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## Meet Jim Pachan Metro's Director of Corporate Safety

Joined Metro in August 1982 as a mechanic at Division 15. Employed there for seven years, he later worked at Division 7 for a year.

Appointed an Equipment Engineering supervisor in 1989, and a chief administration analyst in the Maintenance Department in 1997.

In 2000, he was named maintenance manager at Division 15, later transferring to Division 8. He was appointed director of Corporate Safety in August 2004.

A native of Eagle Bend, Minn., he completed a two-year course in heavy equipment mechanics at the Staples Vocational Technical Institute. He moved to California in 1981 and worked for a Caterpillar dealership prior to joining Metro.

Pachan graduated from Cal State Northridge in 1995 with a B.S. in business administration. He earned an MBA from Cal State Northridge in 2000.

He and his wife, Jennifer, live in Santa Clarita with her son, Chad, 16, and her daughter, Kendal, 14.



**Jim Pachan, Director of Corporate Safety**

Photo Credit: Bill Heard

> **ALSO:** [New Safety Director's View of Job Stretches Back to Shop Floor](#)


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## Metro News Update: Board Actions, Orange Line, Red Line, Bus Lanes

(Oct. 1, 2004) September was a busy month for news affecting Metro. Here are updates on actions by the Board of Directors, a decision in Superior Court and other news.

- [Expansion Planned at Division 10](#)
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- [City Council Approves Wilshire Bus-Only Lanes](#)
- [38,500 Visit 'Metro Experience' at LA County Fair](#)
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### Expansion Planned at Division 10

The Board of Directors adopted a motion at its September meeting to start an "eminent domain action" to acquire 21 parcels of land mostly along North Mission Road and Gallardo Street. The property, which flanks the west side of Gateway Division 10 and contains a number of auto glass and body shops, will be used to expand the division from 20.2 acres to 29 acres.

The expansion plan includes a new transportation building, a larger maintenance building, a new tire shop, new fueling lanes and a new retrieval area. The division also could accommodate maintenance and parking for 60-foot articulated buses. Construction is likely to begin next spring after the property's occupants have been relocated.

Opened in 1984, Division 10 currently has 234 parking spaces for buses and 250 spaces for employees. With the expansion, the division could provide parking for 335 buses and would have spaces for 450 employee vehicles. [\[Return to Top\]](#)

### Judge Refuses to Halt Orange Line Construction

A Superior Court judge refused to halt construction of the Metro Orange Line in the San Fernando Valley, Tuesday, but scheduled a hearing on the issue for Oct. 22.

Judge David Yaffe denied a request for a temporary restraining order by COST, a local opposition group. COST says the project should be halted because a study of the Metro Rapid system as a possible alternative to the transitway was not included in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

An earlier Court of Appeal ruling ordered Metro to add a study of Metro Rapid service to the EIR. It had not been included because it was still an unproven demonstration project when the EIR was being written. [\[Return to Top\]](#)

### City Council Votes on Subway Expansion

The Los Angeles City Council voted unanimously, Tuesday, in favor of actions that could lead to expansion of the Metro Red Line.

The vote approved a resolution by Councilman Tom LaBonge to rescind Proposition A, a measure approved by voters in 1998 that bans the use of local sales tax revenues for subway construction. Actually overturning Prop A would require another countywide vote.

LaBonge also wants to rescind a federal law, passed by Congress in 1985, that prohibits further tunneling under Wilshire Boulevard. Earlier plans had called for the subway to extend at least as far as the Fairfax district. [[Return to Top](#)]

### **Possible Development at Division 20**

The Board of Directors approved a motion at its September meeting authorizing CEO Roger Snoble to negotiate with a firm that wants to build 270 student housing units and a parking lot for 440 vehicles on about four acres of the 50-acre Metro Red Line Division 20.

The housing development would serve students at the Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-Arch), just across Santa Fe Avenue from the rail yard. Both students and Metro employees would be permitted to use the parking lot.

The motion was amended to require a study of the feasibility of constructing a Metro Red Line station adjacent to Division 20 and the 4th Street Bridge. The developer would be required to pay for the study and for construction of the station. [[Return to Top](#)]

### **City Council Approves Wilshire Bus-Only Lanes**

The Los Angeles City Council approved a motion, Tuesday, making the bus-only lanes a permanent fixture on Wilshire Boulevard between Federal and Centinella avenues.

A demonstration project, begun last March, showed that buses traveling the one-mile segment saved up to six percent in travel times in the peak morning hours and up to 14 percent in the peak afternoon hours. Bus patrons also experienced greater service consistency.

Prior to implementation of the project, buses traveled the segment during peak hours in as little as four minutes or in as many as 12 minutes. [[Return to Top](#)]

### **38,500 Visit 'Metro Experience' at LA County Fair**

Some 38,500 kids and adults visited the "Metro Experience" mobile theater during the LA County Fair, which closed Sept. 26 following a 17-day run. Prior to the Fair, Metro distributed safety information to 80,000 pupils and 5,000 teachers.

"We received a lot of compliments about the wonderful things we're doing to help keep people safe," said Senior Community Relations Officer Barbara Burns, who heads Metro's Rail Safety program. Assisting with "Metro Experience" during the Fair were Community Relations Officer Carolos Valdez, Office Assistant Jennifer Mendoza and Intern Walter Gonzalez. [[Return to Top](#)]

### **Governance Councils Schedule October Meetings**

Metro's service sector governance councils have scheduled monthly public meetings in October to discuss various transit issues. Meeting locations and times are:

- San Fernando Valley Sector, Wednesday, Oct. 6, 6:30

p.m., Marvin Braude Constituent Service Center Community Room, 6262 Van Nuys Blvd., Van Nuys.

- Westside/Central Sector, Thursday, Oct. 7, 3 p.m., La Cienega Tennis Center, Sunset Room, 325 S. La Cienega Blvd., Beverly Hills.
- South Bay Sector, Friday, Oct. 8, 9:30 a.m., Carson Community Center, 801 E. Carson St., Carson.
- San Gabriel Valley Sector, Tuesday, Oct. 12, 5 p.m., San Gabriel Sector Office, 3369 Santa Anita Ave., El Monte.
- Gateway Cities Sector, Thursday, Oct. 14, 2 p.m., The Gas Company, 9240 Firestone Blvd., Downey. [[Return to Top](#)]

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## Funeral Arrangements Pending for Division 1's Jorge Sanchez

By SHANTAY IOSIA

(Oct. 1, 2004) Funeral arrangements are pending for Metro Bus Operator Jorge Sanchez who died of a heart attack, Tuesday, as he was driving his bus back to Central City Division 1.

The Line 460/66 bus struck a light pole. Sanchez was transported to County USC Hospital. No passengers were aboard the bus at the time.

A Huntington Park resident, Sanchez, 55, is survived by his wife and three children.

Sanchez joined Metro in January 2000 and is remembered for his interest in astrology. Operator Martha Sampang remembers him as someone who entertained his friends at lunch with birthday charts and tarot cards.

Sanchez was committed to his family and traveled to Tijuana almost every weekend to be with them.

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**Golden Pylon Winners** – Six area traffic reporters were named winners of coveted “Golden Pylon” awards for their dedication to keeping the traffic moving. From left are Ryan Disch, producer for Airwatch America and CBS-TV, Vera Jimenez of CBS-TV, CHP Officer Ricardo Quintero, Sioux-z Jessup of Metro Networks and Arrow 93.1 FM, Lori Ryan of Airwatch America and KBIG, and Nancy Rodriguez of Metro Networks. Sponsored by Metro and the transit authorities of Orange, Ventura, San Bernardino and Riverside counties, the “Golden Pylon” event was the kickoff for Rideshare Week, Oct. 4 – 8.

## Metro to Mark 18th Annual Rideshare Week, Oct. 4 – 8

By DAVE SOTERO

(Oct. 1, 2004) Metro is urging Los Angeles commuters to share the ride, Oct. 4 – 8, as part of the 18th annual Rideshare Week, a statewide campaign to reduce solo driving on the state’s congested streets and freeways.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, solo drivers accounted for 70 percent of work commutes made within Los Angeles County in 2000. Carpooling accounted for just 15 percent, while public transit represented nearly 7 percent of work commutes. Other means, including walking and bicycling comprised the remaining 8 percent of work trips.

In a cost comparison conducted by Metro earlier this year, daily LA County commuters who switch from solo driving to public transportation, carpools or vanpools can save more than \$4,000 a year in commuting costs.

“If commuters shared the ride just one day per week, we would see dramatic improvements in traffic congestion in Los Angeles County,” said David Sutton, executive manager of Metro Commute Services for Metro. “It would do wonders for mobility in our region.”

## Promoting Rideshare Week

Metro is working with thousands of employers throughout Southern

California on ridesharing programs. More than 600 employers will be conducting rideshare events within their companies to promote Rideshare Week.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of Southern California's Rideshare Program and participation grows every year.

More than 786 businesses with 250 or more employees now participate in Metro Commute Services programs, a 68 percent increase within the last two years. An additional 2,000 businesses with less than 250 employees also participate.

On the web, [WWW.RIDEMATCH.INFO](http://WWW.RIDEMATCH.INFO) lists more than 177,000 commuters seeking carpool or vanpool partners. Metro also fields 500 - 700 calls a month on the 1-800-COMMUTE toll-free line from callers in LA County.

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**Jim Pachan, Director of Corporate Safety**

Photo Credit: Bill Heard

> ALSO: [Meet Jim Pachan Metro's Director of Corporate Safety](#)

## New Safety Director's View of Job Stretches Back to Shop Floor

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Oct. 1, 2004) During all the years he spent on the shop floor as a Metro bus mechanic and, later, as a division maintenance manager, safety in the workplace was a constant concern for Jim Pachan.

It was important during the eight years Pachan worked as a mechanic at divisions 15 and 7. Safety was important during the five years he was an Equipment Engineering supervisor and during his three years as maintenance manager at divisions 15 and 8.

Now, as the newly appointed director of Corporate Safety, Pachan, 44, is responsible for the full range of Metro's on-the-job safety efforts.

"Jim is a natural for Corporate Safety director, with his leadership skills and impressive safety record at Division 8," says Andrea Burnside, managing director, Operations Administration. Division maintenance employees achieved a record of 275 days without a lost-time injury while he was manager.

### A comprehensive program

Pachan is charged with administering a comprehensive program that includes occupational health and safety, industrial hygiene and bus and rail operations and maintenance safety.

It also includes what is perhaps Metro's most familiar employee-oriented program, "Safety's First." The program is aimed at drastically

reducing accidents and employee injuries in an agency that has had one of the highest rates of injury claims in the nation's transit industry.

In Fiscal Year 2000, prior to the launch of Safety's First in October 2001, Metro recorded 20 lost-time injuries for every 100 employees. By June 2004, however, new claims for such injuries had fallen to less than one per 100 employees.

"Our workplace is safer because people are more aware of safety," says Pachan. "We've taken a more pro-active approach to safety, addressing safety issues before injuries occur."

### **Thorough accident investigation**

Two key elements of the safety program, he says, are thorough accident investigation and the local safety committees whose members include division managers, operators and mechanics.

The local safety committees discuss safety problems brought to them by employees at the working level. They work to improve division safety programs and, perhaps most important, ensure that safety issues are communicated to all division employees.

Pachan is a strong believer in getting to the root of an accident through in-depth investigations that pin-point the cause of an incident and identify ways management and employees can work together to prevent future accidents.

Pachan sees safety as a 24/7 effort of making sure employees constantly think about safety and how to avoid injuries, while managers ensure that the workplace is safe for employees to do their jobs.

As he puts it: "The pro-active approach to safety does make Metro a safer place to work."


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## Yvonne Brewer-Smith Named Transportation Manager at Division 7

( Oct. 5, 2004) Westside/Central General Manager David Armijo has selected Yvonne Brewer-Smith, a 28-year Metro veteran, to be the new transportation manager at West Hollywood Division 7.

Brewer-Smith, 51, currently serves as assistant transportation manager for the San Gabriel Valley Service Sector, where she heads the vehicle operations (VO) program. She will move to Division 7 later this month to succeed Acting Manager Nita Northington.



Yvonne Brewer-Smith

"Yvonne has come up through the ranks, developing her management and leadership skills with each position she has held," said Armijo. "I am very pleased to name her to lead one of Metro's biggest and busiest transportation divisions."

As head of the VO group, which was launched by the San Gabriel Valley sector last July, Brewer-Smith is credited with helping to improve Metro Bus on-time performance.

### 'Tremendous asset'

"Yvonne has been a tremendous asset to Metro San Gabriel Valley , managing our centralized field supervision team," said General Manager Jack Gabig. "Her leadership skills, high energy, and commitment to excellence will be put to good use at Division 7. We all wish her much success in her new position."

Noting that Northington has been acting transportation manager at Division 7 for more than a year, Armijo said, "I want to especially thank Nita and the entire division team for the excellent job they have done keeping the division moving forward."

Brewer-Smith began her Metro career as a bus operator assigned to Division 3 in June 1976. She also drove out of divisions 5, 2, 15 and the now-closed Division 16 in Pomona. She became an instructor in 1979.

In June 2001, Brewer-Smith was assigned as assistant manager at Central City Division 1 and moved to San Gabriel Valley Division 9 as assistant manager in July 2002.

### Supervises vehicle operations

She was named the San Gabriel Valley sector's assistant transportation manager for vehicle operations in May 2003. In that post, she

supervises vehicle operations and is responsible for on-time performance, scheduling and customer service.

"I've enjoyed my time in the San Gabriel Valley sector," says Brewer-Smith. "I have a great team of supervisors. I'm sad to be leaving them."

A resident of Ontario, Brewer-Smith earned a degree in business management from the University of Phoenix. She has a daughter, Keysa Rancharan and three grandchildren, Ryan, 17, and twins, Joshua and Jacob, 12, who live in Pomona.

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Division 5 Operator Douglas Park, second from left, was one of seven Spotlight Award winners at the 2004 "Night of Stars" banquet. Honoring the winners were, from left, Deputy CEO John Catoe, Board Chairman Frank Roberts and South Bay General Manager Dana Coffey.

## 'Night of Stars' Honors 500 Employees, 7 'Spotlight' Winners

- Event honored 'best of the best,' says Board chairman
- LA City Council pays tribute to honorees

By BILL HEARD, Editor

( Oct. 5, 2004) One by one they climbed the steps to the "Night of Stars" stage in Industry Hills, Oct. 1, to receive a gold medallion and the congratulations of the Metro leadership for a job well done.

On a night when the sky overhead was filled with stars, all attention was focused on the bus operators and maintenance employees – Metro's star performers – who met strict personal performance criteria for the past five years to earn their awards.

"Tonight we honor the best of the best...who have gone above and beyond the call of duty to ensure that all riders have excellent service that is on time and ultra reliable," Board Chairman Frank Roberts told the 575 honorees and guests. "Without you, there would be no Metro as we know it."

The awards presentation was the highlight of an evening that included a reception with appetizers and games at the Pacific Palms Resort's historic railway station, and a dinner under the stars at the Gazebo.

## 'A small tribute'

"Tonight is a small tribute for all the hard work you've done in the past," said Deputy CEO John Catoe. "This agency is only as good as the individuals – the Stars – being recognized tonight."

A resolution signed by Los Angeles City Councilmembers Martin Ludlow, Tom LaBonge and Antonio Villaraigosa congratulated the winners for their "outstanding hard work and positive attitude...(and)... dedication to serve the community...."

Each general manager introduced his or her sector's honorees, then gave special recognition to one of seven "Spotlight" winners. They were selected from among 27 employees nominated by the five bus service sectors, Metro Rail and the Regional Rebuild Center.

## 'Spotlight' winners

First to be named was Operator **Luduvico Castro** of Division 9, this year's Metro Bus Rodeo winner. General Manager Jack Gabig said Castro, a 32-year veteran, demonstrates superior leadership skills and uses his experience to mentor young operators. Castro will represent Metro, this month, at the APTA International Bus Rodeo in Atlanta.



Division 9's "Spotlight" winner, Operator Luduvico Castro, will represent Metro at the APTA International Bus Rodeo.

Operator **Carmine Zeccardi** of Division 15 represented the San Fernando Valley sector. General Manager Richard Hunt noted that Zeccardi is the epitome of safety. He has the maximum number of merits – 90 – and has had no Workers' Compensation injuries in his 28 years of service.

South Bay General Manager Dana Coffey selected Operator **Douglas Park** of Division 5 as the "Spotlight" winner. Park, she said, has been dedicated to excellence as both a public servant and as a member of the U.S. military reserve, having served in two major military operations.

Mechanic "A" **Michael Palmer** is a "renaissance man," according to the citation read by Deputy Executive Officer Milo Victoria, who heads the Regional Rebuild Center. Palmer has sought to master every aspect of bus maintenance while mentoring a team of mechanics.



Mechanic "A" Michael Palmer was the RRC's "Spotlight" winner.

General Manager Alex Clifford named Mechanic "A" **Mack Evans** of Division 1 as the "Spotlight" award winner from the Gateway Cities sector. Evans, whose seniority is exceeded only by 98-year-old Arthur Winston, has replaced more than 1,200 transmissions and diagnosed and repaired many more during his years with Metro.

Maintenance Specialist **Ronnie Burt** of the Metro Blue Line was chosen by Metro Rail General Manager Gerald Francis for his leadership skills, knowledge and expertise. Known as the unit's "go-to guy," Burt frequently provides on-shift technical



training support to fellow employees.

Westside/Central General Manager David Armijo named Division 6 Operator **Andrew Harris** as the sector's "Spotlight" award winner. Harris, a former "Outstanding Operator" honoree, often receives praise from passengers for his professional demeanor and friendly personality. He also is the winner of many safety awards during his 23 years with Metro.

The Metro Blue Line's Ronnie Burt is the "go-to guy" in maintenance.

**Photo Credit:** Bill Heard

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< ['Night of Stars' Honors 500 Employees, 7 'Spotlight' Winners](#)

## Metro's Best and Brightest Attend Gala Fit for Stars

By SHANTAY IOSIA

(Oct. 5, 2004) Metro honored its best and brightest, last Friday night, at a sparkling hilltop gala fit for its stars.

Some 575 honorees and guests enjoyed the festivities under the stars at the Pacific Palms Resort in a park-like setting that overlooks the City of Industry and the mountains beyond.

Arriving guests helped themselves to appetizers served in the resort's 19th century railway station and amused themselves on the putting green and in guessing games.

Metro Blue Line Fleet Services Manager George Kennedy and retired Metro Gold Line Operator Willie Mann, one of the evening's award recipients, both managed to stroke the ball across the green and into the hole to win movie tickets.

## Movie ticket winner

Metro's Jack Gabig, earned his voucher for two movie tickets after he identified 13 of the 17 childhood pictures of Metro managers in "Stars Among Us."

Operator Raul Garcia received a personalized Metro bus stop sign when he guessed the number of chocolate stars stuffed into a Plexiglas Metro Rapid bus.

Many honorees and their guests posed for souvenir pictures in front of the historic Winston Churchill funeral train car. Others sat with old friends and enjoyed the manicured greens, romantic lights and crisp fall evening.

As the last traces of daylight flickered out beyond the horizon, the guests were guided to their seats for dinner and the awards presentation.

## Cascading candles

The Gazebo area was crowded with large round tables draped with white linen and centered with trays of



Division 6 Operator Darrel Carter, a professional comedian, was the master of ceremonies for "An Evening of Stars."

cascading candles set in a bed of rose petals.

Division 6 Operator Darrel Carter, a professional comedian and the evening's master of ceremonies, got the evening off to a fast start with tales of his days in the driver's seat.

After musical entertainment and a three-course meal, the award winners were called to the stage by their general managers to receive medallions honoring their excellent service.

### **"A Night of Stars" Committee Members**

Danielle Boutier, Larry Cosner, Fran Curbello, Carolyn Drummond, Hector Guerrero, Dave Hershenson, Lorene Kelley, Anthony A. Precie, Margo Ross, Jennifer Salamanca, Gary Shiroishi and Milo Victoria.

### **"Night of Stars" Volunteers**

Elizabeth Armijo, Mory Bonakdar, Rich Famighetti, Gil Goytia, Yvonne Goytia, Caroline Howard, Louis Knutson, Clifton Ladage,

Duane Martin, Barbara Maycott, George Maycott, Christine McBryan, Deborah McBryan, John McDowell, Helen Perez, Angela Pina, Manuel Precie, Marie Precie, Robin Precie, Margo Ross, Bruce Shelburne, Cynthia Spadaccini, Mike Turk and Edith Villanueva.



Retired Metro Gold Line Operator Willie Mann sinks a putt.



Division 9 Operator Tyrone Bernard and his wife, Sandra, guessed 160 stars were in the little bus. Wrong!



Enjoying the evening, from left, are Madelene and Fifaat Nakhla, a Metro Green Line maintenance specialist, and daughter Eviola, along with Tammy Smith, wife of Signal Inspector Kevin Smith, and Chris Trevizo, wife of Signal Inspector Michael Trevizo.

**Photo Credit:** Bill Heard


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The CEO HotLine was established as a means for employees to *anonymously* and *confidentially* obtain information from management. The CEO HotLine was first introduced in 1996. Today, under the leadership of CEO Roger Snoble, the CEO HotLine plays an important role in the Metro communication process. Mr. Snoble encourages employees to use their department chain of command when possible; however, if a question remains unanswered or is too personal, then the CEO HotLine is a good alternative. The CEO HotLine responds to all inquiries. Here are a few recent inquiries.

### Employees Ask CEO Hotline About Flu Shots, Junk' E-Mail, Etc.

- [Wearing employee badges](#)
- [Sending 'Junk' e-mail](#)
- [Metrolink subsidies](#)
- [Motorcycle parking spaces](#)

### ***As in prior years, will flu shots be available at the Metro Gateway building?***

Answer: Yes. The Safety Department has agreed to make flu shots available to employees and their adult family members and friends. This event will occur on Monday, Oct. 18, from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The cost to employees will be \$20, payable directly to Glendale Adventist Medical Center. For reservations, please e-mail Becky Quinteros of Corporate Safety by Oct. 13. Thank you for your interest in this important event.

### ***Yesterday as I was entering elevator #10, I noticed a man not wearing an employee badge. Although I'm certain that he is an employee, doesn't everyone have to wear an employee or guest badge?***

Answer: Although our Security officers have become very vigilant about individuals entering the Gateway facility, it's possible that an employee or guest could remove his/her badge once inspected by the guards. The policy is simple: All personnel are required to wear a Metro ID or guest badge while in the Gateway building. This policy is clearly posted on numerous signs throughout the facility.

All employees, as part of the overall security effort, should remind their colleagues to wear their ID badge. If the employee does not recognize an individual as a fellow employee, then they should direct the individual to immediately proceed to the 3rd floor to sign in with Security. The employee should observe the individual to make sure they do in fact comply. If the individual does not comply, then call 922-7600 for a Security officer to respond.

If an employee is not comfortable in asking someone about their identification, then just call Security at 922-7600. Most importantly, all Metro staff must be part of the security effort (eyes and ears). Your concern for employee safety is commendable. Thank you for inquiry.

[\[TOP\]](#)

***I am required to read my e-mail every day when I arrive at work. When I read my e-mail and receive types of "JUNK" mail from fellow employees, it seems a waste of time and Metro resources. Do we have a policy regarding "Junk" mail from employees?***

Answer: This is a great question! Section 5-15-110A of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority Code of Conduct states, in part: "Metro employees shall not use any Metro asset (i.e. computers) for personal gain or for any purpose other than Metro business."

Employees who violate the policy risk disciplinary action. If you receive "Junk" e-mail from fellow employees, you should remind the employees of the policy. By doing this, you are not only assisting in the management of resources, you are also preventing them from further violation of the policy.

Your conscientious use of agency resources is commendable. Thank you for your inquiry. [\[TOP\]](#)

***There are many employees who do not use the entire Metrolink subsidy (i.e. \$102) and there are many who exceed the \$102. Is there a way to shift the unused portion of the \$102 to employees who are paying extra?***

Answer: Metro offers eligible employees a Transportation Subsidy for either public transit that does not honor the Metro Transportation ID/Badge or for participation in an organized vanpool. All employees are eligible to have their public transit cost subsidized. The Transportation Subsidy is 100% of the lowest available fare up to \$102 per month and is intended to *help* pay for the commuting cost of the employee's eligible alternative transportation. The amount an employee is eligible for is determined by the monthly cost to the employee to take public transit. In some cases, the subsidy is enough to cover the entire monthly transit cost and in other cases it subsidizes up to \$102 of the transit cost. We are not able to allow the unused portion of one employee's benefit to be used by another employee.

Metro is aware of Metrolink's increased fares and has conducted a study of employers in the downtown LA area who offer transit subsidies. Our findings were that the majority of the companies have a reimbursement transit policy, with amounts averaging \$65 of taxable income. Metro provides the employee a transit benefit (by using the TransitChek voucher) with the first \$100 of the amount being tax-free. Overall the Metro offers a very competitive transit benefit in Los Angeles.

Currently, Metro is one of the leaders in providing a competitive transit subsidy benefit.

Thank you for your inquiry.

[\[TOP\]](#)

***Why are there no designated motorcycle parking spaces at Gateway Headquarters?***

Answer: This is a good question that applies to many Metro

employees. According to the Real Estate Department, motorcycle drivers have the same rights and responsibilities as vehicle drivers. Just like a vehicle driver, motorcycle drivers should use any available parking stall that is allowable by code (e.g. no stall designated for disabled persons).

For safety reasons, motorcycle drivers are not allowed to go under the lift arm/gate and must enter and exit on the side of the lift arm/gate. Despite not having to "swipe a parking card" to access the garage, motorcycle drivers are required to pay for parking privileges at Gateway.

Five Star Parking is working in cooperation with General Services to identify employees who use motorcycles and notify them of this requirement. Please pass this along to your motorcycle-riding colleagues. Thanks for sending this question. [[TOP](#)]

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Division 1 friends prepared a special reception, including an elaborate "Welcome Back" cake for David Rojas.

## Division 1 Employees Welcome Returning Soldier, David Rojas

- Sgt. Rojas spent a year transporting supplies in Iraq

By SHANTAY IOSIA

(Oct. 8, 2004) The usual bustle of Central Cities Division 1 was temporarily subdued, Sept. 24, as many employees gathered in the break room to welcome Metro Bus Operator David Rojas, who had just returned after 12 months in Iraq.

**Also:**

[CEO Extends  
Compensation for  
Active Reservists](#)

The crowd greeted Sgt. Rojas with song and cheers of appreciation. Transportation manager, Sonja Owens, thanked Rojas for his services and welcomed him back on behalf of the division.

Transportation Operations Supervisor Chris Doan presented Rojas with a plaque of appreciation, purchased with contributions from the division. Volunteers helped serve pizza, drinks and cake to everyone who attended.

"I was really amazed at how many people actually turned up to welcome me back," Rojas says. "This is such an amazing support and I am just so grateful."

Rojas has been with Metro for 21 years and says he received the same welcome and support 13 years ago when he returned from Desert Storm. The second reunion was a pleasant and emotional one for Rojas who says he held back tears.

## Reporting to duty

Rojas spent a total of 14 months on active duty in the U.S. Army National Guard, beginning with two months in Fort Lewis, Wash. He spent the remaining time with his unit in Iraq.

"I did what my Commander in Chief said," Rojas says. "When my orders came down I did my job to the fullest."

He left behind two sons when he reported to duty. Camp Anaconda, an airbase 68 miles north of Baghdad, became his home and the 17, 000 troops from the United States, his brothers.

Rojas's responsibilities included transporting supplies between Baghdad and Kuwait, but eventually evolved to include providing security for the Iraqi men who were hired as drivers.

"We were able to boost up the economy by getting people to work and we were also able to build trust with the Iraqi people," he says.



Sgt. David Rojas, now back from Iraq and driving a Metro Bus once again, thanks his Division 1 colleagues for their support.

Photos by Shantay Iosia.

## Constant threat of insurgents

Rojas says most of the people they came across were friendly but there was the constant threat of insurgents who waited for a vulnerable moment.

Attacks on his base were not uncommon. Artillery shields fell on the base every other night, sometimes seriously wounding soldiers.

Rojas arrived in a desolate Iraq almost a year ago and saw tremendous growth within that time. Rojas believes time will heal and stabilize a vulnerable country.

"There was a lot of destruction because of the bombings," he says. "It was hard for me to look at it, but it just took time for people to venture back into the city."

## Appreciates Americans' support

Rojas appreciates the constant support of the American people for the troops in Iraq.

"It was such a great feeling every time I got a letter from a loved one, friend, co-worker or even a total stranger from another state or country," he says. "It's just a relief and a great morale booster."

Rojas believes progress in Iraq is continuing, but it is punctuated by random hostage-taking and increased suicide bombings.

"I love my country. I always have loved my country," Rojas says. "But, now I appreciate it a lot more. But, whatever our next President decides, I just hope it brings peace throughout the Middle East."




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## Former Operator Pleads Guilty to Workers' Comp Fraud

- Alleged assault never happened, video tape showed
- Court orders probation, community service, \$4,239 fine

By ROY ROMERO

( Oct. 8, 2004 ) Former Gateway Division 10 Operator Anna M. Lewis pled guilty, Oct. 5, to four of seven criminal counts of filing a false or fictitious claim for Workers' Compensation.

Lewis had alleged she was injured during an unprovoked attack by a male passenger on board the bus she was driving.

Sheriff's deputies searched for a suspect and arrested a person matching the description given by Lewis. Lewis identified the man in custody as her assailant. The man eventually was released for lack of evidence.

Metro's Workers' Compensation Special Investigations Unit (SIU) assisted with analysis of the surveillance video from the bus to determine when and where the alleged assault took place.

After hours of a careful frame-by-frame review of the images, SIU investigators determined that the video had not captured an assault because one had never taken place.

The case was presented to the Los Angeles District Attorney's Fraud Division for consideration of Insurance Fraud.

Lewis was in court, Oct. 5, to complete payment of \$1,000 in initial restitution to Metro. She also pled guilty to four of the seven counts against her. They included felony insurance fraud, presenting a false or fraudulent claim for payment, filing a false criminal report, and felony grand theft.

Lewis now must serve five years' formal probation, 200 hours' community service, and pay a total of \$4,239 in restitution to Metro.

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## Metro System Attracting Growing Numbers of Auto Drivers

By ED SCANNELL

(Oct. 8, 2004) More LA County residents who could drive or have access to an automobile are instead commuting by Metro.

A recent survey shows that the number of Metro riders who have a vehicle available for their commute rose from 22 percent in Fall 2002 to 29 percent in Spring 2004.

"As congestion continues to grow in Los Angeles County the Metro System is becoming an increasingly attractive way to get around," said Board Chairman Frank Roberts.

Approximately 15,000 passengers completed written questionnaires for the most recent of four surveys, which were conducted between Fall 2002 and Spring 2004.

The surveys showed that 26 percent of Metro Bus passengers have access to a vehicle, up from 21 percent. A total of 49 percent of Metro Rail riders now have access to a vehicle, up from 39 percent.

Noting that, of all LA County residents 90 percent now have access to a vehicle, Deputy CEO John Catoe said, "Combined with our passenger surveys, the results tell us we're doing a better job of capturing people who in the past would have spent their commute time behind the wheel."

The surveys were conducted on a random basis on all four Metro Rail lines, on all agency-operated Metro Bus lines and on three bus lines operated under contract to Metro.

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## Welcome Home, 'Spirit of America'

Carson Division 18 Operator Darryl Woods, complete with party streamer and noise maker, joined Carson residents and officials, Oct. 3, as they welcomed the Goodyear blimp "Spirit of America" back to the South Bay. "I missed seeing the blimp fly over my division," said Woods. Division 18 is just across the street from the blimp's airfield on Main Street . The air ship, which was damaged during a crash in December 2003, was repaired and refurbished at Goodyear headquarters in Ohio . Photo by Rich Morallo. ( 10/8/04 )

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Wrecked buses placed at Metro Division 15 show the effect of terrorist "bombs" as the injured wait for treatment.



PHOTOS: ERIC RAPP

## 300-Plus Responders, Dozens of 'Victims' in Anti-Terrorist Drill

(Oct. 12, 2004) When "terrorists" attacked several Metro Buses loaded with dozens of volunteer "victims," Oct. 8, more than 300 law enforcement officers, firefighters, paramedics and emergency workers responded.

Arriving at the three "disaster" scenes, the first responders saw massive "bomb" destruction – wrecked and burned buses that appeared to be filled with and surrounded by the dead and dying.

The disaster drill, dubbed "Angel Overload," was played out at the Veterans Administration grounds in West LA and at Metro's East Valley Division 15 and West Valley Division 8. The buses were wrecks transported to the exercise areas by Metro.

While Sheriff's deputies, LAPD and CHP officers, FBI agents and others searched for the "terrorists," LAFD firefighters and paramedics triaged and treated the blood-covered "victims" – UCLA theater arts majors, Makeup Designery students and Metro employee volunteers.

The purpose of the three-location exercise



A paramedic takes the pulse of Division 15 Assistant Transportation Manager Barbara Maycott, a badly wounded "victim." With her is Division 15 Stenographer Darlene Blake, wearing a sling for her "broken arm."



A Makeup Designery student is prepared with fake blood and a

was to train responders in rescuing, transporting, triaging and treating badly injured terror victims. They also practiced toxic decontamination procedures and arson and explosion investigation techniques.

"Angel Overload" involved more than 80 police, fire and emergency vehicles and three helicopters. It was one of the largest terrorist disaster drills conducted in Los Angeles County.

realistic "wound" prior to the anti-terrorism disaster exercise.



Sheriff's deputies coordinate the response to the terrorist attack during the drill in West LA.



Two UCLA theater arts majors await treatment for their "wounds" during the anti-terrorist drill in West LA. (José Ubaldo photo)

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## AC Transit Wins APTA Bus Rodeo; Metro Places 28th

(Oct. 12, 2004) AC Transit of Oakland won "Best Overall Transit Property," last week, at the APTA International Bus Rodeo in Atlanta. Metro's operator/maintenance team placed 28th out of the 46 competing teams.

Carson Division 18 mechanics Javier Soria, Mina Ros and Luke Logan finished 11th of 49 teams entered in the maintenance competition. Taking top slot were the mechanics from King County Metro Transit of Seattle.

San Gabriel Valley Division 9's Luduvico Castro placed 68th of 79 operators in the driving competition. Operator Edwin Negron of New Jersey won the event.

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PHOTO: SHANTAY IOSIA



Metro Rail TOS Lorraine Lomax, right, and her family have pitched in to help Jamaican victims of Hurricane Ivan. From left are Lomax's niece Kai Snowden, 5; sister Stephanie Snowden and mother Elaine Mumby.

## Metro's Lorraine Lomax Is Helping Jamaica's Hurricane Victims

By SHANTAY IOSIA

(Oct. 12, 2004) Thousands of Jamaicans remain without homes, food or electricity after Hurricane Ivan tore through the island, battering the capital, Kingston, and leveling towns and villages along its southern coast.

Metro's Lorraine Lomax has joined the relief efforts to assist many who have lost everything and are searching to rebuild again.

"They are really suffering and trying to do the best they can," says Lomax, a rail transit operations supervisor for the Metro Blue Line. "They don't have insurance or hurricane relief so they have to cover all the damages themselves."

Jamaica's warm Atlantic shores and high humidity makes it susceptible to hurricanes, something the residents have grown accustomed to.

### 'Just weren't prepared'

"We get a lot of hurricane warnings between July and September. Almost every six or seven days," says Lomax, a native of the island. "When they heard it was coming, they just weren't prepared for it."

Hurricane Ivan is the largest hurricane so far this season with winds that reached 155 mph. The rains continued weeks after Hurricane Ivan ventured southward, sparing Jamaica's northern shores and stagnant economy.

Families returned to their homes on the southern coast to find uprooted trees, vanished roads, razed buildings, smashed boats and vehicles washed into nearby streams and bodies of water – more damage than the devastation from Hurricane Gilbert in 1988.

### **Inflated prices**

Most of the families now live in dome tents pitched on empty lots that once housed stores and shops. Families are no longer able to produce their own crops because of the drenched soil and cannot afford the inflated prices of goods in the surviving stores.

Lomax, along with her mother, Elaine Mumby, and sister, Stephanie Snowden, prepared lunches and raised almost \$800 for those in need.

"This is what life is all about, helping others because I don't need help right now," says Mumby. "But when my time comes, it makes a difference. I'm going to get all this back, from people I may not even know."

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## Award Marks Metro's Improved Relations with Contractors

(Oct. 12, 2004) A California contractors' organization has honored Metro and CEO Roger Snoble for significantly improving relations with that industry over the past three years.

Snoble recently accepted a plaque on behalf of the agency from the Consulting Engineers and Land Surveyors of California (CELSOC).

The award honors the CEO and the Metro staff for overcoming budget shortfalls to proceed with "needed capital and operations programs" such as the Metro Gold Line's Eastside Extension and other improvements to the Metro System.

Noting that Metro and the regional contracting industry had often been at odds over the years, Snoble said, "We had to do a lot of work to patch up those relationships and get them to understand that we are willing to work with them to make our relationship more of a partnership than adversarial."

The CELSOC award, he said, "is recognition of the hard work we've done..." to open up the agency's bidding process and make it more fair and easier for prospective bidders to understand and respond to.

As a result, Snoble said, more contractors are now willing to bid on Metro construction projects.

PHOTO: BILL HEARD



CEO Roger Snoble reads a plaque recently presented to Metro to mark improving relations with the state's contracting community.

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"All employees using MTA vehicles shall fasten their seat belts upon entering the vehicle and shall keep them fastened as long as the vehicle is in operation...." --Metro Safety Policy #9, Section 1.1



Operator Jacquelyn Parchman demonstrates proper use of the seat belt.

## New Safety Policy Will Require Bus Operators to Wear Seat Belts

- Policy will take full effect Jan. 1, 2005
- Operators will be trained in proper seat belt use
- [Would 'buckling up' have prevented these accidents?](#)

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Oct. 13, 2004) It was the height of the afternoon rush hour on the Hollywood Freeway that Thursday, Sept. 19, 1996, when a Honda struck the side of a Metro Bus.

The force of the collision knocked the operator – who was not belted in – out of his seat. The bus careened out of control, crossed the center divider and crashed into several other vehicles.

The result? Two deaths, seven injuries. And Metro paid a legal settlement of \$2.3 million to the victims.

Would the accident have been as severe if the operator had been buckled into a seat belt?

## New seat belt policy

Robert Torres, a Systems Safety manager, doesn't think so. That's why he's helping put into effect a new policy that requires operators to wear seat belts when driving a Metro Bus. Safety Policy #9 takes effect Nov. 1, 2004.

During the orientation period, which ends Dec. 31, 2004, bus operators are

PHOTOS: LUIS INZUNZA



Division 18 Operator Jacquelyn Parchman is safely buckled in to her seat and ready to welcome patrons on board her Metro Bus.

expected to become accustomed to wearing seat belts. Management will educate employees about the policy and perform safety contacts about proper seat belt use.

Beginning Jan. 1, 2005, failure to wear a seat belt becomes a major safety rule infraction subject to disciplinary action.

"Wearing seat belts increases safety for both the operators and our riders," says Safety Director Jim Pachan. "It helps make sure the operator has control over the vehicle at all times by remaining in the seat in an accident or when the vehicle swerves."

All bus operator trainees will be instructed in the proper use of seat belts. Seat belt training also will be included during every operator's annual Verification of Transit Training (VTT) refresher course.

**Others require seat belts**

Torres notes that, of the nation's largest transit systems, only Metro has not required mandatory use of seat belts. Transit properties in Southern California that require seat belt use include OCTA, Santa Monica, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, Norwalk, Long Beach and Foothill Transit.

Over the years, many bus operators have resisted wearing seat belts, says Torres, because they were uncomfortable or because the operators believed they would not be able to respond quickly in an assault or confrontation with a passenger.

To answer the need for operator comfort during long drives, Metro has retrofitted every coach in the fleet with 72-inch seat belts. The retractable belts, with a button release, will fit operators of every size and shape.

Training in the use of seat belts should ease operators' concerns about defending themselves, Torres says. An LAPD study showed that – after minimal training – officers wearing seat belts could exit their vehicles just as quickly as they could when driving unbelted.

Metro Bus operators will be trained to quick-release a seat belt, swivel in the driver's seat and use their feet and legs to ward off any attacker. Torres also believes the widespread use of video surveillance cameras in buses should reduce the number of assaults or passenger confrontations.

**453 injured in collisions**

He cites a Metro study from Dec. 1, 2002 through Dec. 31, 2003, that found a total of 453 bus operators were injured in traffic collisions. From Jan. 1, 2002 through Dec. 31, 2003, however, there were only 39 unprovoked attacks on Metro Bus operators and other employees.

A study by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration shows that collisions are the leading cause of death and injury on the job, accounting

**Would 'Buckling Up' Have Prevented These Accidents?**

**January 27, 2004.** While making a turn at El Molino and Mariposa avenues, the operator slips from the driver's seat and falls onto the floor of the bus. The out-of-control bus hits several cars and damages a building. The injured operator is off work for a period. Damage and medical claims estimates exceed \$60,000.

**February 23, 2004.** A Metro Bus hits something hard on the surface of Foothill Boulevard. The operator is jostled from the seat and momentarily loses control of the bus, barely missing a utility pole. Bus damages and other costs exceed \$3,500.

**March 1, 2004.** At Vermont and Beverly, a Metro Bus operator swerves on a rain-slick street to miss an SUV. The operator falls out of the driver's seat but manages to keep her foot on the brake, avoiding a collision. The operator is injured. Cost estimates are pending.

for 30 percent of all workplace fatalities.

The same study showed that use of lap-shoulder belts reduced the risk of fatal injury to front-seat occupants by 45 percent and the risk of moderate-to-critical injuries by 50 percent.

"Metro Bus operators owe it to themselves, to their passengers and to the other motorists and pedestrians around them to provide the safest ride possible," says Torres. "Operators need to understand that by wearing a seat belt, there's an excellent chance they'll finish their careers without ever having an injury."

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## Metro Volunteers Return to their 'Hoods to Talk Safety

By RICH MORALLO

(Oct. 13, 2004) Metro volunteers returned to their childhood communities in late September to encourage families and residents to be safe near transit systems.

"This is my 'hood, I grew up here," said Arthur Winston Division 5 Assistant Transportation Manager

Sherry Walker as she set up a Metro information table at the 3rd Annual Vermont Harbor Street Conference.

The desire to provide public service led her to give up part of her weekend and promote Metro at the event.

"This is still my neighborhood and this is good work - giving back to the community," said Walker, who attended nearby Budlong Elementary, John Muir Middle School and Manuel High School.

Meanwhile, to the east in Chesterfield Square, Kathleen Martin was handing out a pencil and bus safety checklist to a youngster on 2nd Avenue during a neighborhood block party.

"See that house," said Martin, a Metro Bus operator out of Carson Division 18, as she pointed to a white painted home across the street. "My cousin used to live right there."

### 'A great feeling'

"It gives me a great feeling to talk Metro with youngsters and community members from where I used to live," said Martin, who grew up a few blocks to the north on 68th Street.

"We're so glad Metro came out to keep us informed about transit," said organizer Christine Spooner, who said families celebrate neighborhood accomplishments at the block party.

Long-time Watts resident and train safety volunteer Wajeha Bilal passed out information to crowds at the Day of the Drum Simon Rodia Jazz Festival held in the shadow of the famous Watts Towers.

"We have a lot of youths in Watts and most of them learn train safety

PHOTO: RICH MORALLO



Metro volunteer Sherry Walker with two neighborhood children at the Vermont Harbor Street Fair.

through repetition," said Wajeha.

A train safety volunteer for the past four years, Wajeha has promoted rail safety at various annual events in the community and also encourages students at nearby Markham Middle School to be careful near the Metro Blue Line tracks.

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San Gabriel Valley Division 9 continues its performance streak with their third consecutive "How You Doin'?" award. Division 9 Transportation Manager Mike Greenwood, second from right, stands proudly with members of the transportation team.



## Division 9 Continues Strong in 'How You Doin'?' Contest

By SHANTAY IOSIA

(Oct. 14, 2004) San Gabriel Valley Division 9 transportation continues its strong performance in August, placing first in the "How You Doin'?" program three months in a row and for the fourth time this year.

The division was able to maintain its winning position by ranking first in accidents per 100,000 miles, along with ranking third in the in-service on-time performance and running hot categories.

Division 9 continued to maintain the high standards of their transportation operations.

General manager Jack Gabig says, "This is attributed entirely to the dedication of the division's bus operators and the management team's focus on performance and customer service. Congratulations for a job well done."

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L.A.-area media will ride the Metro Liner, Friday, along a section of the Metro Orange Line.



PHOTOS: DENIZ DURMAS

## Metro Liner to be Unveiled to Media at North Hollywood Event

- 200 to operate on Metro Orange Line, other corridors

By ED SCANNELL

(Oct. 14, 2004) Metro officials will gather in North Hollywood, Friday, to showcase the first of 200 high-capacity Metro Liner buses, which will operate on many of LA's busiest transit corridors and on the Metro Orange Line when it opens in 2005.

The technologically sophisticated super-sized 60-foot Metro Liner will be the first articulated bus to operate in Los Angeles in two decades.

"The Metro Liner promises to take public transit in Los Angeles to a new level," says Board Chairman Frank Roberts. "This vehicle is a head-turner and so impressive in person that I believe it will attract many new riders to the Metro System and provide our existing customers with service the likes of which they've never experienced."

Two hundred Metro Liner buses, each



### Metro Liner Fact Sheet

**Manufacturer:** North American Bus Industries (NABI), Anniston, Ala.

**Number of buses:** 200

**Cost per bus:** \$633,000

**Bus dimensions:** 60 feet long, 102 inches wide

**Seating capacity:** 57 passengers

**Number of doors:** three, compared

costing \$633,000, are on order from NABI. Delivery of the first 30 vehicles is scheduled to be completed by June 2005 and the remaining 170 vehicles by June 2006.

22 on the Orange Line

Of the 200 Metro Liners, 22 will be deployed on the Metro Orange Line, a 14-mile exclusive transitway now being built across the San Fernando Valley. The remaining 178 Metro Liners will operate on many of Metro’s highest ridership corridors, including Wilshire Boulevard and Vermont Avenue.

On the Metro Orange Line, the big buses will whisk passengers in approximately 40 minutes from Warner Center to the North Hollywood station, where they can make an easy connection to the Metro Red Line just across the street.

“I anticipate the Metro Orange Line will be a huge success and central to that success will be the Metro Liner,” says CEO Roger Snoble. “The Metro Liner will provide passengers with rail-like service in an attractive, aerodynamically designed vehicle that’s far from the breadbox design of the typical transit bus.”

“On our busiest bus lines, we’re already running at 80-second headways and still can’t keep up with demand,” says Deputy CEO John Catoe. “The Metro Liner will give us greater capacity and its wider doors will make boarding and alighting much easier for our passengers.”

First in two decades

The Metro Liner will be the first articulated bus to operate in Los Angeles in two decades. At 60 feet, the Metro Liner is 20 feet longer than the standard transit bus and seats 57 passengers, 45 percent more than the standard bus.

The 320-hp Cummins engine was engineered from the ground up to run on CNG. Previously, most CNG engines were conversions of diesel engine designs.

An “articulate joint,” or bellows, in the center of the bus allows the bus to “bend” as it negotiates curves and corners.

“This is the most advanced transit vehicle ever introduced in North America,” says John Drayton, Metro’s vehicle acquisition manager. “It really is the biggest leap in styling and appearance inside and out that our industry has seen in over 30 years.”

to two in a standard 40-ft. transit bus

**Door width:** 44 inches for quicker boarding compared to 35-36 inches in a typical transit bus

**Engine:** Cummins CNG (compressed natural gas), 320 horsepower (30 percent more than four-cylinder engines in conventional transit buses), 6 cylinders, 8.9 liters

**Fuel Capacity:** 28,000 cubic feet dispersed among 12 tanks

**Range:** 400+ miles

**Bike racks:** three inside the vehicle

**Wheelchair securement areas:** two


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## Metro's Core Values to be New Employee of Quarter Criteria

(Oct. 14, 2004) Metro's Employee of the Quarter program is taking on new life with the introduction of criteria that match the agency's seven core values.

Employee of the Quarter awards will now be given to employees or business unit teams who meet one of Metro's core values: safety, employees, fiscal responsibility, integrity, innovation, customer satisfaction or teamwork.

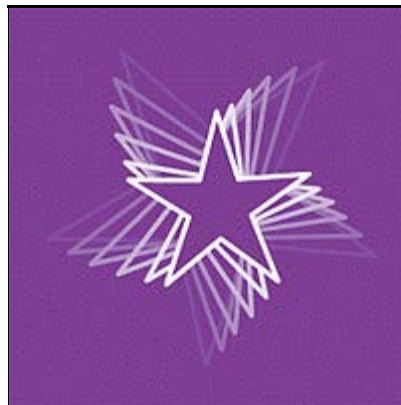
Changing to the new criteria, program sponsors say, will encourage employees to apply the agency's core values in their daily work. The previous program's criteria were quality of work, teamwork, dependability, initiative and motivation.

Under the new Employee of the Quarter program, a business unit may nominate employees or teams in more than one category. However, no more than one person or team can win for each of the seven core values, and no individual or team can win more than once in a fiscal year.

## Nomination requirements

Any employee below the director level who has been with Metro at least six months may be nominated as Employee of the Quarter. Nominations are approved by department executive officers and forwarded to the Employee of the Quarter Selection Committee for approval of quarterly winners.

The winners will be invited to lunch with CEO Roger Snoble. They also will receive a personalized Employee of the Quarter award. Their photo will be placed in the Headquarters cafeteria foyer and an announcement of the honorees will be posted on the Intranet.



Employees or business unit teams now will be selected for Metro Employee of the Quarter based on the following criteria:

**Safety** – Constantly observes a safe work environment and avoids accidents and injuries by identifying hazards and applying preventive measures for the benefit of customers, employees and/or business partners.

**Employees** – Serves as a role model for others by accepting and successfully carrying out additional responsibilities beyond regular job duties, anticipating problems and solving them before they become palpable concerns and/or performing exceptionally well in handling pressure situations.

**Fiscal Responsibility** – Efficiently operates within the management-approved budget by skillfully stretching each taxpayer dollar entrusted to Metro.

**Integrity** – Approaches every decision-making scenario in an honest and professionally ethical manner.

**Innovation** – Exhibits creativity by forming imaginative yet intelligent ideas with purpose that enable Metro to lead the nation in mobility.

The Employee of the Quarter Information Sheet and Nomination Form can be accessed from the Forms Online link at the top of the Intranet home page. At the Forms Online page, scroll down to "Employee Forms" to find the links.

Employee of the Quarter Selection Committee members are Carmen Mayor, Administration; Lucille Coleman, Office of the CEO; Shawn Lowe, Finance; Mary Grace-Hall, Operations; Gaby Maul-Crumby, Procurement; Jon Grace, CP&D; and Ron Jue, Communications. A Metro Construction member will be chosen soon.

**Customer Satisfaction –**

Transcends scope of fundamental job responsibilities to consistently exceed the expectations of our customers.

**Teamwork** – Seamlessly integrates the individual talents of a group in order to deliver an unparalleled final result.

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Passengers board the Metro Liner at the North Hollywood station for trek to Orange Line.



### Metro Liner Debuts at Media Event

(Oct. 15, 2004) The Metro Liner made its debut, Friday, during a media event in the San Fernando Valley. Officials gathered for an inaugural ride along the partially completed Metro Orange Line, beginning at the North Hollywood station. Among those on hand for the event were Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Los Angeles City Councilman Tom LaBonge, California Assemblyman Lloyd Levine (D-40), SFV Sector Governance Council Chairman Coby King, Deputy CEO John Catoe and North American Bus Industries Vice President Bill Coryell.

PHOTOS BY JUAN OCAMPO



Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, right, Councilman Tom LaBonge and Governance Council Chairman Coby King board the Metro Liner.



Above, left, Local officials and Metro staff experienced a Metro Liner ride down a portion of the Metro Orange Line. At right, media capture Metro Liner's maiden voyage.



Deputy CEO John Catoe and local officials introduced the Metro Liner to area media. From left, Governance Council Chairman Coby King, Assemblyman Lloyd Levine, Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Deputy CEO John Catoe, and NABI executive Bill Coryell.

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San Gabriel Valley managers have taken a safety awareness course as part of the sector's effort to reduce accidents. Pictured left to right are sector staffers Dan Ramirez, Emma Nogales, Scott Boim and Liz Armijo-Holbrook; Devinder Singh and A.J. Jackson of Division 3; Operator Colon Gomez; General Manager Jack Gabig and sector staffers Yvonne Brewer-Smith, Julie Ortiz, and Carl Torres.



PHOTO: BOB BOARDMAN

## Division 9 Transportation Gets 'Outstanding' Three-Peat

- 'Safety Bucks' awarded for safe practices

By SHANTAY IOSIA

(Oct. 15, 2004) San Gabriel Valley Division 9 is dedicated to safety. For the third consecutive month, the division has been recognized as outstanding transportation division and has stepped into the top slot with the least amount of accidents per 100,000 miles.

"When it comes to safety we're all on the same page," says Senior Safety Specialist Scott Boim of the San Gabriel Valley Service Sector staff.

Boim introduced the "Safety Buck" program to Division 9 in July and hopes its success will continue throughout Metro.

The program involves everyone at the division. Each manager, supervisor and staff member is required to ride buses twice a month, giving them an opportunity to recognize exceptional safety behavior with a "Safety Buck."

"Safety Buck" winners receive a "Safety First" vest pin and immediate entry into a monthly drawing for a \$50 gift certificate.

**'Very hard to get'**

"At the end of the month there may be 10-12 people in the drawing," says Boim. "The pins are very hard to get, but when you do, the chances of winning the gift certificate are very good."

In order to accurately identify safety concerns and proper procedures, staff members completed a training session arranged by the operators.

"We're getting people out of the offices and into the buses, which is very important because we're making contact with the drivers," says Boim. "The staff has to feel comfortable approaching an operator with twenty years' experience."

During the ride, positive behavior is noted while improper procedures are identified and relayed to the management team to provide additional training.

Interaction with the staff and operators gives both sides an opportunity to identify other concerns. Boim says the operators share grievances about anything from broken seats, resulting in back pain, or traffic-congested areas that should be avoided.

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## International Rating Agency Upgrades Metro Revenue Bonds

(Oct. 15, 2004) A global credit rating service has given Metro an "A+" rating for three series of revenue bonds and an "A" rating on a fourth bond issue.

The "A+" rating, considered a high rating by investors, will result in a lower interest rate for Metro and will help the agency finance its capital projects at the lowest possible cost.

Fitch Ratings upgraded from "A" to "A+" Metro's recent \$180 million Proposition C Sales Tax Revenue Bond issue and a related \$1.22 billion in outstanding Prop C parity bonds. An additional \$1.58 billion in Prop A First Tier Senior Bonds retained an "A+" rating.

In addition, Fitch confirmed the "A" rating on \$11 million in Proposition A First Tier Second Senior Bonds. The rating outlook for all Metro bonds is stable. The highest possible rating is "AAA."

### 'Continued strong performance'

In announcing Metro's bond ratings, Fitch's cited "the continued strong Proposition C sales tax performance." The firm said the ratings uprating also reflects several improvements in Metro's administration and operations over the past several years including:

Increased operating efficiency as reflected in cost per service hour while expanding bus and rail operations,

Greater stability of Metro's management team, with several senior members in their positions for at least five years,

Improved relationship with the Federal Transit Administration, resulting in a Full Funding Grant Agreement for the Eastside Light Rail project, and

The expiration of the 1996 Consent Decree's prohibition on fare increases, providing Metro with greater fare flexibility.

### On-going challenges

However, Fitch Ratings said managing labor costs and Consent Decree mandates are ongoing challenges for Metro.

Metro's \$180 million Proposition C Sales Tax Revenue Bonds and \$1.22 billion in outstanding parity bonds also have been assigned "A1" ratings by Moody's Investors Service and "A+" by Standard and Poor's.

Metro has achieved ratings upgrades on various bonds on five other occasions since 2001, resulting in lower interest rates and reducing the agency's borrowing costs.




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## Committees to Consider Motion on Subway Construction Ban

(Oct. 15, 2004) The Board's Planning and Programming and Construction committees are scheduled to consider a motion, next week, aimed at overturning a voter-approved ban on subway construction.

Other committees will address such issues as a ten-year forecast of Metro revenues and expenditures, a proposed commercial and residential development on Metro-owned property in Boyle Heights, a motion to give Security officers authority to write parking tickets on agency property, and a motion concerning data collection for the UFS system.

### Items 7 & 21, Subway Construction

**Ban:** Los Angeles City Councilman and MTA Director Tom LaBonge is asking the Board to "support an effort to overturn the 1998 prohibition on the use of Proposition A funds (for) subway construction...."

A similar motion recently won unanimous approval by members of the Los Angeles City Council. Now, the Board's Planning and Programming Committee and the Construction Committee both are scheduled to consider the issue.

LaBonge's motion is aimed at ensuring that "the option of constructing subways will be available to address the difficult transportation challenges in Southern California."

Passed by LA County voters in November 1998, Proposition A bans Metro from spending sales tax revenues on subway projects.

**Item 16, Ten Year Forecast:** The Finance and Budget Committee will hear a staff report on the FY 2005 Ten Year Forecast, which identifies expected revenues from sales taxes, fares and grants and how the money will be spent on operations and capital projects.

Among other projections, the forecast anticipates an average annual sale tax growth rate of 4.1 percent and a 10-year operating and capital deficit of \$850 million.

**Item 6, Boyle Heights Development:** A local developer wants to build a multi-screen theater complex, 139 residential units and 74,000 square feet of retail space on a 3.55-acre site owned by Metro in Boyle Heights.

## Committee Meetings for October

- **Planning and Programming**  
Wednesday, Oct. 20, 1 p.m.
- **Executive Management and Audit**  
Thursday, Oct. 21, 9:30 a.m.
- **Finance and Budget**  
Thursday, Oct. 21, 10:30 a.m.
- **Construction**  
Thursday, Oct. 21, 11:30 a.m.
- **Operations**  
Thursday, Oct. 21, 1 p.m.
- **Full Board Meeting**  
Thursday, Oct. 28, 9:30 a.m.

The Planning and Programming Committee will consider a motion giving the CEO authority to enter a six-month exclusive negotiation agreement with the developer, C. Chavez/Soto, LLC.

The proposed development site, located in a two-block section of Cesar Chavez Avenue between Soto and Fickett streets, currently is being used for the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension construction office.

The proposed development would be located about two blocks north of the Metro Gold Line station at 1st and Soto.

**Item 26, Parking Citations:** The Operations Committee will consider a motion giving Metro Security officers authority to issue tickets for parking violations on agency property. Illegal parking usually occurs in clearly marked and posted areas, according to a report to the Board.

In addition to helping solve parking problems, the revenue from the citations will be used to offset security and enforcement costs. Metro Security officers would not be permitted to issue parking tickets in a bus zone or other areas "considered to be an extension of the public highway."

**Item 27, Universal Fare System:** The Operations Committee will consider a motion giving the CEO authority to negotiate a \$6.1 million contract modification with Cubic Transportation Systems, Inc., to provide a regional central data computer system for the Universal Fare System's TAP card program.

The central data computer system would be the primary collection point for bus and rail fare information gathered each day from Metro and the municipal transit operators participating in the TAP (smart card) program.

**In other action,** the Operations Committee will hear a staff report (Item 24) on the accumulation of trash along the Union Pacific tracks that parallel the Metro Blue Line, and a report (Item 25) about the requirement for Metro Bus operators to announce stops and to assist customers with disabilities.


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## \$3 Day Pass a Hit with Riders; Boosts Farebox Revenue

- Riders buying 100,000 Day Passes each weekday
- Avalanche of paper money buries tokens, coins



By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Oct. 19, 2004) You can clearly see it on Metro's monthly revenue reports. Employees in the Cash Counting room know it for sure. The \$3 Day Pass is a hit with customers.

Consider this: In August 2003, tokens made up 50 percent of farebox collections on buses and rail, while bills and coins were 25 percent each. In August 2004, 65 percent of farebox collections were bills, 18 percent were coins and 14 percent were tokens.

Not only that. In Spring 2003, 39 percent of Metro Bus riders surveyed said they used a monthly, semi-monthly or weekly pass. By Spring 2004, however, 36 percent of riders bought a Day Pass while 32 percent used another type of discount pass.

Metro riders are now buying some 100,000 Day Passes each weekday. Revenues from Day Pass sales for July were estimated at approximately \$7.2 million and reached about \$7.7 million in August.

### Big revenue producer

"Currently, the Day Pass produces as much or more revenue than all the other Metro monthly, semi-monthly and weekly pass fare media combined," says April McKay, Day Pass project manager.

In the fourth quarter of FY 2003, taking into account all types of fares, the average fare per boarding was 56 cents. In the fourth quarter of FY 2004, the average fare per boarding was about 61 cents. Day Pass sales made a strong contribution to the increase.

The \$3 Day Pass, introduced in January 2004, is sold only by Metro Bus operators and through Metro Rail ticket vending machines. Neither Metro Customer Centers nor the agency's vendors sell them.

The avalanche of paper money generated by Day Pass sales has required Revenue Collections Manager Marcello Melicor and his Cash Counting staff to shift gears.

In August 2003, the staff handled \$3.7 million in greenbacks – almost exclusively \$1 bills that could quickly be bagged, weighed and sold to a vendor. They spent most of their time sorting and packaging coins and tokens.

In August 2004, however, \$9.4 million in bills flooded in, many of them \$5 and \$10 bills that require special sorting and banding into \$100 bundles for deposit in a bank. Time spent handling tokens and coins declined dramatically.

**‘Up by 800 percent’**

“The number of bills we handle went up by 800 percent,” says Melicor. He notes that the staff must “keep our eyes open” to catch the \$5 and \$10 bills coming in from riders who buy Day Passes for weekend family shopping trips.

Why has the \$3 Day Pass become so popular with Metro patrons? Part of it is the convenience of buying one “ticket” that lasts all day and is good on any part of the Metro system.

But, other factors include last January’s fare restructuring that increased the price of a 90-cent token to \$1.10 and lowered the cash fare from \$1.35 to \$1.25, says McKay.

Still, she says, “I’m very surprised. I didn’t expect the Day Pass to be the Number One fare media.”

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## Minor Route Changes Set for 3 Bus Lines in San Pedro

By RICK JAGER

(Oct. 19, 2004) The South Bay Service Sector will make minor route modifications to three Metro Bus Lines operating in the San Pedro area effective Sunday, October 24.

The changes will take place near San Pedro Peninsula Hospital on Metro Bus Lines 205, (Imperial/Wilmington Metro Rail Station/San Pedro), 447 (San Pedro via 7th Street/Wilmington/Carson/Union Station) and 550 (San Pedro/West Hollywood Express).

These three lines previously operated on Averill Avenue, however, effective Sunday, Oct. 24, they will be taken off Averill Avenue. The three lines will operate one-way service, only, on 7th Street, Weymouth Avenue, 13th Street, and Gaffey Street south of 7th Street.

The changes are the result of meetings with Averill Avenue area residents who sought relief from the noise and vibrations of the buses operating along the avenue.

"This is a perfect example of how the Metro South Bay Service Sector continues to work with the community we serve in providing the best service possible and addressing the community's concerns in terms of Metro Bus operations in the sector," said General Manager Dana Coffey.

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Conservators Susanne Friend and Alyson Souza of ConservArt Associates, Inc. work on the landmark mural by Richard Wyatt in the East Portal of Union Station. The preservation work will help protect the mural from future damage by contaminants and ultraviolet rays.



PHOTO: ANGELENE CAMPUZANO

## Restoration Effort Brightens Faces on East Portal Mural

- Mural depicts LA basin's diverse settlers

By SHANTAY IOSIA

(Oct. 19, 2004) Little remains unchanged throughout Los Angeles history, but artist Richard Wyatt is a veteran at capturing memorable historic moments through his work.

One of his large-scale murals, "City of Dreams/River of History," is incorporated into the wall of the East Portal of Union Station. Metro has recently completed preserving one of the lasting images of Los Angeles culture.

The mural depicts images of Native Americans and members of other ethnic groups who have settled the LA basin over the past 200 years.

"It's a major mural at a landmark site and it's very important that we take care of it in the most professional manner," says Jorge Pardo, Metro art and design manager.

To preserve the mural, Metro Art issued a call to the conservator community. The department also worked closely with Catellus Development Corporation, the owners of the property and the company that originally commissioned the artwork. Metro Real Estate provided \$57,000 to implement the project.

## **Comprehensive conservation**

ConservArt Associates, Inc., a company specializing in mural painting, has a successful track record of restoring significant works. The firm produced a detailed assessment of existing conditions and completed a comprehensive conservation effort.

ConservArt personnel first removed layers of dirt that had built up over the past nine years since the mural was completed in 1995. Contaminants included particles from buses and cars, pigeon droppings and damaging ultraviolet rays from the large glass skylight.

After the cleaning, a protective varnishing coat was applied to ensure the life of the mural. The actual cleaning and varnishing took about a month but preparation, research and special scaffolding requirements dates back to April.

A native of Los Angeles, Wyatt is a well-recognized muralist. His work can be seen at the Capitol Records Building, Watts Tower Art Center, Long Beach City Hall and numerous other cities throughout California. He also completed a pair of tile murals at the Wilshire/Western station.

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## Metro Tops All Transit Agencies in APTA Marketing Competition

(Oct. 20, 2004) Metro grabbed five First Place awards -- more than any other transit agency in the nation -- in the 2004 Adwheel competition, APTA's annual transit marketing awards program.

The "Discover Gold" campaign, designed to publicize the opening of the Metro Gold Line, snagged top honors both for its outdoor advertising program and its public relations media kit.

"Go Metro," introduced at the start of this year as Metro's new "umbrella" campaign, took First Place in the poster category.

For the second straight year, "Metro Quarterly" was cited as the top transit newsletter in the country, while Metro's artful monthly pass series was recognized with a First Place award in the fare media category.

"We're delighted to see our work do so well when compared side by side with that of other transit agencies nationwide," said Matt Raymond, chief communications officer, "but we're even more pleased that, according to our recent surveys, our communications materials are having a measurable positive effect on the public's support for Metro services."

JUAN OCAMPO PHOTO



Freeway drivers 'Discover Gold' during award-winning campaign to publicize the opening of the Metro Gold Line.

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October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month . To find out more, including information on breast exams and scheduling a mammography, visit the website at [www.nbcam.org](http://www.nbcam.org).



## NATIONAL BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

### Cheryl Brown's Experience Highlights Need for Self-Exams

By RICH MORALLO

(Oct. 20, 2004) It was a shock that April morning when Cheryl Brown's doctor said she had detected a couple of lumps in Cheryl's left breast during a routine physical examination.

"I had just received a mammogram eight months earlier and the results were fine," says Cheryl, an assistant transportation manager at Arthur Winston Division 5.

An ultrasound test confirmed the size and location of the lumps. After consultations with a radiologist and a cancer specialist, Cheryl decided to proceed with removal of the lumps.

If the lumps were cancerous, the doctor would remove some of the lymph nodes to see if the cancer had spread.

All the while, Cheryl fretted that she had not regularly checked manually for lumps. "We're advised to conduct self-examinations monthly," she says.

#### 'Do I have cancer?'

Cheryl underwent the two-hour surgery. When she regained conscious, her first question was, "Do I have cancer?"

No, her doctor says, Cheryl was cancer-free. The lumps were benign.

"The lumps were fibroadenomas, common benign breast tumors that are too small to feel although sometimes they grow to several inches in diameter," Cheryl says.

According to the American Cancer Society, African-American women are affected with fibroadenomas more often than women of other racial or ethnic groups.

"I was humbled by the fact that God had granted me grace, and the prayers of family and friends made the difference," she says.

#### 'Know thyself'

Cheryl advises women to "know thyself" - conduct self-examinations and



With a scary experience behind her, Cheryl Brown advises women to conduct regular breast self-examinations.

not rely just on annual mammograms.

On Friday, Nov. 5, Cheryl will help sponsor a fundraiser for a local organization, Women of Color Breast Cancer Survivor's Support Project.

"This group links African American survivors to one another and to resources and services," she says.

The function will be held at the FantaSea Yacht Club, 4215 Admiralty Way in Marina Del Rey. For more information call 310-780-8212.

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## Fresh Paint, New Menu Ordering System Planned for Metro Café

- Toasted sandwiches to be added
- Menu tickets for grill and deli orders

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Oct. 20, 2004) The Metro Café will be closed for two days in mid-November. But, when it reopens, it will have a fresh coat of paint and a new way of doing things.

The cafeteria plans to close, Nov. 11-12, so Facilities Maintenance can repaint the walls and install a new steam table, says Manager Bruce Ueno. A new toaster oven also will be added so deli chefs can prepare Quizno's-style toasted sandwiches.

"It's been a while since we added something this different to our menu," says Ueno. "We think it will be a nice change of pace."

When the cafeteria reopens the following week, Ueno plans to introduce a new "menu ticket" ordering system customers will use to purchase food items in the grill and deli areas at breakfast and lunch.

### List of items, prices

The breakfast ticket will list the names and prices of all items – pancakes, eggs, toast, etc. – prepared by the chef. The lunch "Grill Menu Ticket" also will list items and prices and will include listings for weekly grill specials.

How will the menu ticket ordering system work?

The menu tickets will be placed for customer use near the grill and deli areas. A customer who wants to buy a turkey cheeseburger combo (\$3.69) with extra bacon (99 cents), for example, will write the number 1 beside each item's price on the menu list.

The customer also can indicate whether it's a "to go" order. After selecting all items, the customer will write his or her name at the top and hand the ticket to the chef.

When the order is ready, the chef will call the customer's name for pick up. In the meantime, says Ueno, the customer can leave the grill or deli line to select other items, such as a drink, soup or dessert.

At the checkout counter, the clerk will add up the prices indicated on the menu ticket, along with other items the customer has selected,

Item	Price	To Go	Hot
#1 Philly Steak Combo	\$ 4.49		
#2 Grilled Chicken Sandwich Combo	\$ 4.79		
#3 Bacon Cheeseburger Combo	\$ 4.59		
#4 Classic Cheeseburger Combo	\$ 3.59		
#5 Classic Hamburger Combo	\$ 3.49		
#6 Turkey Cheeseburger Combo	\$ 3.59		
#7 Turkey Burger Combo	\$ 3.59		
#8 Combo Hot Dog Combo	\$ 3.19		
#9 Chicken Quesadilla Combo	\$4.79		
<small>(prices include tax, but not tip or beverage)</small>			
Philly Steak Sandwich	\$ 3.99		
Premium Angus Cheeseburger	\$ 4.19		
Premium Angus Burger	\$ 3.99		
Classic Bacon Cheeseburger	\$ 2.99		
Classic Cheeseburger	\$ 2.19		
Classic Hamburger	\$ 1.99		
Turkey Burger	\$ 2.19		
Chicken Breast Sandwich	\$ 2.99		
Fish Sandwich	\$ 2.99		
Grilled Hot Dog	\$ 1.49		
Patty Melt	\$ 2.35		
Tuna Melt	\$ 2.35		
Grilled Cheese	\$ 1.59		
Grilled Ham and Cheese	\$ 2.35		
Fries	\$ 0.99		
Sauce	\$ 1.25		
Weekly Grill Special #1	(see menu)		
Weekly Grill Special #2	(see menu)		
Add Cheese Slice	\$ 0.25		
Add Bacon	\$ 0.99		
Add additional classic hamburger patty	\$ 1.19		
<small>Other: _____</small>			

Metro Café will introduce a lunch grill menu ticket Nov. 15. A similar ticket will be used to order breakfast in the cafeteria.

and compute the final purchase.

### **Speed and accuracy**

"We're hoping this organizes the grill and deli service better so we can more efficiently prepare the meals," says Ueno. "It should increase the speed and accuracy of the checkout. There shouldn't be any question about what the customer ordered."

To kick off the new menu ticket system, Ueno is planning a "grand reopening," Nov. 15, with a drawing for prizes and free meals. All menu tickets turned in during the first week will be eligible for the drawing.

The move to use the menu ticket system in the Metro Café was suggested by the cafeteria committee, according to Ueno. Sodexo, the company that manages the cafeteria, uses the menu ticket system at other locations, including Disney Studios.

The menu ticket system "will be an enhancement once people get used to it," says Ueno. "The grill and deli are segments of the cafeteria we see expanding. People are asking for more choices and this will make possible a greater variety."

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Division 18  
Operator  
Dionne  
Graham  
gets ready  
for  
Rideshare  
Week event  
with LAX  
employees.

## Dionne Graham was 'Talking Metro' at LAX's Rideshare Week

By RICH MORALLO

(Oct. 21, 2004) The man had never used public transit in Los Angeles and was wondering how he could get to his job at the airport.

Dionne Graham, a Carson Division 18 Metro Bus operator participating in the recent Clean Air Country Fair hosted by Los World Airports (LAWA) told him how.

"Since he lived in Norwalk I explained how he could use either Metro Bus or the Metro Green Line to get to work," said Graham, as she staffed an information table with bus and train schedules, and other transit information for the 400 employees who attended the event.



Operator Dionne Graham "talks Metro" with LAX employees.

"LAWA employee transit ridership has increased 38 percent in the last year," said Devon Deming, Rideshare program manager at the airport. "This is no accident, and is a direct result of the strong partnership between LAWA Rideshare and Metro South Bay."

A three-year Metro operator, Graham talked about the convenience and value of public transit to dozens of visitors at her table.

## Celebrating Rideshare Week

"I came to talk Metro to the airport people since we were also celebrating Rideshare Week," she added. Graham

works with the Division Advisory Council, a group of volunteer Metro staff who promote transit and anti-vandalism themes in the community.

Rideshare Week is a statewide initiative to cut the number of people who drive alone.

"Another visitor had stopped using Metro when he left his job in downtown Los Angeles and started working at the airport," Graham said, "so I gave him a couple of bus lines that would get him to his new job from his home."

The man promised the operator that he would give Metro another try.

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## Metro Releases Draft EIR on Proposed New Division 6

By RICK JAGER

(Oct. 21, 2004) Metro released the draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR), Thursday, on the proposed new West Los Angeles Transportation Center (Division 6) for a 45-day public comment and review period.

The new Division 6 will be a modern, state-of-the-art bus operating facility for up to 175 CNG buses that will serve the community and other parts of Central and West Los Angeles.

The new location is a 4.7-acre site on Jefferson Boulevard between Rodeo Road and National Avenue. The facility will replace the current Division 6 located in Venice.

All access to the proposed division will be from Jefferson, with the bulk of the traffic in and out of the facility occurring well before and after rush hours to avoid traffic congestion in the area.

## Evaluate possible impacts

The draft EIR will evaluate a wide range of possible impacts of the proposed facility. These include traffic, noise and air quality, which are the issues that have generated the most questions from the public so far.

Under regulations set by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), a 45-day public comment period precedes the development of a final EIR. That document will incorporate comments submitted on the draft EIR and responses to those comments.

Before the project can proceed, the Board of Directors will review and vote on approval of the final EIR later this year. Public comments must be received by Dec. 6.


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## 35 Metro Employees are Winners in Rideshare Drawing

(Oct. 21, 2004) Thirty-five Metro employees were winners in the Rideshare Week prize drawing held Oct. 15. Prizes include Metro bags, T-shirts and battery-powered fans.

The prizes are being delivered to winners this week via interoffice mail.

The Metro winners' names also will be entered in a prize drawing Metro Commute Services will conduct later this month. That drawing will include the names of all those who participated in Rideshare Week activities, Oct. 4-8, throughout LA County.

The Metro winners are:

### Metro Bag

- Audrey Chiu – Office of Systems Safety
- James Eng – ITS

### T-Shirts

- Alan Addie – Metro Green Line Maintenance
- Terence Carey – Contract Administration
- Robert Castanon – Metro Blue Line Transportation
- Felipe Castillo – Service Performance Analysis
- Carrie Johnson-Bradford – TDI
- Ilda Licon – Planning & Development
- Marc Littman – Public Relations
- Barbara McDowell – OIG
- Basil Panas – OMB
- Barbara Thomasson – Audit

### Battery-Powered Fans

- Nadine Beffa – OMB
- Dave Buscombe – Audit
- To Chau – Central City Division 1 Maintenance

- Dan Colonello – Mailroom
- Douglas Creveling – Central City Division 1 Maintenance
- Hope Gamble – Administration
- Jorge Garcia – Contractor Pre-Qualification
- Joe Giba – ITS
- John Gillen – Gateway Division 10 Maintenance
- Oscar Gonzalez – East Valley Division 15 Maintenance
- Mattie Jones – ITS
- Richard Maldonado – Operations Central Instruction
- Eduardo Mancillas – Crossroads Depot Division 2 Maintenance
- Tim Mengle – Treasury
- Diane Mumolo – East Valley Division 15 Maintenance
- Joe O'Donnell – Contract Administration, Construction
- Abigail Rubalcaba – West Hollywood Division 7
- Suresh Shrimavle – Metro Red Line Maintenance
- Carlos Silva – Central City Division 1 Maintenance
- Jessica Smith – Accounting
- Michael Turk – Operations Central Instruction
- Bryan Wielandt – Logistics
- Henry Wielandt – Purchasing

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Farewell cake for Operator Rosendo Reyes was purchased and enhanced by his friends at the Metro Gold Line.

### Metro Gold Line Employees Salute Operator Rosendo Reyes

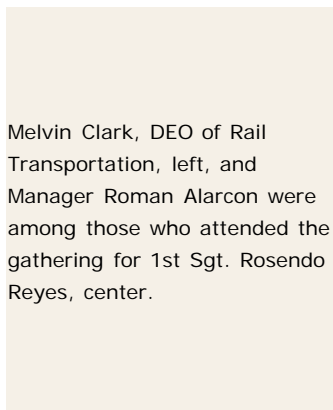
- 1st Sgt. Reyes leaves for National Guard duty in November

By SHANTAY IOSIA

(Oct. 21, 2004) After 19 years in the Marine Corps, Metro's Rosendo Reyes sought another challenge and transferred to the Army National Guard. Less than two months after he enlisted, he received orders to report to Kuwait.

"Anyone who signs up will be deployed," says Reyes, 45, who joined Metro as a bus operator in April 1984.

His colleagues and friends from the Metro Gold Line held a farewell party, Oct. 15, marking the occasion with food, drinks, music and cake. Many expressed their appreciation for his service and wished him a safe return.



Melvin Clark, DEO of Rail Transportation, left, and Manager Roman Alarcon were among those who attended the gathering for 1st Sgt. Rosendo Reyes, center.



PHOTOS: SHANTAY IOSIA

Reyes leaves for Operation Enduring Freedom in November, but his active duty begins well before take off.

### **Responsible for his men**

1st Sgt. Reyes is responsible for the men in his 160th Infantry company. He has to ensure that all of their legal entanglements and obligations here in the U.S. are resolved before the troops report to duty.

"Some of them have issues with child support that have to be taken care of and blessed by the judge before they are deployed," says Reyes.

The Desert Storm veteran says he is comfortable with the job but is very concerned about the welfare of his family while he is away. His wife, Sandra, whose father is a former Marine, understands the demands of the military.

Reyes says his youngest child, Jonathon, 7, will not fully understand until he is gone. However it is his daughter, Isabella, 9, who concerns him the most.

### **'Really close relationship'**

"We have a really close relationship," says Reyes. "We do karate together. I taught her how to boogie board and even how to navigate with a hand compass. "

Sandra Reyes admires her husband's dedication to everything he does, but especially to his family.

As the summer came to an end, Reyes pitched a tent in the back yard and decorated the trees with Christmas lights. He provided snacks for the children and he and his wife read scary stories to them.

"This is what they will remember as they grow up, quality time as a family unit," says Mrs. Reyes.

Reyes says that, although Isabella understands her father has to leave for war, she does not comprehend the amount of time he will be away.

With the transition, training, travel time and active duty, Reyes expects to be deployed for about 18 months.

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Controller Josie Nicasio, center in pink, and Accounting Department managers were honored at a luncheon to mark National Boss Day.



PHOTO BY EDINA PAGADORA

## Accounting Employees Fete Bosses with Lunch, Poetry

(Oct. 22, 2004) Did you let National Boss Day slip by unnoticed? Since the annual observance occurred on Saturday, Oct. 16, many did.

But, not the employees in the Accounting Department. They celebrated with an appreciation lunch for Controller Jose Nicasio and their managers, Dave Wakeling, Harvey Saulter, Jesse Soto, Jim Cudlip, Perry Blake and Rene Decena.

The department also expressed appreciation for their leadership in this poem by Supervisor Jane Mohsin of Accounts Payable:

Thank you, Dave, for paychecks done,  
For deductions, W-2's, and all that fun.  
For direct deposit, that goes in our banks,  
Our bills get paid, to you our thanks.  
The occasional times we get a raise,  
Your payroll department is all we praise.

Thank you, Harvey, for all that you do,  
For helping project accounting and GL too.  
You're a manager, a friend to every one,  
Highly appreciated, disliked by none.  
May you remain healthy is what we pray,  
An asset to our department, here to stay.

Thank you, Jesse, for helping out,  
We call you for help and scream and shout.  
You smile and rush our problem to fix,  
Whether it's oracle, browser or a mix.

When systems fail and problems are there,  
You are always helping everywhere.

Thank you, Jim, for payments on time,  
We save on discounts every nickel and dime.  
The invoices get scanned, there's nothing to hide,  
The workflow and approval, online we provide  
The bill-paying scorecard, unmatched invoices, too,  
Accounts payable doing better with a system so new.

Thank you, Perry, you are so kind,  
The reports are tough but smiles we find.  
No matter what we see you smiling,  
Who can care more for reporting and filing?  
The goodies in your cube are for us to eat  
For snack or for lunch a welcome treat.

Thank you, Rene, for excel training,  
For audits, reports, we quit complaining,  
For CAFR, journal entries and bank recs,  
For all the processes, balance and checks,  
The training that you give helps us all,  
That is why in our work we don't stumble and fall.

Thank you, Josie, for everything,  
A better place to work is now Accounting,  
With picnics, seminars and teambuilding retreats,  
Every standard for work this department now meets.  
We all work here as a well-knit team,  
And hold each other in high esteem.

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Division 9's "Operators in motion" is linked to the Presidential Active Adult Challenge.

Information: <http://fitness.gov/news/fitaward/fitaward.html>



## Division 9 to Launch 'Operators in Motion' Health Walk Program

- See also> [Work out with 'Metro Fit'](#) at rally in Pershing Square

(Oct. 22, 2004) Put your walkin' shoes on! That's what employees at San Gabriel Valley Division 9 are being asked to do, beginning Nov. 1, to take part in "Operators in Motion," an 18-week fitness program.

The walking program, which is linked to the Presidential Active Adult Challenge, is aimed at promoting regular physical activity, employee wellness and fitness with 30-minute walks.

The division will schedule two group walks from 10:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. and again from 12:30 p.m. to 1 p.m., Monday through Friday, around the division yard.

Each employee who completes the 18-week program will receive a personal pedometer to monitor fitness progress, a safe-walking handbook, a sports bottle, T-shirt, headset radio and a certificate of completion.

### For more information

For more information about the Division 9 program, employees should contact Transportation Manager Michael Greenwood or assistant managers Phil Moores or Larry Cosner.

The "Operators in Motion" program will provide a healthy, safe way for employees to stay active, say the program's sponsors. The President's Council on Physical Fitness & Sports recommends walking 30 minutes a day at least five or more days a week.

Research shows that routine exercise can be an effective way to help prevent such chronic conditions as heart disease, Type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis, degenerative disc disease, and conditions associated with obesity, such as arthritis, stroke and depression.

Nationally, \$600 billion is spent on healthcare costs related to these conditions each year.



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# Metro Fit

Make LA your workout

## Work it out at Metro's noontime fitness rally and walking tour in Downtown on Wednesday

- Be there: Wednesday, Nov. 17, at noon.
- Go Metro! Meet the Metro Art Docents on plaza level at 11:30 a.m. to join forces for noontime workout.
- Wear something 'Metro' - it's a press event and photo op!

If you exercise on your lunch hour - or are considering it - then how about kicking it up a notch with a noontime workout at the Civic Center Station Plaza (Temple Street entrance) next Wednesday, Nov. 17?

Los Angeles City Councilman and Board Member Tom LaBonge will join Metro, the American Heart Association, Ketchum-Downtown YMCA and UCLA to kick off a new fitness campaign called "Metro Fit" to show Angelinos how to lose pounds, save money and discover L.A. using public transit.

The event will feature a "Metro Stair Climb" led by Ketchum-Downtown YMCA and a 30-minute lunch-hour walking tour through downtown L.A. led by the Los Angeles Conservancy.

## Get with the program!

The campaign seeks to help health-conscious Angelinos find new ways to get more daily walking exercise. A recent UCLA study reveals that 41 percent of county residents get no more than 10 minutes of continuous exercise each week, which is lower than the 30 minutes a day, five days per week recommended for optimum health.

## Directions to 'Metro Fit'

- Meet the Metro Art Docents at 11:30 a.m. at the Gateway Building, plaza level. The Docents will lead the Metro team on the Metro Red Line to the Civic Center Station, Temple entrance on Hill Street.
- Wear exercise clothes and something 'Metro'.
- Register now for updates. There's more to come as the program develops.
- Commit by contacting coordinators: Dave Sotero, 922-3007, or Gayle Anderson, 922-2702.  
[soterod@metro.net](mailto:soterod@metro.net)

Employees from Metro, the Metro Art Docents, the American Heart Association, Ketchum-Downtown YMCA, UCLA and others will raise their heart rates by taking the "Metro Stair Climb," a 100-step ascent from the Civic Center Red Line subway station. They will then begin a half-hour discovery tour of downtown attractions available by Metro. The walking tour will include City Hall, Disney Concert Hall, Museum of Contemporary Art, Bunker Hill, Central Library, the Biltmore Hotel and Pershing Square.

[andersonga@metro.net](mailto:andersonga@metro.net)

### **Go Metro!**

Bring exercise clothes to work and slip into something "Metro." Meet the Metro Art Docents on the Plaza level at 11:30 a.m. We'll go as a group in a show of strength on the Metro Red Line to the Civic Center Station.

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## Court Again Refuses to Halt Orange Line Work; Metro Releases Revised Environmental Study

- [Three alternative routes studied](#)
- [Environmental report conclusions](#)

By ED SCANNELL

(Oct. 22, 2004) Los Angeles Superior Court Judge David Yaffe denied a request, Friday, by Citizens Organized for Smart Transit (COST) to halt construction on the Metro Orange Line.

COST had asked the Court to stop work on the San Fernando Valley East-West Transit Corridor until the Board of Directors certifies a Revised Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR).

While allowing construction of the line to continue, Yaffe and attorneys for Metro and COST finalized the court's wording of a writ implementing an earlier decision by the California Court of Appeal. That court found that Metro should have considered a Rapid Bus Alternative in its original environmental study.

County Counsel will brief the Board in closed session at its Oct. 28 monthly meeting regarding legal issues surrounding the case before the Board considers any action in open session. Judge Yaffe gave the Board until Nov. 3 to respond to the writ.

### Environmental report issued

Meanwhile Friday, Metro released a Revised Final Environmental Impact Report (Revised FEIR) for a 30-day public review. The draft report includes the court-ordered study of a Rapid Bus alternative to the current 14-mile Metro Orange Line project now under construction from North Hollywood to Warner Center.

The Revised FEIR was prepared at the direction of the Court of Appeal, which ruled, July 19, that the east-west corridor's Final EIR also should have considered multiple Rapid Bus routes as an alternative to the Metro Orange Line project.

The Final EIR evaluated three project alternatives: a No Build Alternative, a Transportation Systems Management (TSM) Alternative (enhancement of the existing bus system), and a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Alternative (three variations including the Metro Orange Line Full BRT).

### Three alternative routes studied

Based on the court's decision, Metro and its consultants studied three Rapid Bus alternatives for the Revised FEIR including:

Three East-West Rapid Bus Routes Alternative (Sherman Way,

Vanowen Street and Victory Boulevard)

Five East-West Rapid Bus Routes Alternative (Sherman Way, Victory Boulevard, Oxnard Street, Burbank Boulevard, and Chandler Boulevard)

Rapid Bus Network Alternative (as submitted by COST, this network of nine Rapid Bus routes would consist of three east-west routes and six north-south routes)

### **Environmental report conclusions**

The Revised FEIR examined the environmental impacts and the costs and benefits of each Rapid Bus alternative and the Metro Orange Line and reached the following conclusions:

The Metro Orange Line would attract substantially more new riders than any of the Rapid Bus alternatives.

The Metro Orange Line would result in the greatest system-wide travel time savings.

The Metro Orange Line would have the most consistent improved travel time, which would not be compromised over time as the result of increasing traffic congestion.

The Rapid Bus alternatives would all have lower capital costs than the Metro Orange Line because of their minimal construction requirements. However, because the Rapid Bus alternatives would attract fewer new riders than the Metro Orange Line, the Rapid Bus alternatives exhibit poor cost-effectiveness measured on a per-new-rider basis.

The exclusive transitway operation of the Metro Orange Line has distinct land use benefits that would encourage transit oriented development at or around stations and is consistent with adopted local planning documents.

Operating costs for the Rapid Bus Network Alternative would be up to \$10 million more each year than the cost to operate the Metro Orange Line.

The Revised FEIR analyzes the Rapid Bus alternatives and is available for public review on Metro's website at [www.metro.net/projects\\_plans/](http://www.metro.net/projects_plans/) and in the Dorothy Peyton Gray Transportation Library.

### **30-day review period**

The public review period for the Revised FEIR is 30 days following approval from the Office of Planning and Research. It commences Oct. 23 and ends Nov. 22. Currently, no public hearings on the contents of the document are scheduled.

Once the public comment period has expired, Metro will evaluate and respond to the environmental issues raised in comments. The comments and responses will be incorporated into the Revised FEIR.

Upon completion, the Revised FEIR will be presented to the Metro Board Dec. 13 for consideration of certification and approval of a San Fernando Valley East-West Transit Corridor project.



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Helping Division 10 Transportation employees to a heaping serving of celebration for their safety achievements are, from left, assistant managers Alva Carrasco, Larry Smith and Rich Van Der Geugten, and Division Transportation Manager Karl Downs.

## Division 10 Transportation: 79 Days and No Lost-Time Accident

(Oct. 26, 2004) It's 79 days and counting for Gateway Division 10 Transportation – almost four months without a lost-time accident.

Transportation also has been able to reduce CalOSHA recordable accidents by 70 percent, from 135 cases in FY 2003 to only 41 cases in FY 2004.

And, to date this fiscal year, the division has seen a 22 percent decrease in recordable cases. There's also been a reduction in Workers' Compensation claims.

"This is a great improvement in safety," said Westside/Central General Manager David Armijo. "These are the dividends we reap from the collective efforts of our bus operators and the management team at the division. Fewer lost work days also result in better service for our customers."

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PHOTO: SHANTAY IOSIA



Crossroads Depot Division 2's Floyd Haggerty aims to decrease accidents and improve the work environment with his mentoring program for bus operators.

## Division 2's Floyd Haggerty Works to Reduce Bus Accidents

By SHANTAY IOSIA

(Oct. 26, 2004) After sitting on an accident review board for Crossroads Depot Division 2, operator Floyd Haggerty was inspired to make a difference.

Haggerty began developing his mentoring program in July to reduce what he considered minor and preventable accidents.

"I sat on the board and watched all these accidents come under review," says Haggerty. "Seventy percent to eighty percent of them were mishaps with the right mirror. That's controllable. All you have to do is be aware of it."

Part of Haggerty's awareness effort is to ride the Metro bus lines at random to discuss concerns with operators and passengers. With 24 years behind the wheel with Metro, Haggerty hopes to decrease accidents within the division.

"I'm basically out there as an encourager," says Haggerty. "As a team, as a family, we're all working for the same objective, zero accidents."

## 'On-street' operation

The benefit of this, says Haggerty, is that he sees the operators in their true "on-street" operation.

"When someone from instruction or management boards your bus, your whole street operation changes," he says. "If you weren't calling stops before, you're going to start."

Seeing the drivers in their natural element allows for better observations and clearer resolution for the problems that occur on the lines.

Haggerty hopes to receive support from his colleagues to advocate the program and its objective to improve the work environment and reduce accidents.

"It's not about being a transportation company. It's about being the number one transportation company with the safest drivers," says Haggerty. "That's the incentive. Just knowing you're the best at what you do."

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## Sheriff Names Deputy Gary De Bondt a 'Legendary Lawman'

(Oct. 26, 2004) Sheriff Lee Baca has named Deputy Gary De Bondt of Metro's Transit Services Bureau a "Legendary Lawman" for his many years of service to the LASD and the public.

Baca presented the award to De Bondt and 14 other patrol and field operations deputies during a ceremony, Oct. 21, in the City of Commerce.

"Gary has done a great job as our team leader in the San Gabriel Valley sector," says Transit Police Chief Capt. Dan Finkelstein, who has known De Bondt since both were Sheriff's Explorers. "He was instrumental in starting and maintaining our Sheriff's Reserve and Explorer programs, and he also volunteers many hours at Metro's weekend events."

To be eligible for the award – presented this year for the first time – deputies must have 10 or more years' service. De Bondt has 26 years' LASD service.

PHOTO: LIZ ARMijo-HOLBROOK



Deputy Gary De Bondt received a "Legendary Lawman" certificate and a silver star pin embossed with the number 13, signifying his ranking as the 13th most senior deputy of 5,000 in the LASD.


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## Metro Store Offers Discounts on Dell Computer Products

- Check it out> [Metro Store's Dell discounts page](#)

(Oct. 27, 2004) If you're looking for a deal on a new computer, look no further than the Metro Store.

Metro has teamed up with Dell to offer employee discounts ranging up to 25 percent on a variety of computers and other electronic products.

Employees can choose among three desktop computers ranging in price from \$749 to \$1,728 and three laptops ranging in price from \$1,171 to \$1,707, along with deals on other equipment.

Among the Dell products and discounts offered through the Metro Store are a Dimension 8400 computer with Pentium processor at a 25 percent discount; a 21 percent discount on an Inspiron 1150 laptop with an Intel Celeron processor; an Axim electronic organizer for \$199; and a Targus BlackTop Messenger Notebook Case for \$40.

## Available on the Web

Although the Dell products won't be on display in the Metro Store, they will be available for purchase on the web. Dell products can be viewed by starting on the Metro Store web page, clicking on "Discounts" and then on "Other Discounts."

Orders also can be placed over the phone (800-695-8133) in English or Spanish. Callers may experience lengthy wait times. Products will be shipped free with 3- to 5-day delivery.

"These are the kinds of discounts we hope to offer Metro employees on high-value products," says Danielle Boutier, executive manager, Communications Services, whose department runs the Metro Store. "Employees also are eligible for 20 percent discounts on all logo items in the store."

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PHOTOS: SHANTAY IOSIA



Division 2 mechanics Dennis Calderone, left, and Ky Van helped develop and organize the Sacrificial Cage. It has proven to save space and time.

## Div. 2 Mechanics' Inventions Will Improve Safety on the Job

By SHANTAY IOSIA

(Oct. 27, 2004) When you're trying to remove a 150-pound alternator from a bus, one slip could cost you a thumb.

That's the danger Mechanic Dennis Calderone and his colleagues at Crossroads Depot Division 2 had in mind when they invented several tools to reduce the risks of such injuries.

One tool is used to assist a mechanic during the removal of an alternator. It is mounted on the engine hoist, also known as the "cherry picker," to support most of the weight for easier removal.

"Before, it took about two or three guys to lift the alternator and maneuver it," says Calderone. "A lot of times you end up with back problems."

## A collaboration



Calderon and Van use the Sacrificial Cart to transport the most frequently used sacrificial

Calderone and Mechanic Ky Van, in collaboration with other Division 2 personnel, used the same concept to create an enhanced tool to remove air compressors.

Although the air compressor is slightly lighter than the alternator, it has its unique challenges. The traditional method involved one mechanic under the bus pushing the compressor up, while another mechanic on the other end attempted to pull it out.

"It gets to be very dangerous because sometimes hoses get in the way, coolant leaks or you get tired and you just want to take a break," Calderone says.

The special fitting of the attachment allows access to the discharge outlet so it can be pivoted in a 360-degree motion to guide it along the hoses and other things blocking its removal, explains Van.

### **A lot safer job**

"It won't save a lot of time," he says. "But it makes the job a lot safer."

One invention that has proven to save the division time is the "Sacrificial Cage."

The Sacrificial Cage is a storage case with some 30 compartments for sacrificial glass replacements. Each compartment is labeled with a number and diagram of the corresponding spot on the bus.

"It gets everything organized and saves space so the employees can just walk up and get what they need," says maintenance manager Donell Harris.

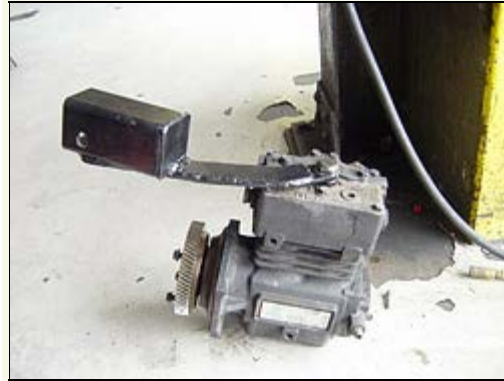
The previous method required several mechanics to search for the glass replacements stacked on wooden pallets.

### **'Moved to the bottom'**

"Sometimes you have to lift through three or four shipments to get to what you want," says Calderone. "By the time you're done the next guy may want what you've just moved to the bottom of the pile."

In addition to the Sacrificial Cage, the staff of Division 2 developed the portable "Sacrificial Cart" to transport the most commonly used sacrificial glass replacements.

glass to and from the buses. This saves the employees time and reduces risks of injuries that occur when employees carry several replacements.



Division 2's attachment, shown here affixed to an air compressor, swivels at a 360-degree angle to allow for safer removal of the air compressor.



Calderone assists Van in removing an air compressor using the cherry picker and the attachment they invented. The tool, attached to the compressor, slides over the end of a "cherry picker" for lifting.

Additionally, the top of the cart is used for the discarded pieces, reducing the number of trips to the waste bin and improving efficiency.

Van and Calderone say the division's next project involves a tool that will be used to remove the radiator. It is in its experimental stages as they await a used radiator to test it out.

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Metro Procurement & Material Management staff members shown here with National Purchasing Institute officials are, from left, Bruce Feerer, Bruce Warrensford, Lonnie Mitchell, Jeanne Kinsel, Ron Dupuis, Ruthe Holden, Bob New, Ava Jordan-Shepherd, Ted Montoya and Fred Origel.



### Procurement, Material Management Dept. Wins 'Achievement of Excellence' Award

(Oct. 27, 2004) Metro's Procurement & Material Management Department has been named a winner of the "Achievement of Excellence in Procurement" award.

Metro was the only transit agency among the 40 California award winners. The National Purchasing Institute, the Institute for Supply Management, the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing and the California Association of Public Purchasing Officers, Inc. present the award annually.

The award is presented to public or non-profit organizations that have adopted progressive procurement systems and have demonstrated continued excellence. A total of 114 agencies nationwide qualified for this year's award.

Among California agencies receiving the Achievement of Excellence in Procurement award this year were the Los Angeles DWP and the counties of Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, Ventura and San Diego.

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The award-winning Accounting team shown here with Chief Financial Officer Dick Brumbaugh (back row, center) and Controller Josie Nicasio (front row, center) are, from back row left, Perry Blake, Danny Santos, Jesse Soto and Harvey Saulter. Front row from left, Jeff Danielski, Alex Perez, Rene Decena, Martha Mengistu and Marcelo Reyes.



PHOTO: BILL HEARD

## Accounting Department Wins Fifth 'Excellence' Award

By JEFF DANIELSKI

(Oct. 28, 2004) For the fifth year in a row, the Metro Accounting Department has been honored with the prestigious Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting.

"The Accounting Department gets the work done in a quiet way, amidst the invoices, payrolls, audits, scorecards, and billings, and we often forget to stop and savor the accomplishments," says Controller Josie Nicasio.

Nicasio and Chief Financial Officer Richard Brumbaugh have made it their goal to receive the certificate every year.

The award is the highest recognition in the area of governmental accounting and finance reporting, and is awarded annually by the Government Finance Officers Association.

"This is a good time to say 'Job well done,'" says Nicasio. "Let's keep up the good work, and go get Number Six!"



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PHOTOS: BILL HEARD



Electronic metal detector "wands" were used to screen Board Room visitors. From left are Metro Security officers Enrique Ortiz and Henry Solis and Sgt. John Davis.

## New Security Measures in Effect for Board Meetings

- Additional security planned for Gateway Building

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Oct. 28, 2004) New measures aimed at providing greater security during Board of Directors meetings went into effect, Thursday, at the Gateway Building.

Metro Security officers stationed in the Board Room lobby checked visitors' handbags and parcels, and used metal detecting "wands" similar to those employed at airports.

Additional security actions are planned for the Headquarters building in the months ahead, says Sheriff's Lt. Mike Herek, director of Metro Security.

By mid-2005, "walk-through" magnetometers and package screening machines will be placed in the building's Plaza-level lobby. They will be used for weapons screening during high-alert periods.

### Employees will be affected

Thursday's security checks did not include employees wearing Metro ID badges, but employees will be affected during periods of heightened alert, Herek said.

Visitors who enter the building from either the Plaza or the parking structure during high-alert periods will be directed to the Plaza level and will be required to go through security screening.



Sheriff's Lt. Mike Herek was named director of Metro Security earlier this year. He is responsible for security at Metro facilities and for the 99-member Metro Security staff and 100 contract security personnel.

Similar security equipment has been in use for some time at the County Hall of Administration, City Hall, federal and state court and office buildings and at welfare offices, Herek said.

"This is the beginning of what's to come," he said. "Times have changed."

Metro Security Sgt. John Davis checks a visitor's bag during a security screening in the Board Room lobby.



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## Sector Governance Councils Schedule November Meetings

By RICK JAGER

(Oct. 28, 2004) Metro's Service Sector Governance Councils have scheduled their monthly public meetings for November to discuss transit issues of interest in their sectors.

The meeting times and locations:

- San Fernando Valley Sector, Wed., Nov. 3, 6:30 p.m., Marvin Braude Constituent Service Center Community Room, 6262 Van Nuys Boulevard, Van Nuys
- Westside/Central Sector, Thurs., Nov. 4, 3 p.m., La Cienega Tennis Center, Sunset Room, 325 S. La Cienega Blvd., Beverly Hills
- San Gabriel Valley Sector, Tues., Nov. 9, 5 p.m., San Gabriel Sector Office, 3369 Santa Anita Avenue, El Monte
- Gateway Cities Sector, Wed., Nov. 10, 2 p.m., The Gas Company, 9240 Firestone Blvd., Downey
- South Bay Service Sector, Fri., Nov. 12, 9:30 a.m., Carson Community Center, 801 E. Carson St., Carson


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## Deputies Arrest 'Most Prolific Tagger' at West LA Home

- Youth blamed for \$200,000 in graffiti damage

(Oct. 28, 2004) Sheriff's deputies arrested a youth, early Wednesday, who is suspected of causing more than \$200,000 in graffiti damage to Metro Buses in some 130 instances of vandalism over the past year.

Called "the most prolific graffiti tagger ever" by Sheriff's Lt. Mike Parker, the 17-year-old was taken into custody at his West Los Angeles home. The youth, whose name was not released, was booked and taken to Eastlake Juvenile Hall for housing.

In a warrant search of the residence, deputies said they found cans of spray paint, etching tools, "slap tag" labels and a journal showing the boy's alleged tagging moniker.

Deputies from the Transit Services Bureau's Special Problems Unit also found evidence they said indicated the youth had used his home computer to forge student bus passes and monthly stamps.

Accompanying Sheriff's deputies during Wednesday morning's raid was Paul Guile, security control manager for London's Tube Lines Ltd. Guile was in Los Angeles to learn first-hand about the Transit Services Bureau's efforts to battle graffiti vandalism on the Metro System.

In FY 2004, Metro spent more than \$7.8 million to repair graffiti vandalism damage to its fleet and facilities. Figures for FY 2005, which began July 1, show that graffiti costs already stand at \$1.9 million this fiscal year.


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

- [LINK](#) > Click here to access 2005 Benefits and Human Resources Self Service [Online Enrollment System](#) (available from 11/1/04 – 11/15/04).

The Annual Benefits Open Enrollment period for Non-Contract, AFSCME, and Teamster employees is scheduled to begin on Monday, November 1 and will end as of close of business on Monday, November 15, 2004.

### Important steps to take:

**1. Access the 2005 Benefits Online Enrollment System** – available from 11/01/04 through 11/15/04.

This link is also located in the right-hand column of the myMetro.net home page on the Intranet. This system is available online from any location at <http://fisben.mta.net>

Easy to follow instructions are included to explain your unique ID and Password.

The online system will allow you to review your current enrollment choices, add, delete, or update dependent information, and make changes to your benefit plans for calendar year 2005, if you so desire. Please pay particular attention to instructions (printed in "red"), which will assist you in successfully completing your enrollment.

If no changes are made, current plans will remain in effect during calendar year 2005, with the exception of the Flex Spending Accounts and the Non-Tobacco Users Life Insurance, both of which require an election each year.

The 2005 Guidebooks, brochures, plan enrollment forms, and links to insurance carrier websites are included on the system. Specific insurance carrier websites require Internet access, and are provided as a convenience, but are not required to complete your enrollment process.

**2. Take note:** Beginning January 2005, Kaiser office visits will have a \$5.00 co-pay and Emergency Room visits will have a \$50.00 co-pay (waived if admitted directly to the hospital). There are no changes to the co-pays for Blue Cross HMO or Blue Cross PPO.

**3. Print a copy of your Confirmation Statement** and retain for your records.

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

- Judi Cline (213) 922-7186
- Beth Geary (213) 922-1260
- Rosie Ventura (213) 922-1244
- Ed Myatt (213) 922-7186

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**Board Ratifies TCU Labor Agreement; Provides Wage Increase**

(Oct. 29, 2004) The Board of Directors ratified a labor agreement, Thursday, with the 650-member Transportation Communications Union.

The new three-year contract, retroactive to July 1, 2003, gives union members a 2.5 percent wage increase effective July 1, 2004 and a second 2.5 percent pay hike effective July 1, 2005.

Under the agreement, Metro will increase contributions to the TCU health and welfare fund by 20 percent as of July 1, 2003; 15 percent as of July 1, 2004; and 15 percent as of July 1, 2005.

Metro also will have equal representation on the union's Trust Fund Board of Trustees and will provide all administrative services necessary for the operation of the fund.

A contract agreement with the union was reached Sept. 15 after some 16 months of negotiations and was ratified by union members. Metro's previous contract with TCU expired in June 2003.


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## Officials Celebrate Opening of Gold Line Eastside Field Office

By JOSÉ UBALDO

(Oct. 29, 2004) Local and federal elected officials were scheduled, Friday, to join Metro executives in celebrating the grand opening of the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension Community Relations Field Office.

Supervisor Gloria Molina, City Councilman Antonio Villaraigosa and U.S. Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard were among those invited to join CEO Roger Snoble and other Metro officials for the event.

The field office, located at 1505 East First St. in Boyle Heights, is open to the public from Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Metro Community Relations team also hosts weekly community project update meetings at the field office Friday mornings from 8 a.m. to 9 a.m.

For the next five years, construction will take place along the six-mile extension of the Metro Gold Line. The level of activity will vary at different locations as the project progresses. The light rail line is scheduled to open in late 2009.

The Community Relations field office has partnered with and will be co-located with the Los Angeles Youth Opportunity Movement. On display at the office is an exhibition on the history of Boyle Heights coordinated by Senior Public Arts Officer Alan Nakagawa.


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## Metro's Victoria Joins Transit Study Mission in South America

By SHANTAY IOSIA

(Oct. 29, 2004) Metro's Milo Victoria is among a select group of U.S. transit executives who are currently traveling through South America to study innovations in contemporary transportation.

The 12-member team met in Miami, Oct. 21, for a briefing and to receive their individual assignments.

The mission, "Innovations in Rail and Bus Transit," will take the team to Sao Paulo, Brasilia and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Santiago, Chile; and Quito, Ecuador before returning to the United States on Nov. 5.

The Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) sponsors the biennial studies, which are funded through the Federal Transportation Administration. This year, the countries were selected for their ability to contribute to modern mass transportation.

The research team was selected from applications submitted from transit organizations nationwide.

### 'Very fortunate'

"There were numerous entries and I'm very fortunate to have been selected," says Victoria, deputy executive officer, Maintenance and Rebuild, a 28-year Metro veteran.

Victoria has been warned by his predecessors to be prepared for a grueling schedule. He will be living out of his suitcase. He will spend no more than a couple of nights in one place and he expects to work very long days.

"We will be going non-stop," said Victoria, as he prepared to leave on the mission. "I'm really looking forward to it."

He is excited about studying the selected countries and hopes to learn from their challenges to improve transportation in the U.S.

A comprehensive report of the study will be accessible soon after the group has completed its the study on [www.tcrponline.org](http://www.tcrponline.org).

PHOTO: GEORGE WILLIAMSON



Milo Victoria is one of 12 team members chosen to conduct transportation research throughout South America. He is one of three chosen from California, the remaining nine were chosen from metro cities on the East Coast.

