say good-bye," she says, "Liza has such a great disposition – always happy."


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TOS Rocque Garcia

## Retiree Rocque Garcia Was All Over Metro

By ERIC RAPP

(Aug. 19, 2004) Rocque Garcia retired in July after 29 and a half years with MTA. During that time, the transportation operations supervisor says he worked in more different positions in just a few years than most people do in their entire career.

Garcia started off as an operator at Venice Division 6. Later, he moved to the rail division, where he participated in the startup of the Metro Red Line, both as an operator and a supervisor.

Moving back to Bus Operations, he worked in several different positions, including his most recent as a transportation operations supervisor at West Valley Division 8 – which he says was the best year out of all those he worked for Metro.

After almost 30 years of work, Garcia is happy to have had a good last year. "I'm going out while I'm still on top," he says.

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Mechanic Larry Jones, yardmaster at Carson Division 18, confronts a variety of mechanical problems during his shift.

## Division 18 Yardmaster Jones Keeps the Buses Rolling

By RICH MORALLO

(Aug. 20, 2004) It's 6:15 a.m. on a recent morning at Carson Division 18's bus yard entrance. Mechanic Larry Jones is nearing the end of his graveyard shift but he is still as busy as he was when he arrived Wednesday night.

A 40-foot TMC diesel bus rolls to a stop at the wheelchair lift test area and the operator opens her door. "Can you check this red light, please?"

Jones enters the bus, determines that it is a transmission problem that will take additional time to further evaluate and repair. He gets the operator a replacement bus. Another bus drives up. "Where's Larry?" shouts the operator.

PHOTOS: RICH MORALLO



Yardmaster Jones helps a Division 18 Metro Bus operator.

## A malfunctioning farebox

Jones walks over and checks the air brake pressure signal. Seconds later a third operator tells Jones about a malfunctioning farebox.

Another job that has to be promptly addressed. "We only have about a couple of minutes per bus to address these last-minute issues," says Jones, who started inspecting the bus fleet for problems eight hours earlier.

Jones is the yardmaster— been doing that at the Metro South Bay division since 1987 when he started assuming the job of launching more than 200 buses into service each morning by 7 a.m. "His is an important job—getting the buses out of the yard and into revenue service," says Assistant Maintenance Manager Tom Whitman. Service for 27 bus lines

The division provides service for 27 bus lines in communities east to Whittier, west to LAX, north to Altadena and south to Long Beach.

"This is challenging, but I like working at Metro—the pay and benefits are good," says Jones, who has 24 1/2 years with the agency and builds computers in his off-time. "I'm mostly checking the buses for safety and that everything is working right."

Jones also ensures that the vehicles are clean of graffiti. "We don't send out dirty buses for the public to ride."

"I need help," shouts out another operator, who is trying to adjust a loose rightside rearview mirror. Jones is at his side in two seconds flat.

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## Caltrans Changes Dates of El Monte Busway Resurfacing Work

- Busway resurfacing begins Wednesday, Aug. 25
- Work on Metrolink's San Bernardino line begins tonight

(Aug. 20, 2004) Caltrans has announced a change in the dates its contractor will begin work on a project to resurface almost six miles of the El Monte Busway between the I-710 and Mission Street in Los Angeles.

Currently, the contractor plans to work on the Busway starting at 10 p.m., Wednesday, Aug. 25, through 4 a.m., Thursday, Aug. 26. Work will continue from 10 p.m., Thursday, Aug. 26, through 4 a.m., Friday, Aug. 27.

No resurfacing work is planned on the weekends of Aug. 20-22, Aug. 27-29 or Sept. 3-5, according to Caltrans Resident Engineer Anthony Kim.

Meanwhile, Metrolink will begin work this weekend on a crosstie replacement project on the San Bernardino line between El Monte and the Los Angeles River.

The work begins at 10 p.m., Friday, Aug. 20, and will close the rail line until noon on Saturday, Aug. 21. The line will be closed again from 8 p.m., Saturday, Aug. 21, until 4 a.m., Monday, Aug. 23.

## I - 10 HOV lane to close

The westbound HOV lane on the I-10 will be closed at 10 a.m., Sunday, Aug. 22, until 4 a.m., Monday, Aug. 23.

Caltrans has only a tentative schedule for further work on the El Monte Busway. The contractor is required to submit lane closure requests only a week in advance of planned resurfacing work.

During the resurfacing, the El Monte Transit Center will remain open, but Metro Buses won't have access to County-USC Medical Center or to the Cal State LA bus station. Buses will operate on the freeway during work periods.

Metro Bus Lines 484, 485, 487, 489 and 490 will be affected by the Busway work and patrons can expect some delays.

Foothill Transit Lines 480, 482 and 486 will be affected on weekdays between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m., while Line 480 will be impacted on weekends. Foothill Transit buses will not serve the Cal State LA or the County-USC stations during resurfacing work periods.







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UCLA Schedules Free Shuttle to Football Home Games

By DAVE SOTERO

(Aug. 20, 2004) UCLA will operate a free shuttle, this fall, to football home games in Pasadena.

The shuttle will run from the Parsons parking lot at 100 West Walnut Street near Pasadena Avenue directly to the Rose Bowl entrance gates.

To catch the shuttle, fans should take the Metro Gold Line to the Memorial Park station, then walk west a couple of blocks down Holly Street to the Parsons lot.

Shuttles to the Rose Bowl will operate continuously starting four hours prior to each game. Return runs from the stadium will continue until the last person leaves at the end of the game.

Metro riders can receive a free UCLA Football Collector's pin when they present a valid Metro fare for the day of the game.

Fans should present the fare at the Advance Sales Booth inside Gate A at the Rose Bowl. Pins are not available for the Dec. 4, 2004 game against USC.

HOME GAME SCHEDULE FOR SHUTTLE SERVICE

9/4	UCLA	vs.	Oklahoma State
10/2	UCLA	vs.	San Diego State
10/9	UCLA	vs.	Arizona
10/30	UCLA	vs.	Stanford
11/6	UCLA	vs.	Washington State
12/4	UCLA	vs.	USC

Ticket info: [www.uclabruins.com](#) or call (310) 825-2946

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PHOTO BY ELIZABETH CRAIGG



Helping plan the new Division 6 are, from left, Benjamin Hi, Derald Wright, Bruce Buck, Miguel Estrada, Jermani Martin, Naren Desai, George Lau, and standing far right, Jesse Guerra and Darryl Henderson.

## Venice Division 6 Employees Help Plan New Division

By ELIZABETH A. CRAIGG

(Aug. 24, 2004) Venice Division 6 employees are participating in the planning of a new operating division proposed for construction in West Los Angeles.

The new division, which would be located on Jefferson Boulevard between National Boulevard and Rodeo Road, would accommodate up to 175 40-foot buses on a 4.66-acre site. The division also will be configured to accommodate articulated buses.

The new division, which would be about 50 percent larger than the 3.13-acre Venice location, would be Metro's first 100 percent CNG operating division. The current Division 6 has no CNG capability.

Project Manager Tim Lindholm lists a few reasons why the Venice location is relocating. "It's old, too small to hold an adequate number of buses, there is no CNG fueling facility, and it's not very accessible."

The division planning team consists of three maintenance and three transportation managers, Metro engineers and architects, the developer and their architect.

The managers discuss ideas with the Division 6 employees, receive input and report to the team of designers with the employees' comments.

### 'Making the job easier'

"Talking with the crew about the design of the new division has also helped with making the job easier, so that the new structure complies with what they are doing," says Assistant Maintenance Manager Bruce Buck.

Buck posted the plans at the division so employees could offer their

suggestions. "Virtually every part of the design came from the employees," he says.

"In designing and building a brand new and state-of-the-art facility for the first time in over 20 years, we really felt that the employees who actually work there would offer the most valuable insights into how it should be designed," says Lindholm. "We're trying to incorporate the vast amount of expertise available from our staff at the divisions into the design and construction of this project."

With the design project 30 percent completed, Lindholm expects the Environmental Impact Report to be presented to the Board of Directors in early 2005.

"Everyone is excited about a new facility because everyone has had a lot of input into building a better facility," says Buck.

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On hand to receive their special retirement gifts were Division 8 retirees Garland Claybourne, left, and Louis Fontanez, second from right. UTU representative Victor Baffoni and Transportation Manager Maria Reynolds presented the gifts. Not shown are retirees Charles Yurko and Franklyn Cooke.



PHOTO BY ERIC RAPP

## Four Division 8 Retirees Combine a Century of Experience

By ERIC RAPP

(Aug. 24, 2004) Four West Valley Division 8 bus operators retired recently, taking with them almost exactly 100 years of experience and hard work.

Operators Louis Fontanez, Garland Claybourne, Charles Yurko, and Franklyn Cooke retired in August, and Division 8 held a small celebration for the retirees.

Each retiree who attended was presented with a bus stop sign printed with their name and badge number, a "Notice of Cancellation of Service" plaque, a scroll bearing the signatures of many of their coworkers, and a Division 8 ballcap.

United Transportation Union representative Victor Baffoni also presented the retirees with a jacket from the union embroidered with their name.

Says Division Manager Maria Reynolds, "they've all worked hard to get where they are, and they deserve to retire and relax."

Retiree Louis Fontanez agrees, and he says he's already been enjoying his retirement. "I get to sleep late every morning."





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PHOTO BY RICH MORALLO



Community Relations Officer  
Vicky Woods, left, and her  
best friend, Division 18  
Operator Meka Stokes, are  
reunited as Metro employees.

## A Metro Reunion 14 Years in the Making

By RICH MORALLO

(Aug. 24, 2004) Meka Stokes and Vicky Woods had a reunion, recently, although they never really strayed apart.

"Meka, my best friend since third grade, just started with Metro as a bus operator at Carson Division 18," says Woods, a community relations officer. It was a Metro reunion that was 14 years in the making.

"I tried to get Meka to join the agency in 1990 when I started here," says Woods, who works on the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension project.

### Met in the third grade

But Stokes was happy with her job in Rancho Dominguez and stayed put. "We were seven years old in the third grade at Miramonte Elementary when we first met," she says.

The two grew up in the same South Central neighborhood, and went to Edison Junior High and Fremont High School together.

Recalls Woods, "We lived one block from each other for years, walked to school and caught the same bus to Fremont High. We even had a favorite bus operator on San Pedro Line 48, named Eric, so actually Metro has been in our lives even before we knew we would land jobs here."

Stokes and Woods had their children around the same time, and Stokes is the godmother of Woods's younger son.

### 'Remained really close'

"We have always remained really close, celebrating birthdays, baby showers and holidays together," Woods says. Stokes, who decided to

join Metro for a better and more reliable career and has just finished bus operator training, agrees.

Years ago, when she was really young, her grandmother told her that Woods was her only real close friend. "I was too young to understand then, but today I completely appreciate my grandmother's words," Stokes says.

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Congresswoman Linda Sanchez speaks to an audience of seniors during a recent event at Los Cerritos Mall.



### **Metro Educates Seniors at Congresswoman Sanchez' Cerritos Senior Fair**

(Aug. 24, 2004) The Gateway Cities Service Sector and Metro's executive staff teamed up, recently, to participate in Congresswoman Linda Sanchez' second annual Senior Fair at the Los Cerritos Mall. Sector staff also participated in last year's inaugural event.

More than 500 seniors attended the event and received a variety of information from almost 50 exhibitors at the fair.

Metro's exhibit booth was staffed by ADA Compliance Officer Chip Hazen and Dave Hershenson, Gateway Cities community relations manager.

"This event offers a great opportunity to talk about Metro and the services we can provide to our senior citizens and to receive input on our system from current and potential customers," said Hazen.

"It was an excellent opportunity to educate a number of people who are interested in riding Metro, but don't know how to use the system," said Hershenson.

Distributing route and system maps, Metro Bus and Metro Rail guides and other informational literature, and explaining how to use metro.net and 1-800-COMMUTE, "gives seniors the tools they need to utilize our Metro system for their travels throughout L.A. County," he added.

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DonCosta Seawell, far right, helped plant 6,875 vegetable gardens for the people of Botswana.



### Food for Botswana: Metro's Seawell Helps Plant 'Never Ending Gardens'

By SHANTAY IOSIA

(Aug. 25, 2004) A year ago, DonCosta Seawell, a senior contract administrator, never imagined he would travel to an underdeveloped country to offer unsolicited help to unsuspecting people.



DonCosta Seawell

But, on June 24, Seawell – along with 83 members of Faith Community Church of West Covina – boarded a plane to begin a journey to Botswana, a South African nation.

The volunteers donated their time and each raised a minimum of \$3000 to participate in "Never Ending Gardens," a program initiated to assist a nation struggling to subsist.

The goal, as envisioned by Bruce Wilkinson, author of the devotional book, "The Prayer of Jabez," was to plant individual vegetable gardens that could feed families for an extended period of time.

### Vitamin-rich plants

The 4-by-4-foot plots of a dozen nutritious and vitamin-rich spinach and cabbage plants, once mature, can feed a household of three to five for about six months. That's because, rather than harvesting the entire plant at once, the families pick the leaves and use them in salads, soups or stews.

Working in pairs, the volunteers



moved through the neighborhoods of Gaborone, the capital of Botswana. Equipped with seedlings, picks, shovels and rakes, they offered to break up and till the hard, dry soil and plant gardens – one for about every three people.

Each team, often helped by neighborhood people, could till and plant 40 vegetable gardens a day. By the end of their four-day mission, the 84-member team had planted 6,875 gardens, lifting the spirits of many families.

"It was the most strenuous, back-breaking thing I have ever done," Seawell says. "But it was all worth it, to see the smiles on their faces. I walked away feeling more blessed than they were."

The unrelenting spread of AIDS throughout Botswana has made it more difficult for the residents to tolerate the famine and resource shortages they have grown accustomed to.

### Too weak to endure

With 47 percent of the population living on less than \$2 a day and 40 percent suffering from AIDS/HIV, many are too weak to endure, or too sickly to harvest food. Botswana loses about 75 lives a day and estimates five infections per hour.

"People built cinderblock homes, used outhouses and did their laundry outside in tubs," Seawell says. "It was pretty bad. The homeless with the worst circumstances in Los Angeles have better living conditions than those in Botswana."

Although the conditions were substandard, Seawell says he doesn't feel sorry for the people of Botswana because of the abundance of joy that surrounded them.

"For the first time in my life, Botswana is at the top of my list of places I'd like to visit," he says. "They have very little, but there is so much to love."



Above, training session demonstrates how to plant the gardens. Below, church members Steve and Deanna till the hard, dry soil.



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Hundreds of walkers participate in the American Heart Association's annual Heart Walk Los Angeles.



## Get 'Metro Fit': Volunteers Needed for Upcoming Fitness Events

By DAVE SOTERO

[Heart Walk L.A.](#)

[Long Beach Marathon](#)

[Metro Fit](#)

(Aug. 25, 2004) Are you into physical fitness and looking for a new fitness challenge? Want to represent Metro in three upcoming fitness events in the Los Angeles and Long Beach areas?

Metro's Public Relations and Communications Departments are now forming Metro Fitness teams for three high profile fitness events: Heart Walk Los Angeles 2004, scheduled Sept. 11-18; the Long Beach Marathon on Sunday, Oct. 10; and Metro's own Fitness Campaign, "Metro Fit," also scheduled for October.

## Heart Walk Los Angeles

More than 15,000 walkers are expected to participate in this year's Heart Walk Los Angeles, sponsored by the American Heart Association.

The event will feature five fitness walks throughout Los Angeles to raise funds for lifesaving research and education programs. The Heart Association's mission is to fight heart disease and stroke, the Number 1 and Number 3 killers in America.

The Heart Association will stage a 5K fitness walk in downtown Los Angeles, Wednesday, Sept. 15, at 5 p.m. The event will also include a Wellness Festival with health screenings, free food, giveaways, music and fun.

Employees interested in raising funds for Heart Walk can register online at [www.heartwalkla.org](http://www.heartwalkla.org).

## **Long Beach Marathon**

The Oct. 10 Long Beach Marathon will include opportunities to participate in any or all of the following events:

- Full Marathon
- Half Marathon
- Inline skating Marathon
- Bike Tour
- 5 K Run
- Finish Line Festival

More than 30,000 will be participate in this year's marathon – the most scenic in Southern California. Most of marathon will be near or within view of the ocean.

Metro employees interested in participating in the Long Beach Marathon event as a corporate team runner, Oct. 10, should contact Fran Curbello, Metro Communications, at 922-5608. The Long Beach Marathon can be contacted directly at 562-728-8829 or by logging onto [www.runlongbeach.com](http://www.runlongbeach.com) and registering online for other participation activities.

## **Metro Fit**

Metro's Public Relations Department is also planning a fitness campaign that utilizes public transportation, and is looking for employees who usually walk during lunch for a special mid-day media event.

A group of Metro walkers will take a short tour of downtown Los Angeles in an effort to "lose pounds, save money and discover Los Angeles." This event is currently scheduled for early October.

If you are interested in joining a Metro walking team for the Heart Walk Los Angeles or Metro Fit media events, contact Dave Sotero, Metro Public Relations, at 922-3007.


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## Work on Eastside Extension Begins in Boyle Heights Area

- Relocation of utility lines is first step

By JOSÉ UBALDO

(Aug. 26, 2004) In preparation for tunneling on the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension, construction workers this week began relocation of utilities in the vicinity of First Street between Gless and Bailey streets in the Boyle Heights area.

Construction crews are excavating trenches to relocate sanitary sewer lines, storm drains and water distribution pipelines and will continue this work for approximately four months.

Work hours are from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday, with intermittent work at First and Boyle on weekends. The six-mile light rail project will cost \$890 million and is due to begin service in late 2009.

Also, during this period, turning restrictions will apply off the southbound and northbound off-ramps on First Street from time to time. The northbound off ramp may also be closed intermittently.

## Lane Closures

While the streets will never be fully closed, there will be intermittent lane closures for eastbound and westbound traffic on First Street between Gless and Bailey Streets and for northbound and southbound lanes on Boyle Avenue between Pennsylvania and Third Street.

Besides lane closures, there will be parking restrictions to allow safe access for the construction crews and to keep the public safe and traffic moving as much as possible.

There will be periodic relocations of bus stops in and around the intersection of First Street and Boyle Avenue. These relocations will result in moving the stops a few feet north, south, east or west from their existing locations.

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Want to know more about the Belgian Malinois? Follow this link to the American Belgian Malinois Club Internet home page:

<http://www.breedclub.org/ABMC.htm>



Canine  
'Deputy' Kona  
and Sheriff's  
Deputy David  
Cervantes on  
a routine  
patrol aboard  
a Metro Gold  
Line train.

## New 'Deputy Dog' on the Job for Transit Services Bureau

- Kona is sniffing out crime on the Metro System

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Aug. 26, 2004) An energetic new "deputy" with the loyalty of a German Shepherd and the speed of a greyhound is now on the job helping sniff out wrongdoers on the Metro System.

Kona, a two-year-old Belgian Malinois (MAL-in-wah), joined the Sheriff's Transit Services Bureau recently and, under the guidance of partner Deputy David Cervantes, already is taking a bite out of crime.

Trained to detect the presence of firearms, in the past two weeks she has helped Cervantes confiscate three pellet guns from juveniles. And, even though she's not a narco dog, her mere presence has led to six drug-possession arrests on the Metro Blue and Green Lines.

PHOTOS: BILL HEARD

Kona provides "an extra level of protection for our customers and for our employees," says CEO Roger Snoble, who greeted the dog and her master in his office this week. "Dogs have some





CEO Roger Snoble greets Kona and her partner, Sheriff's Deputy David Cervantes, in his office.

talents people simply don't have and teaming those talents up with the talents of our deputies gives us a lot more security."

### **10 weeks of training**

Cervantes and Kona participated in 10 weeks of intensive weapons detection training before being assigned to duty. Their patrols begin in the

afternoon and continue until the early morning hours – the period when criminal activity is at its height.

The 10-hour shifts are long for both man and dog, and Cervantes has to be aware of when Kona needs to eat, take a break or relieve herself.

"It's very taxing on the dog to do searches," he says. "Actually, it's 15 times more exertion for her during detection work than when she's not working."

### **Expand canine squad**

Metro Police Chief Capt. Dan Finkelstein would like to have more patrol dogs on the force. He plans to expand the canine squad over the next few months.

The investment in what is proving to be an effective law enforcement team is small, he says.

The outlay for Kona and the training she and Cervantes received was just over \$9,000. It cost another \$1,300 to convert the deputy's patrol car to carry the dog. In addition, Cervantes receives a small stipend for dog food and veterinary care.

"They're a great crime prevention tool, but they're also a good community relations tool," Finkelstein says of the deputy and his canine partner. "It's good for our riders to see Dave and the dog on the rail lines. It sends a message that, if you're a law-abiding patron, we want you on our system and want you to be safe. If you're a criminal, you need to go elsewhere."


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## Sector Governance Councils Set September Meetings

By RICK JAGER

(Aug. 26, 2004) Service Sector governance councils have announced their monthly public meetings for September.

The following is a list of governance council meeting times and locations:

- San Fernando Valley: Wednesday, Sept. 1, 6:30 p.m., Marvin Braude Constituent Service Center Community Room, 6262 Van Nuys Boulevard, Van Nuys.
- Westside/Central: Thursday, Sept. 2, 3 p.m., La Cienega Tennis Center, Sunset Room, 325 S. La Cienega Blvd., Beverly Hills.
- Gateway Cities: Thursday, Sept. 9, 2 p.m., The Gas Company, 9240 Firestone Blvd., Downey.
- South Bay: Friday, Sept. 10, 9:30 a.m., Carson Community Center, 801 E. Carson St., Carson.
- San Gabriel Valley: Tuesday, Sept. 14, 5 p.m., San Gabriel Sector Office, 3369 Santa Anita Avenue, El Monte.


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## CEO Orders Work to Resume on Metro Orange Line

- A dozen uncompleted intersections are 'immediate focus'

(Aug. 26, 2004) "As of this morning, we have removed the 'stop work' order on the Metro Orange Line construction," CEO Roger Snoble reported at Thursday's Board of Directors meeting. "The contractor will be back on the job this afternoon and fully remobilized by next week."

Snoble said contractor Shimmick-Obayashi's "immediate focus" will be on completing 11 intersections left unfinished following the Aug. 2 stay ordered by the Court of Appeal.

The \$330 million project has been on hold for 24 days, leaving an uncompleted construction site that stretches from the North Hollywood Metro Rail station 14 miles west to Warner Center.

"It is essential that this project resume as quickly as possible," said Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, whose district encompasses the construction area. "It's costing \$70,000 a day to have this work stoppage and exposure of literally \$100 million dollars or more if (construction is) suspended for any length of time."

He asked Snoble to report in September on the possibility of compensating merchants whose businesses were impacted by construction prior to the work stoppage.

As construction is set to resume, attorneys for the agency will proceed with an appeal to the California Supreme Court. The high court will be asked to overturn a Court of Appeal ruling requiring the agency to study the Metro Rapid system as an alternative to the Metro Orange Line.

That issue was not included in the original Environmental Impact Report (EIR) because the Metro Rapid was only a pilot project when the EIR was being written. The study could take as long as nine months.


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## Special Master Says 'No' to Consent Decree Extension

(Aug. 27, 2004) The Special Master overseeing the federal Consent Decree has denied a motion by the Bus Riders Union to extend the decree for another six years.

In a document released late Thursday, Donald Bliss wrote that "with more than two years remaining in the initial ten-year (decree), the BRU at this time has not met its burden of establishing...that extension of the Decree is necessary or appropriate...."

The Special Master added that, while the BRU "has not met its burden of proof," Metro also has not yet met required bus passenger load factor targets or achieved a new service plan.

But he wrote that the most recent quarterly reports "show that some progress has been made, but much work remains to be done."

### BRU can refile motion

Bliss said the BRU could refile its extension motion between Sept. 1, 2005 and May 1, 2006, if "sufficient progress has not been made by the MTA in meeting the requirements of the Decree...."

Signed by the BRU and Metro in 1996, the Consent Decree is currently due to expire Oct. 29, 2006.

Noting that Metro has service requirements to meet by Dec. 31, 2004 and June 30, 2005, Bliss said it is "premature for the Special Master to reach any final conclusion on the MTA's compliance with the load factor targets...."

He pointed out that Metro and the BRU have not been able to reach agreement on a new service plan. He said the BRU had failed to show how fare increases violated the terms of the Consent Decree.

## MTA Statement in Response to the Special Master's Ruling

Issued: August 27, 2004

**By Frank Roberts**  
**MTA Board Chair**

MTA is proud of the accomplishments that have been made over the years to improve the Metro Bus System. MTA applauds the recent decision by Special Master Donald T. Bliss to reject a bid by the Bus Riders Union to extend the current 10-year consent decree past its October 2006 deadline.

We believed all along that we were making great progress in addressing overcrowding on the bus system by adding hundreds of buses into service and developing new Metro services for the transit dependent.

As Chair, I pledge to continue to improve our services and remain confident that once the federal consent decree is over, patrons of the Metro Bus System will be pleased with all that has been done by MTA to improve Metro Bus service.





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PHOTOS: SHANTAY IOSIA



Historic Angels Flight cars *Olivet* and *Sinai* are stored on special stands at Metro Rail Division 20.

## A Century of History is Stored at Metro Rail Division 20

By SHANTAY IOSIA

- Angels Flight cars await return to service on Bunker Hill.

(August 27, 2004) More than a century of Los Angeles transportation history is being preserved at Metro Red Line Division 20.

The two cars of the Angels Flight Railway, a funicular railway originally built on Bunker Hill in downtown Los Angeles in 1901, are being stored temporarily at Division 20.

The two railcars, *Olivet* and *Sinai*, for many years ascended and descended Bunker Hill along a right-of-way adjacent to Hill Street at the northern entrance to the Metro Red Line's Pershing Square station.

An accident in early 2001 badly damaged the two historic cars and forced temporary closure of Angels Flight. Subsequently, the cars were restored and housed



at a warehouse on 6th Street – until this year – when a new owner bought the warehouse to convert it into residential loft housing.

Manuel Precie, Metro Rail assistant rail fleet services manager, stands at the bottom entrance to a funicular car.

### **Needed temporary storage**

This summer, John H. Welborne, president of the Angels Flight Railway Foundation, and other supporters contacted CEO Roger Snoble to seek a temporary resting place for the cars.

"We were happy to accommodate their needs," says Manuel Precie, Metro Rail assistant rail fleet services manager. "It goes in conjunction with the Metro Red Line and making history. Having old and new vehicles in such proximity is like having the past with the future."

*Olivet* and *Sinai*, named after biblical mountains, now rest on special 33-degree angled stands awaiting the day of their return to their sloping home near the corner of 4<sup>th</sup> and Hill Streets.

Metro anticipates remaining as the cars' temporary host for about 10 to 12 more months.

The Angels Flight funicular was built by an entrepreneur at the beginning of the 20th Century to connect the affluent residential community at the top of Bunker Hill with the commercial district along Hill, Broadway, Spring, and Main Streets at the bottom.

### **Operated for 68 years**

Angels Flight operated for 68 years and was dismantled and temporarily stored during the redevelopment of Bunker Hill in the 1970s and 80s.

Following Angels Flight's reopening in 1996, the Railway became an important part of the resurgence of 21st Century Bunker Hill and downtown Los Angeles. After 1996, the historic cars were transporting more than 60,000 passengers monthly along their 298-foot long incline, leading to the Flight's nickname as "Shortest Railway in the World."

The historic Railway is now owned and operated by the nonprofit Angels Flight Railway Foundation.

"Angels Flight is truly beloved by the community," says Welborne. "Throughout its 104-year history, whenever there has been discussion of the Railway's possible demise, there always has been a hue and cry of support from the citizenry."


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## Orange Line Contractor Rehiring Workers; Metro Files Appeal

(Aug. 27, 2004) The contractor building the Metro Orange Line has begun rehiring workers as a first step toward remobilizing construction on the cross-valley transitway.

Metro Construction Chief Rick Thorpe notified Shimmick/Obayashi, Thursday, that an Aug. 2 court-ordered stay of construction had been lifted and work could resume. The firm had laid off its workers and supervisors when construction stopped.

The contractor's first priority will be to complete 11 intersections left unfinished when work was halted.

Priority will be given to intersections, such as those near Pierce College and at Woodman Avenue and Oxnard Street, where motorists and businesses have been most impacted.

## Metro files appeal

Meanwhile, Metro attorneys filed an appeal with the California Supreme Court, Thursday afternoon, seeking relief from an earlier Court of Appeal order. That order requires the agency to revise its Environmental Impact Report (EIR) by adding a study of the Metro Rapid system as a possible alternative to the transitway.

The appeals court's order and temporary stay came in response to lawsuit filed by COST, a local group opposed to the Metro Orange Line.

According to press reports, COST attorneys were expected back in court, Friday, to seek a temporary restraining order against further construction. But, the day's filing deadline passed without action by COST.

Metro has launched a study of the Metro Rapid alternative, as required by the court. That study could take as long as nine months.

The Metro Rapid alternative was not included in the original EIR because it was still an unproven pilot project when the document was being written and reviewed.

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## L.A. Man Charged With 8 Vandalism Counts Totaling \$35,000

- Transit Services Bureau cracking down on tagging

By ELIZABETH A. CRAIGG

(Aug. 27, 2004) A Los Angeles man has been charged with eight felony counts of vandalism that caused more than \$35,000 damage to the Metro Buses and to Metro Gold Line and Red Line trains.

David Andres, 22, has confessed to tagging the Metro vehicles with his graffiti moniker, "PORE'S." He was arrested July 15 in Montebello for other charges.

Members of the Transit Services Bureau's Special Problems Unit, met him at the jail to question his involvement with the damage done to Metro vehicles.

"When questioned, most taggers confess to the crime", says Sheriff's Deputy Loren Worthington of the SPU's Westside/Central unit.

### Crackdown on taggers

The Transit Services Bureau is cracking down on taggers.

Deputy Larry Ware quotes a tagger website, "The graffiti scene is declining." Ware and Worthington see this as proof of the anti-vandalism team's effectiveness.

Ware does express concern that "surrounding areas are not putting the same effort into catching these criminals, so when they are caught here, they just go somewhere else."

The Internet is one resource taggers use to tell each other where they can tag without getting caught.

### 'Decline in damage'

"Word is out that more people are being busted and are telling on each other, which has caused a decline in damage," says Worthington.

The SPU is conducting a vandalism investigation that could be the biggest in Metro history, with damage estimated to total in the hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Convicted taggers can be sentenced to work camp or jail time, community service, or pay full restitution of damages.

There are ten officers in the Special Problems Unit, two per Service Sector. They collect evidence by going along bus routes and taking photos of graffiti, then proceeding by investigating the most reoccurring tags.





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New seats have been added to the Metro Experience mobile theater to accommodate more viewers.



### **'Metro Experience' Is Going to the LA County Fair**

By ELIZABETH CRAIGG

(Aug. 31, 2004) Metro will have a major presence at the LA County Fair, Sept. 10-26 in Pomona.

The "Metro Experience" mobile theater expects to host as many as 50,000 school kids, teachers and parents during the Fair's 17-day run.

"Metro Experience" has been updated to accommodate more people in order to double the number of viewers. The 3-D show will last 3 minutes instead of 5 ½ minutes, and the number of seats has been increased from 16 to 24.

"Taking 'Metro Experience' to the fair is an effort to get the message out about safety around trains," says Senior Community Relations Officer Barbara Burns, who is in charge of Metro's rail safety program.

In an agreement with the Fair, rail safety information was sent to 5,000 teachers and reached 80,000 students. "Metro Experience" will be located in the Pirate's Cove area, near the Blue Gate entrance on White Ave.

### **'Split-second decision'**

"Safety is so important," says Burns, "It is the split-second decision people make when they are put in a situation that will determine their behavior. We're trying to make sure they make the right choice."

The 'Metro Experience' will be at the Long Beach Marathon in November.

It has visited such venues as the LA Zoo, Pasadena Summer Feast, Beacon Street Festival in San Pedro and Tweetie Street Festival.

The LA County Fair will be open from 10 a.m. to midnight Friday and Saturday, and from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Sunday through Thursday.

Admissions prices for ages 13 and up are \$10 weekdays and \$14 weekends; seniors 60-plus are \$8 weekdays and \$10 weekends; ages 6-12 are \$7 weekends and \$6 weekdays; 5 and under are free.

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## COST Loses Court Bid To Stop Metro Orange Line Construction

By ED SCANNELL

(Aug. 31, 2004) Los Angeles Superior Court Judge David P. Yaffe denied a petition, Monday, for a restraining order to halt construction of the Metro Orange Line.

The petition was filed by John Henning, attorney for COST (Citizens Organized for Smart Transit), a local group opposed to construction of the San Fernando Valley transitway.

"If any court has authority in this matter, it certainly isn't this one," said Yaffe. "It is not within the jurisdiction of this court to issue any order."

Construction resumed last Friday when the California Court of Appeal, Second Appellate District, failed to rule on an earlier petition by COST to stop construction until a study of a Metro Rapid alternative could be completed.

Henning told reporters COST would file another petition with the Court of Appeal in a few days.

Meanwhile, Metro awaits a decision by the California Supreme Court on whether it will hear its appeal of the order to conduct the Metro Rapid study.


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## Metro Will Train Operators on State's Breastfeeding Law

- Bulletin calls for 'all courtesies' to nursing mothers

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Aug. 31, 2004) Metro will add information about California's breastfeeding law to its operator training curriculum in response to concerns from nursing mothers who staged a small demonstration, Tuesday, in front of the Gateway building.

The agency also is issuing a bulletin to Metro operators and supervisors instructing them to "offer all courtesies and...facilitate any mothers who wish to breastfeed while using the Metro system."

Members of Maternal and Child Health Access protested two alleged incidents – one in December 2003 and the other Aug. 17, 2004 – in which Metro Bus operators on Line 55 were reported to have confronted the same passenger who was breastfeeding her baby.

With two complaints now on record, Metro will add information about the breastfeeding law to its operator training curriculum, according to Carolyn Flowers, executive officer, Operations Administration.

### Violates Metro policy

The bulletin being issued to operators and supervisors also notes that, "Any physical action or verbal exchange by the Operator that is intended to restrict the rights of the mother to breastfeed shall be conceded a violation of Metro's policy and Standard Operating Procedure."

The California Civil Code, Section 43.3, explicitly allows breastfeeding in public places. The law was authored by former Assembly Speaker Antonio Villaraigosa, currently a Los Angeles City Councilman and an MTA Board member.

In a statement to media, Flowers said the agency has no policy prohibiting mothers from nursing their infants aboard Metro Buses or Metro Rail trains and is aware of the law giving women the right to breastfeed in public.

She said complaints from patrons about confrontations with nursing mothers are extremely rare. "However, we are sensitive to any single complaint and find any such incident to be unfortunate."

Governor Schwarzenegger declared August to be "Breastfeeding Awareness Month." Some 120 countries marked Aug. 1-7 as "World Breastfeeding Week."

