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VIEW FROM THE 25th FLOOR

Courage, Dedication and a Happy 99th Birthday Celebration

By CEO ROGER SNOBLE

I want to start this month's column by recognizing the courage and dedication of two Sheriff's deputies assigned to provide security on the Metro Blue Line. Deputies Erik Albano and Scott Harper reacted quickly and decisively when they arrested a robbery suspect, last week, at the Pacific Coast Highway station.



CEO Roger Snoble

Unfortunately, during a scuffle with the suspect, Deputy Albano was wounded. I hope all employees will join me in wishing Deputy Albano a speedy recovery. We look forward to having him back on the job.

When something like this happens, it reminds us how much we depend upon the vigilance and dedication of the men and women of the Sheriff's Transit Services Bureau to keep our system safe. The quick action by Deputies Albano and Harper is an excellent example of what it takes to do that sometimes dangerous job.

On a happier note, I want to congratulate our most senior employee, Arthur Winston, on his 99th birthday. His 71 years at Metro exemplify the highest commitment to service. He's a role model for all of us – truly Metro's "Employee of the Century."

Congratulations also to our Bus Operations Control team for their outstanding work preparing for this year's L.A. Marathon. Three months of planning went into reorganizing some 50 bus lines. The work included posting signs at 900 bus stops, distributing more than 100,000 Service Change Notices and coordinating with law enforcement and other transit properties. The result: smooth, safe operation for our customers.

I'm happy to report that we have passed an important milestone in our effort to build the first new Metro bus facility in 25 years.

Last Thursday, the Board approved the environmental impact report and mitigation plan and formally adopted the West Los Angeles Transportation Facility as a project. This facility, a 4.7-acre site suitable for up to 150 CNG buses, will replace Venice Division 6.

The L.A. City Council still has to approve the project, but the private developer is expected to begin construction this summer, with completion in mid-2006.

Finally, you should know that while we're struggling with this fiscal year's \$42.2 million budget deficit, we're also developing a balanced budget for FY-2006. The big challenges are bus service required by the Consent Decree and the rising price of fuel, along with Worker's

Compensation and health and welfare costs.

There was a ray of sunshine in February, however. Average daily and weekend ridership increased on our bus lines and on most rail lines. We're looking forward to the March numbers, and we're hoping that our improved transit system, along with the rising cost of commuting by car, will bring us more customers and more revenue to help close the budget gap.

March 29, 2005

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