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## Staff Meeting: CEO Gives Frank Assessment of Metro's Future

- Suggests some may want to look at early retirement
- Expects budget woes until FY 2007

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Feb. 1, 2005) Although he pointed out several bright spots in the current fiscal year and in FY 2006 during last week's staff meeting, CEO Roger Snoble gave a straight-forward assessment of Metro's immediate future – which he expects will include a staff reduction.

In fact, Snoble suggested that some employees might want to think about taking early retirement or accepting a retirement package.

"Talk to us about it and we'll see what we can do," he said. "We're thinking about going to the Board and seeing if there's something the Board might authorize us to do to make it easier."

Asked later in the meeting about the current job freeze, Snoble said, "It probably will continue through the rest of this fiscal year and perhaps most of next year." He might authorize filling some critical positions on a case-by-case basis, "...but, I'd rather not fill a position today and then lay off a position months from now."

## Exposition Line work

In answer to a question about Metro Construction layoffs following completion of the Metro Orange Line, next fall, he said work on the Exposition Line, which is now in preliminary engineering, would begin soon afterward and that some Construction employees might be needed to staff that project.

A \$40 million deficit for the remainder of FY 2005 and perhaps an even larger one next fiscal year are at the heart of Metro's budget woes – a "real dilemma that we're working very hard...to patch up..." he said.

Management anticipates that the 290,000 bus service hours added this year to fulfill Consent Decree orders will mean a \$75 million increase in operating costs, but – because ridership is flat – Metro can expect to get only about \$20 million more from the farebox.

Shoble does not foresee a fare hike any time soon – at least not until the Universal Fare System with its new TAP fareboxes is fully deployed in the Metro Bus fleet.



CEO Roger Snoble addresses all-staff meeting Jan. 25.



CEO Roger Snoble: "Transportation dollars are zeroed out in the state budget."

### **Proposition 42 funding**

The CEO noted that, for the third year, Proposition 42 funds earmarked for transportation projects will be used to balance the state's budget. "Transportation dollars are zeroed out in the state budget," he said.

And, while he'll go to Washington, D.C., in February in an effort to ensure some \$100 million in federal funding this year for buses, local transit service and the Eastside Extension project, Snoble indicated there's little hope of receiving similar funding over the next four years.

Despite these challenges, the CEO was upbeat about a number of things – new 45-foot Compo Buses joining the fleet, the opening later this year of the Metro Orange Line with its new 60-foot Metro Liners, a 25 percent reduction in Workers' Compensation claims, and even the prospects of a balanced budget for FY 2006.

But, he cautioned that things might not get a lot better for Metro until FY 2007.

In the meantime, he said, "Hang on. Work hard and we'll get through it all."


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## New Online Employment Verification System Speeds Loan Process

- Lending institutions can access employee data on the Web

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Feb. 1, 2005) Human Resources is making it easier for employees who apply for a home loan or other credit by moving its employment verification process into the computer age.

Once an entirely paper process that could take a week or more to complete, now employees can let their lenders go online with Metro to verify employment dates, salary and other information required to approve a loan. The result – instant verification and faster loans.

"Assuming everything else is in place, you can get a loan, today," says Bruce Moore, a supervisor in HR's Employment and Compensation unit.

Approximately 10 major lending institutions account for 90 percent of data inquiries, says Moore, and generate between 300 and 400 inquiries each year on behalf of Metro employees seeking loans.

### Lenders must sign up

To make the new system work, a lending institution must be signed up for the Metro Online Employment Verification Service found on the Internet at <http://empver.mta.net>.

Each qualified lender is given a data base user name and password.

The online verification system can be set in motion when an employee is seeking to qualify for a loan and needs to provide such information as job title, date hired and last worked, employment status, hours worked per week, year-to-date gross wages and wages for the past three years.

Prior to meeting with a lender, the employee sets up access to the required information by signing up with the Metro Employment Verification system.

### Link on Intranet home page

The Human Resources Intranet home page has an Employment Verification link at the upper left for access to the login page.

During the loan qualification process, the employee provides the access information to the lending institution so the lender can call up the required verification information.

Once the lender has the required information, the employee can easily change it to preserve confidentiality.

For more information about the Metro Online Employment Verification Service, contact Bruce Moore at 922-2613.

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## Metro Orange Line

## COUNTDOWN

From left, Metro CEO Roger Snoble, Los Angeles City Council Members Tom LaBonge and Wendy Greuel, and Los Angeles County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavy review construction progress on the Metro Orange Line at news conference held at the construction site of the Laurel Canyon Station in North Hollywood Jan. 31.



PHOTO BY JUAN OCAMPO

## Metro Orange Line enters the homestretch

- [No further court delays anticipated:](#) COST Drops Lawsuit Against Metro Orange Line Construction
- [Status of construction:](#) Feb. 1, 2005

(Feb. 1, 2005) Under the newly-installed frame of the Metro Orange Line's signature canopy, officials and community leaders held a news conference to mark a milestone as construction of the \$330 million, 14-mile transitway reaches the halfway mark. When it opens for service in September, super-sized Metro Liner buses will traverse the exclusive transitway that links the North Hollywood Metro Rail Station and Warner Center in the West San Fernando Valley.

### Status as of Feb. 1, 2005:

- All construction scope of work is approximately 60 percent
- Work at 31 major intersections is approximately 75 percent complete:
  - 23 are complete enough for full flow automobile traffic
  - 5 are currently underway (Winnetka, Wilbur, Hazeltine, Chandler North,

Coldwater)

- 3 remain to be started (Reseda, Tyrone and Burbank/Fulton)
- Construction has commenced at all 13 stations and is approximately 5 percent complete:
  - Canopies erected at Laurel Canyon and Valley College Stations and soon will be installed at DeSoto Station
  - Platforms completed or underway at 12 stations.
- Soundwall construction is approximately 20 percent complete:
  - On the west end, between Variel and Victory/Topham is 90 percent complete
  - On the west end, between Victory/Topham and White Oak is 65 percent complete
- Rough and fine grading is approximately 55 percent complete.
- Busway paving is approximately 40 percent complete. Bikepath has been paved from Variel to Mason (approximately 3 percent)
- Landscaping has commenced on the east end.
- Acceleration Agreement is now signed:
  - First Major Completion Milestone is April 2005 to allow access to follow-on Universal Fare System Contractor (UFS) for preparation of area for installation of some Ticket Vending Machines and Stand Alone Validators
  - Contractor to commence extended work week and additional hours per day (60-hour work week)

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## COST Drops Lawsuit Against Metro Orange Line Construction

- No further court delays anticipated

(Feb. 1, 2005) A San Fernando Valley group opposed to construction of the Metro Orange Line has dropped its lawsuit, clearing the way for construction to proceed without further court delays.

In an out-of-court settlement, Metro has agreed to pay COST (Citizens Organized for Smart Transit) a total of \$350,000 to cover legal fees incurred during the protracted lawsuit.

Attorneys for the group initially had sought some \$600,000 in legal fee reimbursement.

According to Assistant County Counsel Steve Carnevale, COST was expected to receive repayment for legal fees when the California Court of Appeal ruled in its favor last summer.

The court required Metro to reopen the Orange Line environmental impact report and consider Metro Rapid service as a possible alternative to the 14-mile cross-valley transitway. The study showed that, for a number of reasons, the Orange Line was a better choice for the Valley transit corridor.

"The sad part about the lawsuit is it cost us money...for no reason whatsoever. That was a shame," Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky told the Daily News during a Monday media event at which he announced that the project is now 60 percent complete.

During the 23 days Orange Line construction was halted, Metro officials estimated the delay was costing some \$70,000 a day. In addition, the agency spent nearly \$500,000 fighting the COST lawsuit.

COST Chairwoman Diana Lipari told the newspaper that Orange Line construction had moved ahead despite the lawsuit, which was launched in 2002. "We ran out of time to make any meaningful change to this busway."

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Bus Controller Nadine Triche-Williams demonstrates the Automatic Vehicle Locator and ATMS systems for Councilman Tom La Bonge (second from right) and neighborhood council members.



## LA City Councilman La Bonge, Community Leaders Tour Metro

By JODY LITVAK

(Feb. 2, 2005) Los Angeles City Councilman Tom La Bonge brought members of neighborhood councils in his district to Metro, late last month, to learn about transportation.

The council members began their day at different Metro Red Line stations where they rode to Metro Headquarters accompanied by a member of Councilman La Bonge's staff.

Westside/Central Sector General Manager David Armijo gave the group an overview of the broad range of Metro activities and responsibilities.

He discussed bus and rail operations, the upcoming Metro Orange Line, other new transportation initiatives, funding for street and freeway improvements, the Freeway Service Patrol, and more.

PHOTOS: JODY LITVAK



Westside/Central General Manager David Armijo briefs community leaders

from Councilman Tom La Bonge's district about Metro.

### **Funding a challenge**

La Bonge, also a member of Metro's Board of Directors, addressed some of the issues that come before the Board.

He indicated that funding is always a challenge and discussed Gov. Schwarzenegger's proposal to borrow transportation funds to help alleviate the state budget crisis.

"The group had a lot of good questions and suggestions," said Armijo. "I was particularly impressed with their ideas about how to improve customer service. I will be discussing many of those ideas with my colleagues at Metro."

Following the briefing, the group toured the Bus Operations Center and learned about the advantages of the new ATMS and Automatic Vehicle Locator technology. They also were briefed on rail operations as they rode the Metro Red Line back to where they began their day.

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PHOTO: BILL HEARD



## A Dozen Years: February Marks 12th Anniversary of Metro

Librarian Matt Barrett checks the inscription on a time capsule containing memorabilia from the early days of the L.A. County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, established by law in February 1993. The inscription – “Honoring the past. Embracing the future.” – symbolizes the contents of the capsule, which was the centerpiece of a 1997 celebration of the agency’s fourth anniversary. The capsule includes photos and recollections of employees, correspondence, ID cards, monthly passes, logo pins and patches and even an SCRTD 25-year service pin. The time capsule and other Metro historical artifacts are on exhibit in the library’s stacks and display area. The capsule is scheduled to be opened on Metro’s 25th anniversary in February 2018. (2/2/05)

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American Red Cross Nurse Zulema Vega, right, prepares Thom Pelk, transportation manager at Crossroads Depot Division 2, for a blood donation.



PHOTO: BILL HEARD

## Employees Give Blood in Memory of Metrolink Accident Victims

(Feb. 2, 2005) Metro employees responded wholeheartedly, Tuesday, to the need for blood donations following last week's tragic Metrolink accident.

A total of 29 employees initially signed up to give blood. By the end of the day, however, 53 employees had responded and a total of 39 were able to make donations.

"Our hearts go out to the victims and the families of those injured or killed...", CEO Roger Snoble wrote in a Jan. 27 memo to employees. He noted that the American Red Cross had reported a "significant drain on the blood supply due to the number of injured being treated at local hospitals."

Annie Murray, donor recruiter for the Red Cross, said 60 units of blood were rushed to Glendale Memorial Hospital immediately following the accident. Four other hospitals were on the standby list for blood, if needed.

### Blood supply critically short

At the moment, she said, the Los Angeles chapter of the Red Cross has less than a half-day's blood supply on hand and can't fill its contracts with hospitals. A three days' supply is the optimum, she said.

The Red Cross issued an urgent appeal for blood following the Metrolink accident. O negative – the universal blood type – is especially needed because it can be given when a patient's blood type is not known and the patient needs an immediate transfusion.

"When tragedies happen and the blood supply gets taken quickly," said Nurse Sharri Genens, who was in charge of the Metro blood drive, "we need to get blood back on the shelves so we can fill our regular hospital orders."

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PHOTOS: AJITH PEIRIS



Solar panels installed at Division 15, like these shown on the roof of the transportation building, will provide 20 percent of the division's power needs.

## Solar Power Project at Divisions 15, 8 Will Save Big Bucks

- 1,648 solar panels is most of any U.S. transportation agency
- Average 20 percent savings on division energy needs

By ERIC RAPP

(Feb 3, 2005) The largest solar power installation of any transportation agency in the United States is underway at Metro Bus divisions 15 and 8 in the San Fernando Valley. It will be the 20th largest green energy-producing installation ever built in the United States.

The 1,648 solar panels, once in operation on the roofs of the transportation and maintenance buildings, are predicted to produce 425 kilowatts of power at peak, saving Metro up to \$150,000 a year in electricity costs.

Based on a yearly energy consumption cycle, the installations will produce average savings of 20 percent of the total energy needs of each division.

The shade produced by the panels, which will cover about 70 percent of each roof's surface area, is also expected to reduce heating and cooling costs, and prolong the life of the roof itself.

## Two-phase project

The installation at East Valley Division 15, located appropriately enough in Sun Valley, is almost complete. The project at West Valley Division 8 in Chatsworth will start construction next week.

Facilities Operations staff members check the solar panel installation on the roof of the Division 15 transportation building.



The installations are a pilot project that will be extended to other Metro operating divisions if it is successful and the savings are verified.

"Metro has had some hard financial times over the last years, and there has been a big push to pinch pennies and find cost savings wherever we can," says Tim Lindholm, Facilities Operations project manager for the solar panel installation. "This project just made complete sense, both financially and environmentally."

The panels cost \$1.5 million per division to fabricate and install, but Southern California Gas Company is providing rebates for half of that cost, or about \$750,000 dollars per division.

### **Seven-year payoff**

Those rebates mean that the investment in solar panels should pay off in seven to 10 years, providing huge future savings for Metro.

"Facilities Operations has made a commitment to incorporate sustainable design and construction techniques wherever feasible," says Lindholm. "This certainly qualifies in that regard."

Lindholm's team, which includes Engineer Ajith Peiris and Senior Engineer Cesar Robeniol, has worked with contractor and designer Sol Source Energy to make the project go smoothly.

John Roberts, Division 15 Maintenance manager, says, "This project team has been one of the best I have ever worked with. It has been an excellent construction project, with virtually no impact to the operation of the division."




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## Metro Helping Boyle Heights Businesses During Construction

- Mexican restaurant among those receiving mitigation

By NED RACINE

(Feb. 3, 2005) Metro Community Relations is helping Boyle Heights businesses – including a local restaurant known for tasty, inexpensive Mexican food – during construction of the Metro Gold Line's Eastside extension.

And, if good things come in small packages, Restaurant Santa Cecilia at 1707 Pleasant Ave. proves that good food can be found in tiny restaurants.

Recently praised in the *Los Angeles Times* for its fresh, flavorful food, Restaurant Santa Cecilia has long been a favorite of Metro staff members working on the light rail line project.

The restaurant, open daily from 9 a.m. to midnight, is only a short drive from Metro Headquarters.

Chef Armando Salazar offers a varied and authentic menu (ask him about the *costillitas*). Meals average under \$8 and the restaurant offers carryout service. Parking is available in the rear.

Located near the construction site, the restaurant will witness the tremendous changes beginning at 1st Street and Boyle Avenue when Metro's contractor begins tunneling the underground section of the light-rail line and constructs the Boyle Heights/Mariachi Plaza underground station.

Metro Community Relations has helped Restaurant Santa Cecilia advertise its tasty, but inexpensive food as part of the mitigation efforts for local businesses.


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## Governance Councils Set Feb. Meetings, 2 Will Hold Hearings

(Feb. 3, 2005) Metro's service sector governance councils have scheduled their monthly public meetings for February.

In addition, two service sectors – Westside/Central and South Bay – will hold public hearings on proposed service modifications planned for implementation in June.

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

- *Westside/Central Sector*, Thursday, Feb. 3, 3 p.m., La Cienega Tennis Center, Sunset Room, 325 S. La Cienega Blvd., Beverly Hills.
- *San Gabriel Valley Sector*, Tuesday, Feb. 8, 5 p.m., San Gabriel Sector Office, 3369 Santa Anita Avenue, El Monte.
- *Gateway Cities Sector*, Thursday, Feb. 10, 2 p.m., The Gas Company, 9240 Firestone Blvd., Downey.
- *South Bay Service Sector*, Friday, February 11, 9:30 a.m., Carson Community Center, 801 E. Carson St., Carson.

The times and locations of the two public hearings are:

- *Westside/Central Sector*, Wednesday, Feb. 9, 6:30 p.m., La Cienega Tennis Center, Sunset Room, 325 S. La Cienega Blvd., Los Angeles.
- *Metro South Bay Service Sector*, Tuesday, Feb. 22, 6 p.m., Carson Community Center, Adult Activities Room, 801 East Carson, Carson.

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UPDATE

**Metro Gold Line Eastside  
Extension UPDATE**

Photos by Ned Racine

Senior Community Relations Officer Ned Racine is on the scene at the Eastside Extension of the Metro Gold Line, where construction is underway near the future First and Soto Station. Photos were taken February 3, 2005.

Click on images below to view.



Cutting a 24-inch main -  
First & Soto Station



First & Concord - lowering  
water line



Lowering water line




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## All Metro Policies to be Available on Intranet Later This Year

- Departments must complete review of 477 policies first

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Feb. 3, 2005) Metro's Administration Department is launching a project that – before the year is out – should put every agency policy at employees' fingertips, just by accessing the Intranet.

Sometime within the week, major department heads will receive a stack of policies, many of them dating to SCRTD and LACTC days. The policies must be reviewed and, when necessary, updated or discarded if no longer needed.

Under newly released policy Gen 5, the departments will be asked to review a total of 477 policies, at least 53 of which Admin believes exist, but which even the Records Management Center hasn't been able to put its hands on.

By June 30, departments must have completed their initial review. Revision of policies that will remain in effect must be completed by Sept. 30.

"It's a big undertaking," admits Don Ott, executive officer, Administration. "We talked to departments, to Records Management and the Metro Library to assemble every policy we could find. We now hope to get all policies on a two-year review cycle."

Ott noted that Senior Administrative Analyst Hope Gamble spent the better part of two months working with Records Management to compile and organize the existing policies. "She did a tremendous job. It was an enormous undertaking."

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PHOTOS: AJITH PEIRIS



Solar panels installed at Division 15, like these shown on the roof of the transportation building, will provide 20 percent of the division's power needs.

## Solar Power Project at Divisions 15, 8 Will Save Big Bucks

- 1,648 solar panels is most of any U.S. transportation agency
- Average 20 percent savings on division energy needs

By ERIC RAPP

(Feb 3, 2005) The largest solar power installation of any transportation agency in the United States is underway at Metro Bus divisions 15 and 8 in the San Fernando Valley. It will be the 20th largest green energy-producing installation ever built in the United States.

The 1,648 solar panels, once in operation on the roofs of the transportation and maintenance buildings, are predicted to produce 425 kilowatts of power at peak, saving Metro up to \$150,000 a year in electricity costs.

Based on a yearly energy consumption cycle, the installations will produce average savings of 20 percent of the total energy needs of each division.

The shade produced by the panels, which will cover about 70 percent of each roof's surface area, is also expected to reduce heating and cooling costs, and prolong the life of the roof itself.

## Two-phase project

The installation at East Valley Division 15, located appropriately enough in Sun Valley, is almost complete. The project at West Valley Division 8 in Chatsworth will start construction next week.

Facilities Operations staff members check the solar panel installation on the roof of the Division 15 transportation building.



The installations are a pilot project that will be extended to other Metro operating divisions if it is successful and the savings are verified.

"Metro has had some hard financial times over the last years, and there has been a big push to pinch pennies and find cost savings wherever we can," says Tim Lindholm, Facilities Operations project manager for the solar panel installation. "This project just made complete sense, both financially and environmentally."

The panels cost \$1.5 million per division to fabricate and install, but Southern California Gas Company is providing rebates for half of that cost, or about \$750,000 dollars per division.

### **Seven-year payoff**

Those rebates mean that the investment in solar panels should pay off in seven to 10 years, providing huge future savings for Metro.

"Facilities Operations has made a commitment to incorporate sustainable design and construction techniques wherever feasible," says Lindholm. "This certainly qualifies in that regard."

Lindholm's team, which includes Engineer Ajith Peiris and Senior Engineer Cesar Robeniol, has worked with contractor and designer Sol Source Energy to make the project go smoothly.

John Roberts, Division 15 Maintenance manager, says, "This project team has been one of the best I have ever worked with. It has been an excellent construction project, with virtually no impact to the operation of the division."




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## Board OKs Funding for Division 1 Expansion, Approves Other Motions

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- [Video Screens on Metro Buses](#)
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(Feb. 4, 2005) The Board of Directors approved a motion in January funding the expansion of Central City Division 1. Other actions include expansion and operation of the Metro Orange Line, and new ways to gain more advertising revenue.

January Board actions included:

**Item 36, Division 1 Expansion.** The Board approved a motion that adds \$4.02 million to the Division 1 expansion project, which now totals approximately \$11.5 million. The Board also voted to amend the FY 2005 budget to include \$2.8 million in federal funding and \$700,000 in local matching funds.

Division 1 is being expanded onto a three-acre site just to the south of the existing facility at Central Avenue and East 6th Street. The expansion will accommodate parking for up to 100 more buses as well as employee vehicles. Phase 1 construction of the new parking area and a fuel island should be completed in April 2005.

**Item 11, Metro Orange Line FEIR.** The Board approved a motion to approve and certify an Addendum to the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the Metro Orange Line.

The Addendum provides environmental clearance for additional surface parking – the North Parking Lot – on Metro-owned property adjacent to the Canoga station and park-and-ride-lot previously approved by the Board. Together, both lots will provide some 840 parking spaces.

The Board's action also includes construction of a bikeway and pedestrian path and landscaping leading to the new Canoga station.

**Item 41, Metro Orange Line Operation.** The Board approved a motion by Director John Fasana directing the staff to report back to

the Operations and the Executive Management and Audit committees in February on the cost of providing Metro Orange Line service “within the organization versus the cost of contracting out the operation of services, maintenance of vehicles, and the maintenance of the Right of Way and fixed guideway.”

Fasana’s motion says Metro will operate 64,000 hours of new service on the line and could save \$2 million to \$3 million annually through contracting “without negatively impacting the jobs of existing employees.” Citing Metro’s budget deficits, the motion notes that, “Contract services cost 30% less to operate than service operated directly by Metro Operations.”

**Item 20, Metro Rapid Advertising.** The Board approved a motion amending Metro’s advertising policy to permit ads on the outside of Metro Rapid buses.

By amending the policy to permit ads on Metro Rapid buses, the agency stands to gain as much as \$3.25 million in ad revenue by the end of fiscal year 2007.

**Item 21, Video Screens on Metro Buses.** The Board approved a motion authorizing the CEO to sign a 10-year revenue contract with Transit Television Network.

The company plans to install two small video monitors on each Metro Bus to show customized TV programs. The programming would include news, sports and entertainment programming, simple games, commercial ads and transit advertising.

**Item 10, Metro Rail Station Development.** The Board approved a motion authorizing the CEO to enter a six-month exclusive negotiation agreement with Vermont/Santa Monica Metro Red Line Station, LLC.

The developer wants to build 200 rental units and 18,700 square feet of retail space at the station. The proposed development, which includes Saint Nicholas Foundation property, totals 1.5 acres.

**Item 40, Governance Council Appointments.** The Board approved the appointment of two Westside/Central Service Sector Governance Council members nominated by Mayor James Hahn. Gregory J. Fischer serves as transportation deputy to District 9 City Councilwoman Jan Perry. Carlos Collard is an administrative analyst for Santa Monica’s Big Blue Bus.




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Marking the opening of the new I-10 HOV lanes are, from left, Caltrans District 7 Director Douglas Failing, El Monte Mayor Ernie Gutierrez and Metro Board Member John Fasana.



PHOTOS: LUIS INZUNZA

## Three New Miles of HOV Lanes Now Open on I - 10 Freeway

- Three or more riders required in a vehicle during peak hours

(Feb. 4, 2005) Officials from Caltrans, Metro and the City of El Monte were on hand, Friday, to open a stretch of HOV lanes on the I-10 freeway between the I-605 freeway and Baldwin Avenue.

Vehicles using the three-mile section must carry three or more riders from 5 a.m. until 9 a.m. and from 4 p.m. until 7 p.m., Monday through Friday. At least two people must be in the car at all other times.

The cost of the project is \$55.2 million – and includes a \$4.8-million soundwall. Additional projects are in the planning stages that will close the HOV gap on I-10 from West Covina to the I-10/57/210 interchange.

With the new HOV addition, Los Angeles County now has a total of 455 miles of carpool lanes. The county leads the state in the miles of carpool lanes, with approximately 40 percent of the state's total carpool lane miles.

On average, an HOV lane carries 1,300 vehicles (or 3,200 people) per peak hour. The connecting segment, from Alameda Street to Baldwin Avenue, is currently used by some 24,000 vehicles a day.



Celebrating the opening of the new three-mile stretch of HOV lanes are, from left, Douglas Failing of Caltrans, El Monte Mayor Ernie Gueierrez, El Monte Councilwoman Patricia Wallach and Metro Board Member John Fasana.

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The Division 8 maintenance team collected enough relief supplies for tsunami victims to require a forklift to carry it. *Photo by Fabio Restrepo.*



## Valley Divisions Helping To Provide Relief For Tsunami Victims

By Eric Rapp

(Feb. 4, 2005) After a deadly tsunami struck South Asia last month, pictures and video of the devastation began flowing to the rest of the world. Watching these pictures, West Valley Division 8 Equipment Maintenance Supervisor Jagath Wijegunawardena's first thought was how he could help.

He immediately contacted Ike Alison, another equipment maintenance supervisor at Division 8. Together, they put together a plan.

Wijegunawardena spoke to several Buddhist temples in the Los Angeles area to find out what items were needed and what efforts were ongoing. Management at Division 8 and East Valley Division 15 helped get the word out, putting up flyers at both divisions and helping collect items.

Employees at the divisions also got involved in the effort, donating food and clothing, bagging items, and cutting drums to store and ship the donations.

### Worked long and hard



Division 15 maintenance crew displays barrels with some of the tsunami supplies they collected from co-workers.

*Photo by Brent Devol.*

Division 8's Mark Lacanilao, Scott Lanski, Larry Ramata, Bill Heiller, Chris Kane, and Mike Benton; and Division 15's Pat Kato, Andy Gonzalez, Mark Calinog, Cuauhte Martinez, and Dave Rakistis, all worked long and hard to secure, pack, and load the huge number of items donated by employees.

"I really appreciate the generosity of the employees at both divisions for their donations to help these victims," says Alison. "God bless them all."

Wijegunawardena also donated the use of his RV and trailer to transport the items to a Buddhist temple in North Hollywood, which was organizing relief shipments. Two loads of about 2,000 pounds each of donated goods were delivered to the temple.

Not content to stop there, Alison and Wijegunawardena are also collecting funds to help victims of the tsunami. To date, more than \$1,000 has been collected through the caring donations of employees at the San Fernando Valley divisions.

"Ike and Jag worked incredibly hard on this," says Pat Orr, Division 8 maintenance manager. "Out of the goodness of their hearts, they've accomplished an amazing feat of charity."

General Manager Richard Hunt agrees. "I'm glad we can do so much to help the people who have been so devastated by this natural disaster. This couldn't have happened without the generosity of all our employees."

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## Metro Tailors Transit Pass Programs for Businesses

- Program offers incentives for companies that give passes to employees

By DAVE SOTERO

(Feb. 9, 2005) New Metro pass programs are making it easier than ever for Los Angeles County businesses, both large and small, to offer employees a better, more cost-effective way to get to work by Metro.

Metro's Commuter Services Department offers employers two types of pass programs – the Business Transit Access Pass (B-TAP) and the Annual Transit Pass (A-TAP).

The B-TAP program, designed exclusively for businesses, gives companies options for introducing annual transit passes to their employees as a valuable addition to their benefits package.

The TAP program provides a strong incentive for company employees who would not otherwise use public transit, and holds great promise in helping to reduce single passenger commuting on LA County's clogged streets and freeways. But employers also benefit.

### 'Improves the bottom line'

"Metro's TAP Program is simply good for business," says CEO Roger Snoble. "It raises productivity by enabling workers to arrive on time, refreshed and ready to work. It also improves the company's bottom line because the programs can be partially paid for with pre-tax dollars. TAP is a win-win program that every company should seriously consider 'tapping' into."

As an additional company benefit, employers with 250 or more employees may meet their South Coast AQMD trip reduction requirements with Metro's TAP Programs.

The A-TAP, or Annual Transit Pass program, allows businesses to provide annual transit passes for only those employees who currently take transit to work. The price of the pass is not discounted under this program, and may be attractive for larger companies with a smaller employee base using public transit.

Businesses have the flexibility to choose how the passes are paid for as part of the employee's benefit plan.

The employer may choose to pay the entire cost of the passes and take full advantage of the pre-tax benefit. The company may also elect to subsidize part of the cost, or allow employees to pay the cost as a benefit through payroll deduction.

Metro will issue photo-ID "smart cards" for employees to use when

boarding the Metro Bus or Metro Rail system and will manage employee card changes for the company.

To encourage new employees to explore alternatives to driving alone to work, Metro will give them a pass allowing unlimited access to the Metro system for a full week.

Other incentives are available for company employees who use transit, carpool or vanpool to work rather than drive alone. An employee at any size company who rideshares at least eight times a month will receive \$15 gift certificates good at major retail stores.

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Mechanic "C" Grads: From left, Mark Anderson, Director Operations Training; Dane Sheldon, ATU, Vice President; graduates Jeffrey Lopez, Jeff Shaffer, Jay Shields, and Eric Urena; Jim Lindsay, ATU Financial Recording Secretary; Adolfo Soto, ATU Treasurer. Front row, from left, graduates Richard Garcia, Daniel Karisoh, and Michael Aguilar; and Jim Lindsay, ATU Financial Recording Secretary; Brain Markey, Maintenance Instructor and Steve Mullaly, Sr. Maintenance Instructor. Not Pictured: graduate Lester Duboise.

## Maintenance Instruction Dept. Honors 8 Mechanic 'C' Grads

(Feb. 9, 2005) Eight service attendants have upgraded their training and skills – and they've been promoted to the position of mechanic "C".

The Maintenance Instruction Department honored the 25th class of service attendants, Jan 26, presenting certificates and hosting a reception for the graduates of the 18-month mechanic "C" On-the-Job Training (OJT) program.

The program, which was implemented in 1974, is conducted over an 18-month period. It includes nine months of classroom instruction and nine months of supervised on-the-job training at an operating division.

The students must commit to attend four-hour classroom sessions two times a week for 36 consecutive weeks.

"They learn everything that pertains to bus equipment, electrical systems, brake systems and engine diagnostics," says Senior Maintenance Instructor Steve Mullaly.

The 12 new mechanics are all now working at the operating divisions.

"This program is a great opportunity for any service attendant who wants to move to the next level in this career," it as an education nobody could ever take away says Mullaly. "I'm very proud of both this group of students and also of the class instructor Brian Markey. They all performed exceptional."

## Congratulations to Mechanic 'C' Graduates

- Michael Aguilar
- Lester Duboise
- Richard Garcia
- Daniel Karisoh
- Jeffrey Lopez
- Jeff Shaffer
- Jay Shields
- Eric Urena





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Transportation  
Operations Supervisor  
Marcel Gipson  
demonstrates ATMS  
technology during the  
students' visit to Bus  
Operations Control.



## Santa Fe Springs Students Get a Close-up Look at Metro

By DAVID HERSHENSON

(Feb. 9, 2005) About 20 eighth grade students from Lake Center Middle School in Santa Fe Springs were treated to a Metro tour, recently, that included Central City Division 1 transportation operations, the Bus Operations Center (BOC), the Gateway Cities sector office, a Sheriff's substation and non-revenue maintenance Division 4.

The students are enrolled in the school's AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) program, which was created to assist students who would not normally go to college in learning how to prepare and qualify for college enrollment and a four-year degree.

The AVID program solicits guest speakers from the community to talk to the students about possible career choices. They also visit various colleges and universities in the area.

The offer for the tour was made a few months ago when Division 1 Transportation Manager Sonja Owens accompanied Gateway Cities Executive Secretary Sheila Badji to the school to give a career presentation.

PHOTOS: DAVE HERSHENSON



Division 1 Transportation Manager Sonja Owens explains bus operations procedures to students from Lake Center Middle School in Santa Fe Springs.

### **Greeted by the staff**

A Metro Bus picked up the students in front of their school at about 10 a.m. and delivered them to Division 1, where they were greeted by Owens, assistant transportation managers, operators, and other employees.

Before a brief tour of the division, Owens and others stressed the importance of getting a good education.

Operator Peter Freeman explained that people without a college degree who get jobs as bus operators at Metro have started out as high on the ladder as they are likely to get. However, operators who begin working at Metro with a college degree have lots of opportunities to climb higher.

After their division tour, the students were taken to the BOC. They were impressed by the controllers' work, the technology involved, and with the advanced communications system that is used to track all Metro buses.

Owens also gave a brief description of her background and stressed the importance of a good education to get where you want to go in life.

### **Given an overview**

Before returning to school, the students made one more stop at the Gateway Cities Sector office where they met staff members and were given an overview of the Transit Services Bureau's responsibilities by Sheriff's Sgt. Allan Stanny.

They also took a brief tour of the non-revenue maintenance shop where Equipment Maintenance Supervisor Harold Torres is responsible for the maintenance of all Metro vehicles, other than buses and trains.

The students came away impressed with Metro's operations and the high level of technology involved in running buses efficiently.

Tim Panik, a math teacher involved in the AVID program, said the AVID students continue in a special program when they move on to Santa Fe High School. He noted that 100 percent of the students enrolled in the high school program were accepted to the college of their choice.

"Besides being interesting, this tour provided our students with a number of benefits," said Panik. "In addition to the exposure to a diverse working environment, students heard how important education is and got to see the many technological tools that go into a successful operation. I think it opened their eyes to a whole new world."

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## AAEA Hears 'Buffalo Soldiers' Presentation



PHOTO: BILL HEARD

Al Stewart, an ITS engineer and a member of Greater Los Angeles chapter of the Ninth and Tenth (Horse) Cavalry Association, discussed the history of the famed "Buffalo Soldiers," Thursday, as part of the African American Employee's Association celebration of Black History Month. The all-black cavalry units, which gained their tough reputation and name in the Indian Wars of the late 1800s, were in existence through World War II. Members of the local chapter appear in parades, make presentations at schools and sponsor an annual scholarship for a high school graduate. Stewart was introduced by ITS Technician Keith Hanson, whose great grandfather, William McPherson, was a member of the 10th Cavalry and along with his wife, Clara, was a founder of the town of Mesa, Ariz. You can learn more about the Buffalo Soldiers on the Internet at [www.buffalola.com](http://www.buffalola.com). (2/10/05)  
(Photo by Bill Heard)


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## 30 Fare Inspectors Now Deployed on Metro Blue, Green Lines

(Feb. 10, 2005) The Sheriff's Transit Services Bureau is deploying 16 more uniformed fare inspectors on the Metro Blue and Green Lines, bringing the total to 30.

Beginning this week, the additional "security assistants" will begin patrols at the Blue Line's Washington, San Pedro and Grand stations and at stations in Long Beach. On the Green Line, they will begin working at the Norwalk and Aviation stations.

Eventually, pairs of fare inspectors will be assigned to ride the trains and patrol stations at most Metro Blue and Green Line stations. At Compton stations and at the 103rd Street station, fare inspectors will team up with Sheriff's deputies.

The daily deployment of the fare inspectors will vary, says Sheriff's Sgt. Jerry Ryan, who oversees the group.

During off-peak hours, they'll patrol the trains to check fares and keep an eye out for vandalism. During peak hours, they're more likely to be stationed on the platforms.

The 30 fare inspectors are a blend of experienced security assistants and some who have recently graduated from a three-week training class. Fare inspectors were first assigned to the two light-rail lines in July 2004.

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Division 5's  
Sergio  
Rubalcava has  
amassed one  
of the largest  
collections of  
DVD movies  
in the  
country.  
Photo: Rich  
Morallo

## Home Theater:

### DVD Collector Sergio Rubalcava has 3,000 Movies

- May be one of nation's largest private collections

By RICH MORALLO

(Feb. 10, 2005) Sergio Rubalcava has his hands full at work. As the assistant maintenance manager at Arthur Winston Division 5, there are more than 200 buses to get out on the street, 135 mechanics and service attendants to supervise, and daily maintenance challenges to hurdle.

"There is always a maintenance repair, like a broken water pump or malfunctioning fan belt to follow up on," says Rubalcava.

Then at home, Rubalcava has his hands full of DVDs – 3,000 of them. It may be one of the largest personal collections in the country, according to a home entertainment magazine that interviewed him about his DVDs.

"My collection of DVDs helps me unwind after a busy day at Metro," says Rubalcava, whose favorites include "Lawrence of Arabia," "Modern Times," "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly" and "Citizen Kane."

### Variety of films

The 22-year Metro manager started his collection in 1997. Through the years, he has amassed all types of DVD movies including drama, silent films, documentaries, foreign movies with subtitles, action and animation.

"The first DVDs I bought eight years ago were "Twister" and "Bonnie



and Clyde," Rubalcava recalls.

He adds to his DVD library every week by purchasing new titles from retail electronics stores and the Internet.

Rubalcava also procured special cabinets to shelve his collection, and uses a top-of-the-line audio system and a 65-inch giant screen television for viewing.

### **Favorite is Charlie Chaplin**

Movie directors such as Alfred Hitchcock and Sergio Leone have a special place in Rubalcava's heart, but his favorite is Charlie Chaplin.

"A true genius," says Rubalcava, as he describes how Chaplin wrote, directed and produced his own movies.

Along with amassing DVDs, Rubalcava has also gathered several original movie posters.

"I have about 35 posters, the biggest one, 'The Good, the Bad and the Ugly,' is about 4-1/2 by 6 feet," he says. "I also collect signed baseballs. I have about 450 baseballs and other collectibles, including a signed letter from the last pitcher who struck out Babe Ruth."

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U.S. Rep. Diane Watson was among congressional leaders CEO Roger Snoble met with during his visit, earlier this week, to Washington, D.C. *Photo by Raffi Hamparian*



## CEO Visits U.S. Capitol To Discuss Metro Appropriations

- Busy schedule includes round of congressional meetings

By RAFFI HAMPARIAN

(Feb. 11, 2005) CEO Roger Snoble held his annual Capitol Hill Legislative Briefing, Feb. 8, for congressional aides working for members of the Los Angeles County congressional delegation.

Aides from the congressional offices of David Dreier, Grace Napolitano, Lucille Roybal-Allard, Adam Schiff, Maxine Waters, Diane Watson and Henry Waxman, were among those who participated.

Later in the day, Snoble met with Representatives Xavier Becerra and Diane Watson. He also met with senior aides for Senators Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer and with senior aides for Senators Richard Shelby (R-Ala.) and Patty Murray (D-Wa.).

At these meetings, the CEO advocated appropriating \$80 million for the Metro Gold Line's Eastside extension this fiscal year, earmarking \$10 million for Metro's bus and bus facilities, and \$5 million for Intelligent Transportation Systems funding.

## Met FTA administrator

During his visit to the nation's capital, Snoble also met with Federal Transit Administration Administrator Jenna Dorn.

During that meeting the two discussed the planned Exposition Light

Rail Line. Snoble provided an update on the construction of the Eastside Line.

He also addressed a number of Metro's major priorities with respect to the Transportation Reauthorization Bill now pending before the 109th Congress.

All the legislative items Snoble mentioned during his visit to Washington are detailed in the Federal Legislative Program passed unanimously by Metro's Board of Directors, Dec. 13, 2004.

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Metro ADA Administrator Chip Hazen, center, discusses how disabled patrons can use Metro service with Easter Seals representatives. Joining him at the meeting, from left, were transit operations supervisors Debbie Blair and Steve Rank. Photo: Rich Morallo



## Helping Disabled Patrons: Metro Meets with Easter Seals

By RICH MORALLO

(Feb. 11. 2005) Members of the Metro staff met, recently, with Easter Seals administrators in the South Bay to provide information on how disabled patrons can use Metro Bus service with ease and convenience.

"The meeting at the regional office in Hermosa Beach was an excellent opportunity to share information," says Chip Hazen, Metro's ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliance administrator. "Our operators need to know what the needs of the disabled passengers are and, at the same time, passengers should communicate their requests to our staff."

Transportation operations supervisors Steve Rank and Debbie Blair accompanied Hazen to the conference with the regional staff of Easter Seals, a non-profit organization serving nearly 2,000 people with disabilities every day in Southern California, and over 1 million nationwide.

### 'A receptive audience'

"The Easter Seals staff was a receptive audience and had a lot of good things to say about our operators and service," says Rank. "They were aware that the reliability of our equipment and the involvement of our operators had improved greatly over the last three to four years."

Blair, who is currently coordinating a team to address customer concerns at Carson Division 18, had some suggestions for the Easter Seals representatives regarding wheel chairs.

"I told them how to position the wheelchair at bus stops for increased visibility, and encouraged them to have patrons with oversized wheel chairs back their equipment onto the ramp," says Blair. "This makes it easier for the operator to assist them."



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## Who to Call if You See Suspicious Activity

- LASD Watch Commander -- 323-563-5000
- Rail Operations Control -- 323-563-5022
- Bus Operations Control -- 213-922-6280
- Metro Security Control -- 213-922-7600

## Deputies Near Goal of Training All Employees in Anti-Terror Tactics

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Feb. 11, 2005) Sheriff's deputies Britta Kjellstrand and Ban Nguyen are on the verge of reaching an important goal – providing terrorism awareness training to virtually every Metro employee.

Since April 2004, the deputies have taught more than 8,500 employees in classes at the operating divisions and at Metro Headquarters.

They also have mailed a 16-page pamphlet, titled "What You Can Do To Help," to every employee and have distributed wallet cards with emergency phone numbers. The goal of the effort is to develop extra eyes and ears in the quest to prevent terrorist violence.



PHOTO: BILL HEARD

Sheriff's Deputy Britta Kjellstrand shows how a suicide bomber constructs a device laden with explosives during a class anti-terrorist tactics.

In addition to the Metro program, Kjellstrand and Nguyen are training employees of the county's municipal transit agencies. The program, called "Train the Trainer," is intended to teach muni employees the anti-terrorism "warning signs" and extend the reach of law enforcement efforts.

"A key component of terrorism is to instill in people the belief that their government cannot protect them," says Metro Police Chief Capt. Dan Finkelstein. "The goal of this training program is to empower all Metro employees to take an active role in the prevention of terrorism and general crime. Additionally, having the knowledge and skills to not be unnecessarily alarmed by sensationalism in the media makes us a



stronger team in the counter-terrorism effort."

### **Be aware of surroundings**

A video shown during the class illustrates how transit employees can help guard against terrorist activities. It advises bus and train operators, maintenance workers and other transit employees to be aware of their surroundings when using transit.

Employees should report people who are out of place, don't have proper identification and are behaving oddly, but "profiling" people on the basis of race or appearance should be avoided.

Employees should be alert for unattended packages and for suspicious devices placed in or near transit facilities.

One indicator that a chemical, biological or radiological device has been used, according to the video, is if two or more people on a train or in an enclosed area suddenly become ill.

Funding for the anti-terrorism training comes from a \$4.7 million Homeland Security Department grant, which also is being used to purchase emergency response vehicles, chemical detectors for transit facilities, to deploy search and rescue dogs and weapons detecting dogs, among other things.

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## FY 2005 Budget Shortfall to Receive Board Committee Attention

(Feb. 15, 2005) Metro's FY 2005 budget will receive attention, this month, as Board members wrestle with a projected shortfall of \$42.2 million. Rail tunneling and names for Metro Orange Line stations also are on committee agendas.

### Item 26, FY 2005 Budget Amendment.

The Finance and Budget Committee will consider a motion aimed at meeting Metro's anticipated FY 2005 budget shortfall of approximately \$42.2 million.

The motion would approve the transfer of \$19.2 million from the capital program to the operating program and amend the FY 2005 budget to move up to \$8.2 million from the General Fund into the Enterprise Fund for additional bus operations fuel costs.

The motion includes moving up to \$8 million in Proposition A 35 percent funds to be used for rail operations. The motion also calls for eliminating 14 positions as a result of the capital program changes.

**Item 14, Rail Tunneling.** The Planning and Programming Committee is scheduled to consider a motion by LA City Councilman Tom LaBonge directing the CEO to include a policy, standards and criteria on "where best to construct underground rail."

The motion would direct the CEO to work to remove the federal prohibition on use of federal funds for rail tunneling in "gas risk areas." The motion also calls for analyzing the impact on the transportation sales tax if the tunneling restrictions were removed, as well as assessing the "potential financial implications" on such projects as the Eastside Extension if there were no restriction on tunneling.

**Item 29, Orange Line Station Names.** A "receive and file" item with proposed names for stations on the Metro Orange Line will be presented to the Construction Committee. The names were developed in keeping with the Property Naming Policy adopted by the Board in August 2003.

The policy requires that stations carry an official name and an operational name. The official and operational names proposed for the 13 Metro Orange Line stations are the same with two exceptions – Woodman/Valley Glen will have the operational name of Woodman,

## February Committee Meetings

### • Wednesday, Feb. 16

- Planning and Programming, 1 p.m.

### • Thursday, Feb. 17

- Executive Management and Audit, 9:30 a.m.
- Finance and Budget, 10:30 a.m.
- Construction, 11:30 a.m.
- Operations, 1 p.m.

### • Thursday, Feb. 24

- Full Board Meeting, 9:30 a.m.

and Laurel Canyon/Valley Village will have the operational name of Laurel Canyon.

The other station names are Warner Center, De Soto, Pierce College, Tampa, Reseda, Balboa, Woodley, Sepulveda, Van Nuys, Valley College and North Hollywood.

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Mark Clifford's spectacular photograph captured Metro's Valentine's Day display against the downtown L.A. cityscape.



*Photography by Mark Clifford*

Metro's Valentine's Day Salute to L.A.

(Feb. 15, 2005) Metro Headquarters was ablaze with Cupid's symbol, Monday evening, as lighted hearts shown from all four sides of the building.

The Valentine's Day message was created by a Design Studio team headed by Neil Sadler, working in cooperation with General Services.

To create the giant hearts, designers asked employees on Floors 12 through 21 to close certain blinds and leave others open after work hours.

The light display became visible at sunset and ended at 10 p.m. when the building's office lights normally are shut off for the night.

[More!](#)

See> "Cupid Floats Valentine's Balloons in Accounting"



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## Funeral Services Set for Operator Quincy Carroll, Div. 3

(Feb. 15, 2005) Funeral arrangements have been announced for North Los Angeles Division 3 Operator Quincy Carroll, who died Feb. 9 at age 69.

Carroll, who lived in Altadena, joined Metro in July 1973 and since 1984 had been assigned to Division 3. He retired Aug. 27, 2004, with 31 years' service.



Quincy Carroll

A viewing is scheduled Thursday, Feb. 17, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Mountain View Mortuary, 2400 North Fair Oaks Ave., Altadena.

Funeral services are set for 1 p.m., Friday, Feb. 18, at Metropolitan Baptist Church, 2283 North Fair Oaks Ave., Altadena.

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PHOTOS: BILL HEARD



## Cupid Floats Valentine's Balloons in Accounting

- [More!](#) See "Metro's Valentine's Day Salute to L.A."

(Feb. 15, 2005) Red, white and pink balloons floated over the Accounting Department on Monday, St. Valentine's Day.

Love was in the air, thanks to the 13 members of the Team Building group, who decorated the entire 20th floor with 326 colorful helium-filled mylar and latex balloons.

"Thank you so much for creating this atmosphere in our workplace," e-mailed Accountant Noemi Pronuevo. "You've made us so in love with love. Happy Valentine's Day!" (2/15/05)



Team Building members with their balloons are, back row from left, Jerry Solomon, Bill Hesser, Phyllis Cooper, Jim Cudlip and Nelson Mak. Front row from left are Ellen Yi, Bonnie Kwan, Nancy Untalan, Uvi Sanchez, Cora Arellano and Edina Pagadora. Not



shown are Leilani Reyes and Lili Chavez.

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Dave Vila, contact administration manager, at left, and Bruce Feerer, deputy executive officer, Procurement, present a check representing \$5,600 in savings generated by the P-card program in just 3 months, to CEO Roger Snoble.



PHOTO: GAYLE ANDERSON

## Penny Pinchers: P-Card Program Generates Savings

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(Feb. 16, 2005) Dave Vila, contact administration manager in the Office of Procurement and Material, is a penny pincher. He earned the honorary title this quarter by chalking up \$5,600 in rebates for prompt payment for purchases employees make using Purchase Cards.

With EO Lonnie Mitchell in the wings, Vila and Bruce Feerer, deputy executive officer, Procurement, presented a symbolic check for \$5,600 to CEO Roger Snoble, Feb. 10. Snoble, who issued the "Be a Penny Pincher" directive as part of Metro's internal initiatives to crunch diminishing budget numbers, praised the effort as creative.

"It's a good sign things are working when employees can save money even by spending it," he said.

The Purchase Card is actually a VISA card issued to employees in their name. The P-card allows the employees to purchase supplies directly without having to wait for purchase order processing or personal reimbursements.

"It's a fast and convenient method of payment," said Vila, "and paying the credit card bills promptly means we can collect rebates." The rebates are incentive for prompt payment offered by a division of the U.S. National Bank Association that provides purchase card services to the State of California.

"The biggest savings with the P-card are in the field," says Vila. "Over

the past year, we've increased card usage by 30%, to over 1,600 transactions per month. It means getting more work done without costly delays, and it means a bigger rebate."

- Check it out on myMetro.net > [Purchase Card Program](#) web page

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Division 10 swing shift service attendants have the main burden of cleaning buses after their daily runs. Equipment Maintenance Supervisor Demi Orleans is at far right.



PHOTOS: JOHN GILLEN

## How Division 10 Maintenance Reached a Coveted Goal

By FRANK LONYAI

(Feb. 16, 2005) Division maintenance teams work hard to supply safe, reliable and clean buses to the riding public and bus operators.

Every day when the buses come back from service, maintenance crews start swirling around to prepare them for service the next day. This is the part that not many people see.

About the time the majority of us are heading home, service attendants arrive at the divisions and work through the night to have the buses ready for rollout the next morning.



Service Attendant Perry Ford uses a special device to clean hard-crested gum off the surfaces in a Division 10 bus. Below, Service Attendant Alfred Duarte cleans the wheels on a Division 10 bus.

All of this activity and the cleaning of the buses are measured by the Cleanliness Rating. Once a month, sharp-eyed inspectors from the Quality Assurance group inspect a variety of buses and determine the division's overall cleanliness rating.

## 8 on a scale of 10

The goal for the Divisions is 8 on a scale of 10. Eight is rarified air, and usually only one or two divisions get there.

Over a year ago, Division 10 Maintenance decided to improve its cleanliness rating. At the time, ratings were in the mid-6 range. Supervisors, service attendant leaders and maintenance employees looked



for the best practices available. Some supervisors even visited other transit agencies to check out their cleaning programs.

In December 2004, Division 10 Maintenance reached 8.1 in its cleanliness rating, a first for this division.

Demi Orleans is the equipment maintenance supervisor in charge of the afternoon servicing and cleaning of the buses.

### **'Started working together'**

"Employees had to be part of the planning and buy into the idea," says Orleans. "The cleaning program we have at Division 10 goes across the shifts. Initially there was some difficulty in synchronizing the work among the shifts, but later, instead of blaming each other, we started working together."

The program consists of three major elements: modular cleaning performed by dayshift; daily regular servicing and cleaning of the buses done by swing shift; and weekly scheduled, targeted follow-up on certain crucial elements, such as dashboards, doors, windows, ceilings, floors.

Each day of the week there is something else maintenance crews pay a bit of extra attention, what we call "touch up". Also, both day and swing shifts have targeted special cleaning projects to address – such as front door water spot removal and ceilings – which could not be accomplished during the regular cleaning process.

"In all of my 20 years working for Metro," says Orleans. "I haven't seen a group of people so dedicated and conscientious."

*-- Frank Lonyai is maintenance manager at Division 10.*

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Rollings Hills  
Estates Mayor  
John Addleman  
is sworn in as a  
member of the  
South Bay  
Governance  
Council by  
Assistant Board  
Secretary  
Sharon Sterling.

## South Bay Governance Council Swears in New Member

By RICH MORALLO

(Feb. 17, 2005) The South Bay Governance Council launched its third year of operation by swearing in a new member, welcoming back another, recognizing student winners of a transit safety contest, and conducting briefings on bus operations.

Rolling Hills Estates Mayor John Addleman was sworn in as a council member before an audience of 25 community members.

Addleman, who fills the vacancy created by the departure of Palos Verdes Estates City Manager Jim Hendrickson, has spent more than 38 years in the investment and banking industries, and has been on the Rolling Hills Estates council since 1997.

John McTaggart, a former Rancho Palos Verdes mayor, was elected vice chair, a position held by Hendrickson.

## Back after injuries

The council also welcomed Council Member Margaret Hudson, back for her first meeting since sustaining injuries during a car accident in early December.

Three students from Whaley Middle School earned certificates of appreciation for participating in the Governance Council's transit safety writing and drawing contest.

Open to South Bay students, the contest invites youngsters to submit a drawing or write an essay on how they can stay safe near Metro Bus and Metro Rail. To date about 30 winners from several schools have been recognized.

The three-hour council meeting included presentations on the Metro



Trip Planner, the Los Angeles Community DASH Needs Assessment Survey, and several South Bay management team briefings on lost time and restricted activity days, Metro Rapid and division performance.

PHOTO: RICH MORALLO

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Shown with the City of San Fernando certificate of appreciation are, from left, Councilman Steven Veres, GM Richard Hunt, Division 15 Transportation Manager Gary Spivack, Operator Eddie Valles, Federico Ruelas Cervantes, Assistant Transportation Manager Lorene Kelley, Operator Benny Rios and San Fernando parade committee member Tom Ybarra.



## City of San Fernando Says 'Thanks' To Division 15

By ERIC RAPP

(Feb 17, 2005) Officials from the City of San Fernando stopped by East Valley Division 15, Feb. 10, to present a certificate of appreciation to employees for their participation in the city's Christmas Parade and Santa's Village.

Councilman Steven Veres, who also represented Mayor Marabell Delatorre, told employees that the people of San Fernando appreciate not only their participation in the parade, but what they do every day.

"Many people in our city depend on transit to get to their jobs, to get to school, and to get home to their families," said Veres. "The job you do is vital to our community."

General Manager Richard Hunt agreed. "In every area that we serve, Metro employees are a vital part of the community."

Parade committee representatives presented a framed Certificate of Appreciation to "The Employees of Metro Bus Division 15," along with shirts and pins, to some of the employees who volunteered to work the parade and staff a Metro information booth at Santa's Village.

PHOTO: ERIC RAPP

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## Transit Hearings Set for Santa Clarita Valley, Antelope Valley

By RICK JAGER

Feb. 17, 2005) Metro will conduct public hearings in early March to receive ideas and suggestions for meeting public transportation needs in the Santa Clarita and Antelope valleys.

Two hearings will be held in Santa Clarita. The first is scheduled at 2 p.m. Wednesday, March 2, at the Santa Clarita City Hall, Orchard Room, 23920 Valencia Blvd. The second is set at 6 p.m. that day in the same location.

A public hearing is scheduled in Palmdale at 10 a.m., Thursday, March 3, at the Palmdale Cultural Center, 38350 Palmdale Blvd.

The Lancaster public hearing is set for 10 a.m., Saturday, March 5, in the Lancaster City Council Chambers at 44933 North Fern Ave.

## Sales tax revenue

Article 8 of the Transportation Development Act (TDA) stipulates that a proportional share of the sales tax revenue must be allocated to areas in Los Angeles County that do not have Metro service.

Article 8 applies to the approximately 5 percent of the county population that resides in the Santa Clarita Valley, Antelope Valley and on Santa Catalina Island.

TDA funds must be spent for public transit purposes when a legitimate need for transit service can be identified. However, if no "unmet transit needs" are found, the sales tax revenue may be used for street and road purposes.

Each year, the Metro holds public hearings in areas outside the agency's service area to determine if any unmet transit needs exist. Following the hearings, and after receiving input from the Hearing Board and Social Services Transportation Advisory Council, Metro decides whether there are unmet transit needs in the Santa Clarita Valley.


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Members of the Division 8 transportation and maintenance teams take a moment with Transportation Manager Maria Reynolds, center, to enjoy their selection as "Best Division of the Quarter."



## West Valley Division 8 Wins "Best Division of the Quarter"

By ERIC RAPP

(Feb. 18, 2005) Continuing its record of victories, West Valley Division 8 has been selected as Best Division of the Quarter, for the second quarter of Fiscal Year 2005.

This is a combined win. The high performance of both the Transportation and Maintenance Departments of Division 8 were factors in the victory.

"It's no surprise to me," says Transportation Manager Maria Reynolds. "Our employees are some of the best in the Metro system."

The win probably comes as no surprise to Division 8 Maintenance employees, either. Maintenance has notched victories as Best Maintenance Division of the Month for several months running, and recently won as Best Maintenance Division of the Quarter.

General Manager Richard Hunt also offered his congratulations. "Since I've joined the team here in the Valley I've been consistently impressed at the quality and hard work our employees give every day. This award is a great recognition of what our team can accomplish."

The reward came with a cash prize and a celebration, held Feb. 14. The \$1,000 prize was used to put on a huge barbecue for all employees, with workers from both departments pitching in to cook.

PHOTO: ERIC RAPP

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To check Foothill Transit Lines 699 and 497 timetables, click here:

[http://www.foothilltransit.org/line\\_menu.html](http://www.foothilltransit.org/line_menu.html)

## Commuters on Foothill Lines 699, 497 Will Ride Free in March

(Feb. 18, 2005) Commuters who use Foothill Transit lines 699 and 497 will ride free during the month of March – a savings of \$115.

Line 699 serves Montclair, West Covina and downtown Los Angeles. Line 497 serves Diamond Bar, Industry and downtown LA.

Beginning Feb. 27, Foothill will shave 24 minutes off Line 699 runs by eliminating the Via Verde and Lakes park and ride lots from its list of stops.

In its new configuration, Line 699 will begin at the Montclair Transit Center, go south on Monte Vista to the I-10 freeway in Pomona, make stops at Cal State LA, USC Medical Center and terminate at 9th and Hope in downtown LA.

Started just a year ago, Foothill Line 497 starts at the Chino Transit Center, stops at the Chino park and ride lot, moves onto State 71, then to the I-60 freeway, the I-605 freeway and the I-10 freeway. After stops at Cal State LA and the USC Medical Center, it continues into downtown LA to terminate at 9th and Hope.

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## Gateway Cities Sheriff's Substation is Making a Difference

By DAVID HERSHENSON

(Feb. 18, 2005) The recent location of a Transit Services Bureau (TSB) substation and some 17 Sheriff's deputies at the Gateway Cities Service Sector office in Downey already is producing positive results.

Perhaps the biggest benefit is improved communication between the TSB detail assigned to work the Gateway Cities area and the sector staff, including management and bus operators at Central City Division 1 and Crossroads Depot Division 2.

The improved communication also has resulted in a crackdown on criminal activity in the area.

Sgt. Paul Takeshita's team of 10 deputies asked 50 operators to complete a survey identifying bus lines, line segments and the time of day when they experienced problems. The deputies then conducted undercover operations on Lines 18 and 270 on Whittier Boulevard and Line 260 on Atlantic Boulevard.

### Made three arrests

The team made three arrests for unauthorized selling of Metro tokens; possession of marijuana; and possession of a syringe. Citations also were issued to a minor in possession of alcohol, for smoking, eating and drinking on a bus, and for loud and unruly behavior.

During a second undercover operation, deputies boarded 15 buses serving lines in Downey, Bell, Huntington Park, South Gate, Lynwood and Walnut Park. One suspect was arrested for vandalizing a bus and others were cited for unauthorized use of a discount ticket, drinking on a bus, and smoking on a bus.

After completing a bus ride, the deputies identified themselves so the operators would know they were monitoring the buses for criminal and unacceptable behavior.

Lt. Leo Norton, who heads the Gateway Cities TSB unit, said operators were pleasantly surprised to see the results of the operation.

"We all understand that we are here to serve Metro, including patrons and the employees," said Norton. "With the help of our operators, we are able to do a better job. Their input is critical to help us focus law



General Manager Alex Clifford and Sheriff's Lt. Leo Norton have a look at the Gateway Cities area now covered by the new Transit Services Bureau substation.



enforcement assets on the lines where help is most needed."

### **A successful investigation**

The Special Problems Unit assigned to the Gateway Cities sector also completed a successful investigation in January. Deputies arrested a prolific tagger suspected of vandalism damage estimated in excess of \$5,000.

General Manager Alex Clifford is happy with the benefits he has seen with the addition of the TSB substation. "I am pleased with the pride and dedication exhibited by Lt. Norton and his team. They have truly embraced the concept of transit community policing in the Gateway Cities Service Sector."

Norton is proud of the efforts of everyone involved in the recent operations, and is confident more progress will be made with the cooperation of Metro staff and Sheriff's personnel.

"The combination of operator input, plain clothes operations by patrol personnel, and good investigative work by the Special Problems Unit," said Norton, "goes a long way towards a better quality of life for the entire transit community."

PHOTO: DAVID HERSHENSON

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Metro Orange Line COUNTDOWN

Metro Orange Line  
COUNTDOWN

- Photos by Ned Racine

Senior Community Relations Officer Ned Racine is on the scene at the Metro Orange Line, where construction is well underway. Photos were taken Feb. 9 at the Winnetka Station and Feb. 16 at Valley College Station.

Click on images below to view.



Workers fasten lengths of conduit pipe at Valley College Station.



Workers drag pipe to installation site. We're looking west here; Burbank Boulevard is to the right.



Facing west, the conduit trench is to the right of the far edge of the eastbound platform at Valley College Station.



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Metro Orange Line COUNTDOWN

• Photos by Ned Racine

Senior Community Relations Officer Ned Racine is on the scene at the Metro Orange Line, where construction of the Laurel Canyon Station is well underway. Photos were taken January 21, when the first *signature* canopies were raised at both platforms.

Click on images below to view.



An element of art



Curb appeal



Bike path





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**Funeral Services, Wednesday, for Rudy Lipscomb**

(Feb. 22, 2005) Funeral services for Deputy Chief Labor Relations Officer Rudolph (Rudy) Lipscomb, who died at his home last week, are scheduled for 11 a.m., Wednesday, Feb. 23, in the Arbitorium Room, Crystal Cathedral, 12141 Lewis St., Garden Grove.

Viewings are scheduled from 6 – 8 p.m., today, in the Art Gallery of the Crystal Cathedral, and again from 10 – 11 a.m., Wednesday, in the Arbitorium Room. A reception will follow the funeral service.

Flowers may be sent to O'Connor Mortuary, 25301 Alicia Parkway, Laguna Hills. Donations may be made to the American Red Cross.

See myMetro.net: [Feb. 16](#)

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## Funeral Arrangements Pending for Rudy Lipscomb



Rudy Lipscomb

(Feb. 16, 2005) Funeral arrangements are pending for Deputy Chief Labor Relations Officer Rudolph (Rudy) Lipscomb, who was found dead, earlier today, at his home in Irvine.

Lipscomb, 56, had fought a lengthy battle with diabetes.

Lipscomb joined Metro in May 1990 as a senior labor relations analyst. He was promoted to assistant director in May 1999 and again to deputy chief labor relations officer in March

2003.

"Rudy has been a valued colleague...and has played an important role on the Labor Relations team," wrote Brenda Diederichs, executive officer, Labor and Employee Relations, in an e-mail announcing Lipscomb's death. "He will be sorely missed."

Lipscomb is survived by a daughter, RuDee, and a son, Isaac.


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## Metro Library Offers Two More 'Tools' to Help in Data Searches

By MATT BARRETT

(Feb. 22, 2005) The Dorothy Peyton Gray Transportation Library has just released two additional search tools employees can use to find transportation data, historical documents, Board reports and other information on myMetro.net and the Internet.

In addition to the standard Library Catalog, the TLCat Catalog and the Metro Words on-line Dictionary, employees can now access the History Archives Catalog and the Google-powered Board Actions Archive via the intranet on the Research Center/Library page, <http://intranet1/dept/mtalibrary/>.

Each of these tools, found on the Research/Library site under Search Tools, provides employees with desktop access to a wealth of additional electronic information sources.

The History Archives Catalog contains about 50,000 records, or about a fourth of the archives' contents, which document Los Angeles transportation history from 1873 to the present.

### Variety of collections

Each of the predecessor transit agencies, both public and private, handed down collections of photographs, reports, studies, franchise agreements, payroll records, contracts, advertising and artifacts that were acquired when they purchased other private operators or were merged with other public agencies.

Historian/Archivist Jim Walker has been cataloging those records to ensure that Metro's historic resources are preserved and documented for generations to come.

Maybe you or your project were featured in an issue of Headway (SCRTD), or your parents in an issue of the Emblem (LAMTA), or your grandparents in an issue of Two Bells (Los Angeles Railway). Those resources, along with many others are now searchable on line. In a long-term project, the Library plans to digitize many of the key reports, photos and publications, and expand viewable access to these irreplaceable resources.

### CHECK IT OUT:

- **Library Catalog** - Search the main collection of transportation research collection, search the Learning Resource Center collection, or both simultaneously.
- **TLCat** - Search 20 transportation libraries simultaneously, a project sponsored by the U.S. DOT's National Transportation Library.
- **Metro Words Dictionary** - Search acronyms and transportation terminology.
- **History Archives Catalog** - Search historical documents, photographs, and artifacts.
- **Board Action Archive using Google** - Find board reports, minutes, agendas and more.



The History Archives catalog is also available via <http://www.metro.net/library> to allow academics, journalists, historians and the media industry to search to our collections. Whether its a film studio's costume shop documenting bus operator uniform details, or the 1950s era Los Angeles monorail plans for a documentary, or a historian looking for LA's first subway plan from 1915, the archives have the information.

### **Full text of reports**

The Board of Directors Action Archive allows employees to search through the full text of LACMTA board reports, agendas, minutes and "Board Box" reports, as well as reports on the service sectors and other Board organizations like the Bus Operations Subcommittee, PTSC and SAFE.

Having these reports available and searchable gives users the ability to research public policy and procurement issues, find examples, trace progress and explore current and past decisions from their desktop computer.

The full text of Board meeting minutes of the predecessor agencies – SCRTD, LACTC and RCC – are also there. In total, about 30,000 records have been digitized so far.

The Library is continuing to work backwards in time, scanning additional files as they are obtained from paper and microfilm sources.

The goal is to go back as many years as possible to have a complete digitally accessible archive of Board actions from the beginning of public oversight and operation of Los Angeles' transportation system from 1958 to the present. This system is currently only available to intranet users.

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## Metro Rail's Wild, Wet Weekend of Lightning, Rain and Mudslides

- Rail system was battered, but fought back
- Crews are bracing for more stormy weather
- [Weather forecast](#)

> Rain that saturated an unstable hill alongside the Metro Gold Line dumped mud, debris and a tree onto the northbound tracks. >



By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Feb. 22, 2005) After a wild, wet holiday weekend spent coping with lightning-sparked electrical outages, rainwater damage and mudslides that affected service on all four Metro Rail lines, controllers and maintenance crews are bracing for another round of storms.

Weather forecasters are predicting scattered thunderstorms, heavy downpours, gusty winds and hail through Tuesday night with isolated thunderstorms likely on Wednesday morning.

When that weather hits, it will find a rail system that was battered, but fought back against great odds to maintain customer service however it could. Service problems were most severe Friday evening and early Saturday morning, when lightning strikes repeatedly interrupted service on the Metro Green and Blue Lines.

On Monday, debris from a small landslide just north of the Arroyo Seco Bridge forced Metro Gold Line trains to single-track between the Mission and Southwest Museum stations, with a stop at Highland Park.

### Rainwater burst doors

Also on Monday, rainwater pouring into air vents at the Metro Red Line's Wilshire/Western



Rail Facilities Systems technicians Andy Villa, foreground,

station burst through emergency exit doors on the west end of the station, swept across the passenger platform and flooded electrical rooms, but service was delayed for only 10 minutes or so.

Action at the Rail Operations Center went into high gear, Friday, when an electrical outage reaching from the South Bay to Whittier cut power to the Green Line between the Imperial/Wilmington and Crenshaw stations and, later, affected the line east to Norwalk.

After several hours, power was restored to all but a stretch of Green Line track between the Avalon, Harbor Freeway and Vermont stations. Buses from Carson Division 18 and Arthur Winston Division 5 formed a bus bridge, supplemented by buses and vans driven by Metro Blue Line operators.

and Ignatius Kelly use a sump pump to clear water from the backup battery room at the Wilshire/Western station.



Water pouring into air vents at the Wilshire/Western Metro Rail station burst through this door on the passenger platform.



An air duct damaged during the weekend storm lies in pieces at the Wilshire/Western station.

It was a tense five or six hours in the ROC, which worked on emergency generator power for more than four hours early Saturday as controllers fought against the storm to keep trains running, sometimes dispatching "rescue trains" to restart stalled Green Line cars.

### 'Hit pretty hard'

"We did fairly well, although we got hit pretty hard Friday night and early Saturday," said ROC Manager Byron England. He complimented employees who worked past their shifts and who set up and operated the bus bridge.

As controllers contended with Green Line problems, street flooding between Washington and Flower in downtown LA slowed Metro Blue Line service for a while just before midnight, Friday.

Early Saturday, Traction Power employees and supervisors worked to restore power during electrical outages on the Green Line and that affected Blue Line service from the Del Amo station south to the Long Beach Transit Mall and intermittently from the Artesia station north.

"Everyone did a bang-up job," said Rob Chappell, deputy executive officer for Wayside Systems. "Communications and facilities

maintenance – it was a busy weekend for us.”

### **Thick mud cascaded**

Storm-related problems continued into Monday on the Gold Line when a section of hillside between the Mission and Highland Park stations gave way and thick mud cascaded onto about 10 yards of tracks.

“Mud was all the way up to the top of the rails on the northbound track and reached onto the southbound track,” said Gold Line Transportation Manager Duane Martin, noting that a five-member Wayside Maintenance crew quickly cleared the tracks. “They worked hard. It was heavy shoveling.”

A Metro Rail engineer was dispatched Tuesday morning to assess the hillside, but the northbound track remained closed to through trains due to concerns about the possibility of more mudslides. Gold Line trains were operating on 20-minute headways, Tuesday, while single-tracking on the southbound tracks through the mudslide area.

“We’re very fortunate to have this Metro Rail team,” said General Manager Gerald Francis. “When adversity hits, they show their stuff. They’re committed to keeping the service going for the customers who depend on us.”

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#### **WEATHER FORECAST**

**Today**...Showers with scattered thunderstorms...heavy downpours... gusty winds and small hail. Some thunderstorms may be severe in the afternoon. Highs near 60. Southeast winds 15 to 20 mph.

**Tonight**...Showers with scattered thunderstorms...heavy downpours... gusty winds and small hail. Some thunderstorms may be severe in the evening. Showers diminishing from the west overnight. Lows in the upper 40s to mid 50s. East winds 15 to 20 mph.

**Wednesday**...Partly cloudy with isolated thunderstorms. Showers likely in the morning...diminishing afternoon. Highs in the lower to mid 60s. East winds around 15 mph in the morning. Chance of precipitation 60 percent.


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## Former Service Attendant Pleads Guilty to Forgery, Workers' Comp Fraud

By PAM MURANO

(Feb. 23, 2005) Paul Gonzalez, a former service attendant at the Regional Rebuild Center, pled guilty, Tuesday, in Los Angeles Superior Court to three felony charges and one misdemeanor charge filed by the Los Angeles District Attorney's Office.

Gonzalez pled guilty to forgery, insurance fraud and Workers' Compensation fraud – all felonies under the California Penal Code – and to altering medical records, a misdemeanor.

Gonzales was sentenced to time served, based on the time he spent in custody subsequent to his arrest Nov. 2, 2004. He was also sentenced to three years' formal probation, 350 hours of community service and paid an initial restitution amount of \$15,000.

As additional restitution, the court ordered Gonzalez to forfeit to Metro an additional \$10,026 he would have received from a workers' compensation claim.

Gonzales was ordered to return to court April 20, 2005, for a progress hearing to finalize the terms of his probation and to ensure that he has registered with his probation officer and has begun his community service.

Gonzales resigned from Metro, in lieu of termination, in 2004.

Senior Investigator Roy Romero of Metro's Special Investigation Unit (SIU) investigated the case, prepared it for prosecution and was in court, Tuesday, to take custody of the court-ordered restitution. The SIU worked closely with the District Attorney's office on the case.




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Planning ahead for Metro Family Day, Deputy CEO John Catoe was in line, Tuesday, to buy two tickets from Administrative Aide Alicia Morales-Rodriguez.

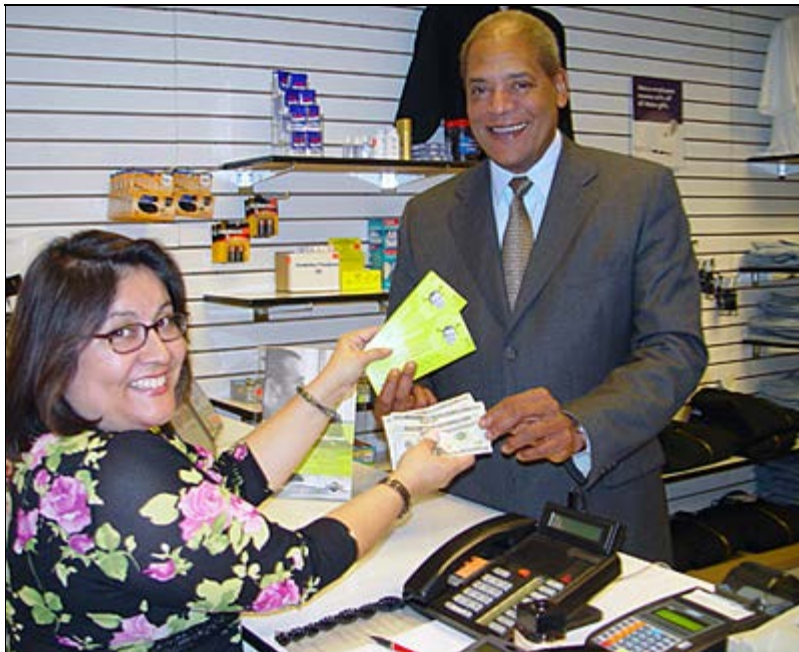


PHOTO: BILL HEARD

## Some 300 Tickets Sold for Metro Family Day at Universal Studios

- Ticket sales end April 1

(Feb. 23, 2005) With just over a month before sales end, some 300 tickets already have been sold for Metro Family Day, scheduled Saturday, April 16, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., at Universal Studios.

The \$25 tickets, on sale through April 1, will cover the buffet lunch, entertainment, a private party at the Universal Amphitheater Concourse and admission to the Universal City Park.

Tickets are sold at the Metro Store in the Gateway Building and at most operating divisions. No tickets will be sold on the day of the event.

Ticket sales are scheduled at the following divisions:

- Division 11, Monday, Feb. 28, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
- Division 8, Wednesday, March 2, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.
- Division 7, Monday, March 7, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.
- Division 6, Wednesday, March 9, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.



- Division 9, Wednesday, March 16, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.
- Division 5, Monday, March 25, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.
- Division 22, Monday, March 28, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.

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Flowers, raindrops and flag ceremony reflect on memorial plaque installed in Gateway Transit Plaza in honor of fallen Transit Police Officer Edward E. Reed.

PHOTOS: GAYLE ANDERSON



## Remembered...

Metro Transit Security officers form Color Guard to salute fellow officer Edward E. Reed, who was killed in the line of duty in 1993.

< Lt. James Cook led memorial ceremony presented by Transit Security officers Gus Lozano, Jose Oritz, Rodel Pareja and Carlos Pena.




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## PCH Mudslide Cuts Metro Service to Malibu and Beyond

- Shuttle bus service will serve cutoff area
- Line 434 buses trapped for second time since January
- Rock slide almost hits one Metro Bus

(Feb. 24, 2005) A massive mudslide that continued to block the Pacific Coast Highway in Malibu, Thursday, has cut Metro Bus service to homes, businesses and schools and has forced transit users to walk two miles through the slide area to reach their destinations.

CHP and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department have cordoned off a mile section either side of the slide area to through traffic, but is permitting access to pedestrians.

Derick Mahome, Westside/Central assistant transportation manager, said Line 434 shuttle bus service will be set up beginning at 3 p.m., today, between the slide area at Big Rock in Malibu and the north end of the line at Trancas Canyon.

It was the second time since mid-January that storm-generated mud and rock slides trapped Metro buses on Pacific Coast Highway in Malibu.

### Boulder threatened the roadway

On Tuesday, three Line 434 buses operating out of Venice Division 6 were caught in a 15-mile stretch of highway beyond Big Rock Mesa when a mudslide blocked PCH and a 1,200-ton boulder threatened to crash down on the roadway.

One bus, driven by Operator William Hudson, was nearly hit by a rock slide as he evacuated passengers up Kanan Dune Road. He no sooner had driven past Mulholland Drive when the hillside gave way and debris swept across the road.

Hudson immediately called in an alert to prevent the other two buses from taking the same route.

"That saved us from having a bus stuck on that canyon road with no way to turn around," says George Trudeau, assistant transportation manager for the San Fernando Valley service sector, who helped coordinate the emergency service.

### Operating shuttle service

Meanwhile, Operators Brandy Ankeny and Certurice Alexander were operating a shuttle service between the blocked area and the end of the line at Trancas Canyon Road north of Zuma Beach.

Late in the day, Trudeau and Transportation Operations Supervisor

Russ Modell directed Ankeny and Alexander to return to their division. With one empty bus and another loaded with passengers, the operators drove all the way to Oxnard before they were able to get onto the 101 Freeway east.

Having signed on before dawn, Tuesday, the operators didn't get back to Venice until after 10 p.m.

In an e-mail to Alva Carrasco, Division 6 assistant transportation manager, Trudeau commended the three operators. "They were excellent out there, very professional, over and above the call, a true credit to your division. (It was) a pleasure to work with them."

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## VIEW FROM THE 25th FLOOR

### The Storm, a Shortage and Dollars from D.C.

By ROGER SNOBLE

"When it rains, it pours," they say, and that was certainly true over the President's Day weekend when one storm after another walloped the Metro Rail system.



CEO Roger Snoble

Rain, lightning, flooding, mudslides – nature was playing tag with us and kept the controllers at the Rail Control Center and our Wayside Systems crews hopping to maintain as much service as possible on the Metro Green, Blue, Gold and Red Lines.

It was a difficult, wet and sometimes dangerous task that also required excellent coordination and teamwork at the ROC and in the field. Operators at divisions 18, 5 and 11 pitched in to run a bus bridge and

Rail Facilities employees helped with cleanup from the storm.

It's incredible the kind of effort Metro employees are willing to put into such efforts to serve our customers and to ensure their mobility even under the worse weather conditions.

### Hats off!

Hats off to all our Metro Rail folks! They did a great job. We're really fortunate to have such dedicated people.

And speaking of people, we don't have enough of them – at least not in our bus operator ranks. At a time when we're continuing to expand bus service, we haven't been able to attract enough people who want to be bus operators and who can pass our rigorous training program.

Being a Metro Bus operator can be an excellent career for many. If you know of someone who's service-minded and customer-oriented and who's looking for a great job opportunity, please encourage them to apply through our Human Resources Department. Job listings for bus operators also are posted on our metro.net web site.

I want to close this month's column with a quick report on my recent trip to Washington, D.C.

### Encouraging reception in D.C.

The reception we received from our Los Angeles-area congressional delegation was quite encouraging. They're all very supportive of our federal funding request, this year, for \$80 million for construction of the Metro Gold Line's Eastside Extension, of the \$10 million we need for bus purchases and of the \$5 million we want for ITS projects.



Joined by Supervisor Mike Antonovich, I also paid a visit to Federal Transit Administrator Jenna Dorn. We discussed funding for the Exposition Light Rail Line and for the Metro Foothill Gold Line. As a result of our talks, I think we now have a better understanding of what the possibilities are for securing more federal funding.

As I said in my January column, 2005 is going to be a tough year, but there are some bright spots ahead. Let's just keep pluggin' away and enjoy 'em when they come.

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February 24, 2005

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## CPUC Rules on Gold Line Crossing Bells, Sound Walls

(Feb. 25, 2005) The California Public Utilities Commission approved the conditions of a three-party settlement agreement, Thursday, that allows for improvements to the South Pasadena section of the Metro Gold Line, City News Service reported.

The Metro Gold Line Construction Authority, the City of South Pasadena and the LA County Metropolitan Transportation Authority worked together to identify measures that would reduce community concerns regarding operations of the Gold Line.

Conditions of the agreement include modifications to the crossing bells by lowering the volume of the bells and installing a metal shroud on the back of the bell to direct the sound toward the crossing, and reduce the noise impact on any surrounding properties.

The settlement also provides for construction of at least 1,030 feet of additional sound walls, installation of two additional sets of rail lubricators. The settlement permits the Construction Authority and the city to agree to additional mitigation measures which are dependent upon the availability of surplus project funds.

## Gates and crossings

Several projects that may be implemented include the reconfiguration of gates and pedestrian crossings at two intersections.

The settlement also includes a housing purchase and sales program, which will be mutually developed and implemented by the Construction Authority and the city of South Pasadena. Components of the agreement may be instituted as early as April 30.

A major issue in the controversy has been the noise level of the bells at Metro Gold Line rail crossings.

The PUC permits crossing bells to be set within a range of 75 to 105 decibels. The PUC's ruling directs that the crossing bells must be individually tested in accordance with PUC rules, metal shrouds must then be attached to the bells which will be tested again to ensure they ring no louder than 75 to 77 decibels.

"I think people will notice a significant difference," Deputy County Counsel Augustin Zuniga, who represents Metro, told the Pasadena Star-News. "Most of the manufacturers of these bells in America set (them) for the middle range, 85-90 (decibels)."

## 'A major reduction'

"When you come down to the level the judge ordered," he added, "that's a major reduction."

Bells in South Pasadena will be replaced first, according to the

## Construction Authority.

The Construction Authority and Metro will adjust bells at Mission Street/Meridian Avenue and at Pasadena Avenue/Monterey Road in South Pasadena so that they will cease ringing after the crossing barriers have descended.

There will only be a single crossing in the city – El Centro/Glendon Way – where the bells will continue to ring after the gates are in the down position. The PUC determined that the unusual nature of the crossing design at the intersection required no change in the bell pattern until the crossing is redesigned with quad gates.

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## Employee Recognition Pages Debut on myMetro.net

- [CHECK IT OUT:](#) New web site describes four major programs

(Feb. 25, 2005) MyMETRO.net today introduces a new addition that will give Intranet users a "central destination" for all employee recognition programs.

The new Employee Recognition web pages, provided by the Communication Services Department, assemble in one convenient web location information about four of Metro's major employee recognition programs.

Intranet users can link to information about the Employee of the Quarter program, "A Night of Stars," Metro Service Awards and Retirement Roundup.

The Employee of the Quarter site lists the seven categories in which employees can be nominated and the criteria they must meet to be eligible for the award. It also outlines the nomination and awards process, and provides links to the nomination form and program administration.

That site also provides a link to the most recent winners, with photos and descriptions of the work that qualified them for Employee of the Quarter honors.

## See photos on-line

"Those employees who don't often get a chance to come to the Gateway Building can now look at the photos on-line," says Communications Assistant Jennifer Salamanca, who coordinates the programs.

The pages for "A Night of Stars" provides program highlights, list the awards criteria and the 2004 five-year honorees and Spotlight Award nominees and winners, along with other program information.

The Service Awards pages list the names and job titles, by month, of 30-year, 25-year, 20-year, 10-year and 5-year service award honorees.

The Employee Recognition web page also includes a link to Retirement Roundup, a listing of the names, titles and start dates of employees who have retired within the past 12 months. That link also can be found in the left-hand navigation column of the Intranet home page.


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## February Board Actions

(Feb. 25, 2005) The Board took a preliminary step to consider a possible revival of subway construction, Thursday, by passing a motion to include it in Metro's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

In other action, the Board approved motions to bolster the FY 2005 budget and to direct the staff to consider the Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension in the LRTP.

**Item 14, Subway Tunneling.** The Board approved a motion by LA City Councilman Tom LaBonge directing the CEO to include in the Long Range Transportation Plan a countywide policy, standards and criteria on "where best to construct underground rail."

The motion directs the CEO to work to remove the federal prohibition on use of federal funds for rail tunneling in "gas risk areas."

The motion also called for analyzing the impact on the transportation sales tax if the tunneling restrictions were removed, as well as assessing the "potential financial implications" on such projects as the Eastside Extension and the Exposition Line if there were no restriction on tunneling.

**Item 26, FY 2005 Budget Amendment.** The Board approved a motion aimed at meeting Metro's anticipated FY 2005 budget shortfall of approximately \$42.2 million.

The motion approves the transfer of \$19.2 million from the capital program to the operating program and amend the FY 2005 budget to move up to \$8.2 million from the General Fund into the Enterprise Fund for additional bus operations fuel costs.

The motion included moving up to \$8 million in Proposition A 35 percent funds to be used for rail operations. The motion also called for eliminating 14 positions as a result of the capital program changes.

**Item 39, Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension.** The Board voted to refer three sections of a motion by directors Michael Antonovich, John Fasana and Frank Roberts to the Metro staff for consideration as part of development of the Long Range Transportation Plan.

The first of the three sections to be considered would support completion of the Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension to Montclair by 2014, subject to the availability of federal funds consistent with FTA guidelines.

The second would direct the staff to work with the Gold Line Construction Authority to revise the line's "ridership model" and develop a financial plan. The third would direct Metro to enter a Memorandum of Understanding with the Construction Authority reflecting those actions no later than April 2005.

A fourth section of the motion to replace the Pasadena, South Pasadena and San Gabriel Valley Council of Government seats on the Construction Authority was designated "receive and file."

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Also see: [BOC's "Taste of Africa"](#)

**Total Praise** - Metro Choir rocks the Gateway Plaza in noontime performance that drew cheers and applause from standing-room-only crowds in AAEEA's final presentation of month-long activities celebrating Black History Month. Renee Willis conducts.



Director and County Supervisor Yvonne Burke pledged to declare the Black History Month Celebration an official designation of Metro.



Actress Onnie Pointer performed a monologue from the writings of Coretta Scott King.



Bill Satterfield delivers the famous "I Have a Dream" speech by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. while the Metro Choir softly sings the spiritual "We Shall Overcome" behind the words.



Recording artist Sherri Bryant got everyone moving with her rocking rendition of "Throw Your Hands Up."



Tahir Davis conducts the Metro Choir.

photos: gayle anderson





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photos: gayle anderson



**A taste of Africa** - Bus Operations Control TOSs Bonnie Bradford and Dietra Thompson create an inviting African experience in a jungle motif with an exotic decor, a timeline wall of history, and a glowing, flowing waterfall display. Honored guests from the Metro Choir joined with the 60-some BOC crew at a banquet-sized catered potluck feast of traditional food and comraderie, all in celebration of Black History Month.

Also see: [Metro Choir gets and gives 'Total Praise.'](#)





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On behalf of Metro, Rail Systems Safety Manager Abdul Zohbi receives a gold medal from the president of the New York Festivals. The award recognizes excellence in music and lyrics in Metro's rail safety public service announcements.

### Metro's Rail Safety PSAs Win Gold Medal in NYC Competition

(Feb. 25, 2005) Rail safety public service announcements produced by Metro won a World Gold Medal for excellence in music and lyrics at the recent New York Festivals.

Advertising agencies and organizations from some 87 countries participated in the annual competition, with top awards going to such companies as Honda, Toyota and Coca-Cola.

"To win a gold medal for any category is an accomplishment," says Rail Systems Safety Manager Abdul Zohbi, who represented Metro at the awards event.

The PSAs, a joint effort of Rail Operations Safety and Community Relations, were shown frequently on television stations throughout Southern California.

### Funded by federal grant

The PSAs were part of a rail safety education program funded by a \$5.7 million federal grant. The bulk of the funding was used for such engineering improvements as 4-quad crossing gates, photo enforcement camera installations and train-coming signs at rail crossings, but \$1.5 million was earmarked for safety education.

With those funds, says Zohbi, Metro "resurrected a dormant rail safety education program" that now is "the Number 1 light rail safety education program in the nation due to the creativity and dedication of Rail Operations Safety and Community Relations."

"This was a perfect example of interdepartmental cooperations," he added.

"Abdul and I love to save lives," says Lynda Bybee, deputy executive officer, Community Relations, whose professional experience includes award-winning film and theatrical productions.

