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PHOTOS BY RICH MORALLO



Division 18 Instructor Roy Steens was in high spirits at his surprise retirement party.

Division 18 Retirees Have Fond Memories of Years on the Job

By RICH MORALLO

(April 29, 2005) As Division 18 Instructor Roy Steens and Service Attendant Linda Burns were spending their final days before retirement, they remembered fondly their respective careers and experiences at Metro.

Beginning as a Metro Bus operator, Steen had almost 31 years on the job and had worked at all the divisions. Burns is a 23-year veteran who started on the graveyard shift but stuck to the job of maintaining the bus fleet.

Steens recalled the day he volunteered to go out with an operator trainee on her first day driving on Los Angeles streets. The other instructors had hesitated to take the assignment since the student had knocked down 11 pylons in the Los Angeles riverbed training course the day before.

"She did excellent on the streets that day; she was just a little nervous," recalled Steens, who bid farewell, April 13, to Metro and Carson Division 18.

Became an instructor

In 1974, Steens left his job running a press and printing labels to work for the SCRTD. After operating a bus for 4 1/2 years, Steens became an instructor and through the years worked at all of the divisions.

"A good instructor is thorough, attentive and makes the student comfortable," advises Steens, who now looks forward to traveling and hunting.

At Steens' farewell party Assistant Transportation Manager Curley Little said, "Roy, there are 365 days in the year, and now they are all holidays for you."



Division 18 Operator Glinda Alston, at left, congratulates retiring Service Attendant Linda Burns, right, in the Carson Division 18 bus yard.

On April 21, her last day at Division 18, Burns walked out onto the bus yard and hugged operator Glinda Alston. "I've been crying tears of joy," said Burns whose coworkers gave her a surprise party.

Burns never thought she would last 23 1/2 years at Metro.

Supervisor encouraged her

"When I applied to work at the agency I didn't know what a service attendant did, and working the 11 p.m. to 7:30 a.m. graveyard shift didn't help either," she said. "But my supervisor always encouraged me and said I did good work."

So, the service attendant stayed to help maintain the bus fleet through the years. "The money was good, the benefits were good, and the people - I just love my coworkers," exclaimed Burns.

Now making plans to move to Louisiana, Burns will miss the staff at Division 18.

A friend, Lee Harris, walked out onto the yard and handed Burns a soda. "This is my final gift for completing your assignment here," he smiled at Burns.