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Board Adopts FY 2007 Budget, But Wants to Cut \$10 Million More

- Further cuts would help offset \$110 million deficit

(June 1, 2006) The Board of Directors adopted a \$3.029 billion budget for FY 2007, May 25, but voted to meet within 30 days to consider budget cuts to offset a \$110 million structural deficit.

The Board will be looking to trim \$10 million from the budget by, among other measures, eliminating 17 vacant non-contract positions and deferring for a year the purchase of 40 non-revenue vehicles. The Board also will review transit security costs for possible cuts that could be made without affecting bus and rail safety.

In addition, the Board will look for ways Metro could generate additional revenue – from advertising or possibly by leasing vacant space at the Gateway Building – to help offset the deficit. Metro also will lobby for more state and federal funds and work to attract more riders to boost farebox revenue.

No fare increase was included to balance the budget so Metro will have to nearly exhaust its reserves and defer such capital projects as some bus engine overhauls.

The spending plan is only \$174 million, or 6 percent, more than the current Metro budget. The increase is largely due to the scheduling of more bus and rail service.

In FY 2007, Metro will cut expenditures for such administrative expenses as office supplies, travel and training and professional services by 11 percent. Since FY 2004, Metro has eliminated 545 full time positions and held down workers' compensation costs.

More Bus Service Planned

The FY 07 budget calls for spending \$1.338 billion or 44.2 percent of the total budget on bus operating and capital for Metro and the municipal bus operators in LA County. Bus service will increase by 96,000 operating hours next year for a total of 7.8 million Metro Bus and Metro Orange Line revenue service hours.

The agency will receive and put into service 94 articulated buses on Wilshire Boulevard, Metro Rapid Line 761 (Van Nuys Boulevard/UCLA/Westwood) and other busy bus lines. It will debut seven new Metro Rapid lines.

The spending plan earmarks \$720 million or 23.8 percent for countywide rail, including Metro Rail operating and capital costs and \$57 million for Metrolink.

With nearly 300,000 riders boarding Metro Rail trains on weekdays, the agency will increase rail service by 36,000 hours and receive and deploy 19 new light rail train cars.

The budget allocates \$590 million or 19.5 percent for highway and other regional transportation programs. It also includes funding for the Metro Freeway Service Patrol.

Metro's debt service next year will be \$306 million – 10.1 percent of the budget. It's down \$4 million from this year's debt service on bonds issued for various transportation projects.

Rounding out the FY 2007 adopted Metro budget are expenditures for other governmental programs such as transportation planning, legal and other expenses. These total \$76 million or 2.5 percent of the budget.



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Honor Roll Reminder: Form Completion Deadline is June 15

- Download and print your ["2006 Honor Roll Form"](#) here. (PDF)

(June 1, 2006) June 15 is the deadline for employees to complete and turn in signup forms to ensure a listing in this year's "Metro Honor Roll."

The names of high school, technical school and college graduates will be listed in a special "Metro Honor Roll" posting on myMetro.net on June 22 and in a special printed version to be published the following week. Last year more than 200 graduates were listed on the Honor Roll.

The names of Metro employees and the children and spouses of employees are eligible to be included in "Metro Honor Roll." Due to a lack of space, the names of employees' grandchildren can no longer be included.

Metro Honor Roll forms also are available by mail or FAX by contacting Communications Manager Bill Heard at 922-7479. Forms should be returned to Heard at mail stop 99-19-8 or faxed to 213-922-2704.



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Service Sectors Schedule June Governance Council Meetings

By RICK JAGER

(June 1, 2006) Metro's service sector governance councils will hold their monthly public meetings in June to discuss various transportation issues.

The Westside/Central governance council will also hold a special Metro Connections workshop as a part of their regular monthly meeting.

The following is a list of Metro governance council meetings for June.

- San Fernando Valley Service Sector, 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, June 7, Marvin Braude Constituent Service Center, 6262 Van Nuys Blvd., Van Nuys.
- Gateway Service Sector, 2 p.m., Thursday, June 8, The Gas Company, 9240 Firestone Blvd., Downey.
- South Bay Service Sector, 9:30 a.m., Friday, June 9, Arthur Winston Division, 5425 Van Ness Avenue, South Los Angeles.
- San Gabriel Valley Service Sector, 5 p.m., Tuesday, June 13,
- San Gabriel Valley Sector Office, 3369 Santa Anita Ave., El Monte.
- Westside/Central Service Sector, 5 p.m., Wednesday, June 14, La Cienega Tennis Center, Sunset Room, 325 S. La Cienega Blvd. , Beverly Hills.

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The Walt Disney Company won Metro's coveted Corporate Diamond Award for the company's full-service rideshare program that includes transit and vanpool subsidies and carpool rebates, as well as for its corporate leadership in regional and national ridesharing issues.



Employee transportation coordinators of the Walt Disney Co. take home top honors in Rideshare Program awards. *Juan Ocampo photo*

Metro Recognizes Employers' Successful Rideshare Programs

- Walt Disney Company takes top honors for 2005

By DAVE SOTERO

(June 1, 2006) Metro recognized Los Angeles-area employers that led successful rideshare programs in 2005 during its 8th annual Diamond Awards ceremony, May 24.

The Walt Disney Company won Metro's coveted Corporate Diamond Award for the company's full-service rideshare program that includes transit and vanpool subsidies and carpool rebates, as well as for its corporate leadership in regional and national ridesharing issues.

The annual awards honor businesses that demonstrate their commitment to helping improve air quality and alleviate the region's traffic congestion through carpool, vanpool, public transit and other alternatives to solo driving.

Award winners for 2005 are:

- Outstanding Individual Achievement: Universal Hilton Hotel, Cal Poly Pomona
- Shoestring Program: The Aerospace Corporation – Bicycling Program
- Outstanding Group Achievement: UCLA Transportation Services – Vanpool

Innovative Rideshare Program: Los Angeles County Employees Retirement Association

- Innovative Rideshare Strategy: Los Angeles World Airports – Rideshare, American Apparel
- Outstanding Marketing Program: UCLA Transportation Services, Raytheon, City of Pasadena
- Metro Rewards: Lockton Insurance

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County Grand Jury Visits Metro as Term Nears End



Photo by Bill Heard

With its one-year term due to expire at the end of this month, the LA County Grand Jury visited Metro to learn about local transit issues and tour the Regional Rebuild Center and Gateway Division 10. The 23-member panel, which meets every weekday, has visited county and city emergency centers and has investigated conditions at the LA County Hospital's prisoner lockup, among other duties. Eighteen members of the Grand Jury, with Foreman William Max in the center, are pictured here.



Photo by Bill Heard

Community Relations Manager Jody Litvak, right, briefs members of the Grand Jury about Metro prior to their tour of the Regional

Rebuild Center and Gateway Division 10.

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CEO Roger Snoble, center, looks on as Material Supervisor Jon Lyle explains how the Automated Guided Vehicles (AGV) are programmed to transport pallet-loads of parts and supplies throughout the central warehouse. Also on the tour of the Material Division facility were, from left, Jim Montoya, Julie Ellis, Ted Montoya and Lonnie Mitchell.



Photos by Bill Heard

Automated Equipment Keeps Central Warehouse Moving

- CEO cites the system's 'ingenuity and technology'

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(June 2, 2006) Every couple of weeks, more than 32,000 equipment parts orders and supply transactions are routed through Material Division computers in the central warehouse at the Regional Rebuild Center.

That enormous number of requests would overwhelm the 40 or so employees who work in the cavernous warehouse, if it weren't for the automated machines that retrieve, lift and move a vast array of items to and from the storage bins to picking stations and the loading platform for shipment to the operating divisions.

Perhaps the most visible components of the automated system are the new robotic



Material Control Clerk Chuck Hernandez monitors the accuracy of the parts retrieval system. He is one of some 40 employees at the central warehouse.

vehicles – called AGVs (Automated Guided Vehicles) – that recently replaced models dating back to the 1980s. The AGVs are constantly busy whisking pallets loaded with supplies across the warehouse floor.

"There's an incredible amount of ingenuity and technology that we're putting to work for our customers," CEO Roger Snoble said, Tuesday, during a tour of the warehouse. "It's a very impressive operation."

'They really know this equipment'

While Material Control Clerk Chuck Hernandez monitored the accuracy of the parts retrieval system, Snoble said, "The machinery is remarkable, but what I'm really most impressed with is the dedication of the employees who work here. They really know this equipment."

Material Supervisor Jon Lyle explained the various systems to Snoble, noting their labor-saving and safety features.

"I like the emphasis on safety," Snoble said later. "This facility has gone three years without a lost-time accident and that's extremely commendable."

Snoble took the tour of the Material Division along with Chief Procurement Officer Lonnie Mitchell, Procurement DEO Ted Montoya, and material managers Julie Ellis and Jim Montoya.

Metro expects to expand its parts warehousing facilities in the next couple of years with construction of a new warehouse on a 1.39-acre parcel just north of the RRC.

The project, approved by the Board of Directors in July 2005, will provide bulk storage of bus and rail materials, parts and supplies, and will provide shop space for Facilities Maintenance personnel moved in from South Park.



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Photo by Mike Barnes



Terisa Price of Beach Cities Transit, a member of the South Bay Governance Council, and Metro Communications Chief Matt Raymond try out a solar-powered bus stop sign recently installed at the corner of Artesia and Kingsdale in Redondo Beach.

Metro to Test Effectiveness of Illuminated Bus Stop Signs

- Solar-powered signs also flash alerts to bus operators

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(June 2, 2006) When night falls, some bus stops in out-of-the-way areas of Los Angeles County are cast into darkness. So, Metro is testing a solar-powered bus stop sign that provides illumination and can alert approaching operators that patrons are waiting.

Metro Stops and Zones employees installed one "I-Stop Illuminated Transit Stop" in mid-May in Redondo Beach at the intersection of Artesia and Kingsdale near the South Bay Galleria. Another will be installed soon at a test site in Altadena.



A high-intensity LED light fixture mounted at the top of the 10-foot metal pole can illuminate a 6-foot diameter area

According to the manufacturer, Carmanah Technologies Corp. of Victoria, British Columbia, a high-intensity LED light fixture mounted at the top of the 10-foot metal pole can illuminate a 6-foot diameter area when a patron pushes one of three buttons on a waist-level panel.

A second button activates a bright, white flashing light at the top of the pole that can be seen for a mile by approaching buses. The third button illuminates bus information displayed in a box mounted on the pole.

According to Carmanah, the area lights provide extra security for transit patrons, while the flashing beacons help ensure that bus operators stop for waiting passengers. The solar-powered LED (light emitting diodes) lights are rated for 100,000 hours and need only two hours of sun exposure to provide light.

‘Looking for public input’

“We’ll be looking for public input during a six-month trial period and will be contacting other transit agencies that use Carmanah’s I-Stop about their experiences to determine how useful the illuminated bus stop signs are,” says Facilities Maintenance Manager Pete Serdienis.

“We want to know whether they will greatly reduce passenger passups at night and increase customer security and comfort levels,” he adds. “We will conduct a cost benefit analysis on their installation time, maintenance and vandalism before pursuing any large-scale purchases due to their relatively high unit cost.”

Serdienis says areas that would benefit the most from illuminated bus stops would be the less populated, rural areas of the county and dimly lit stops and along Metro’s overnight “owl service” bus lines.

Currently, more than 90 transit agencies in such cities as London, Toronto, Chicago, Atlanta, London and Long Beach, are using the I-Stop solar-powered equipment.



OCTA has installed some 700 illuminated bus stop signs

In Orange County, OCTA has installed some 700 illuminated bus stop signs and will eventually have 1,200 in operation.

“With the extra security lighting, the flashing beacon and the back-lit bus information, these new bus stop signs could prove to be a real benefit for our customers,” says Metro’s Chief Communications Officer Matt Raymond.

“This is one of the many ways we’re looking to improve our transit system signage.”

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Dyana Elorriaga is a rail maintenance specialist at Metro Gold Line Division 21.



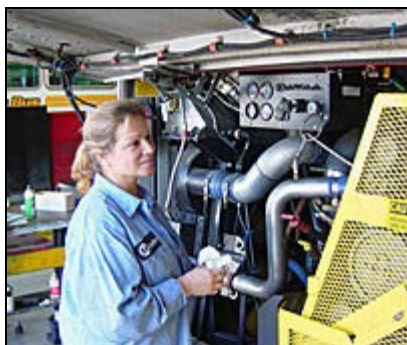
Photos by Reina Slutske

Success Story: Metro Women in the 'Man's World' of Mechanics

- Profiles of three of the 16 women who repair Metro's buses and rail cars

By REINA V. SLUTSKE

(June 6, 2006) One morning, Rosie Saavedra came to work in the maintenance shop at Arthur Winston Division 5 and learned to her surprise that she was going to go out on her first road call.



Rosie Saavedra on the job at Arthur Winston Division 5.

She was nervous, but she was given a map and was told how to find the broken-down bus. When she arrived, the operator was a little shocked to see that Saavedra was, in fact, the mechanic.

"More power to ya!" said the operator as Saavedra fixed the brakes on the bus.

Saavedra is one of 16 female bus mechanics and rail maintenance specialists employed by Metro. As these women have advanced through the ranks, each has had a different experience, but they all have shared a desire to move ahead.

Saavedra started out as a service attendant. However, after 19 years, she decided to fulfill her passion.



Saavedra replaces a filter on a bus at Arthur Winston Division 5.

‘Wanted to be a mechanic’

“I always wanted to be a mechanic,” she says. “The tow truck, working on the bus, fixing it... I was just really interested in it.”

In order to move ahead, Saavedra studied diesel technology at Citrus College while working a graveyard shift.

“Going to school was the hard part,” she says. “It took me a long time to finally make that jump. It’s a little scary, because you don’t know if you can do it.”

Along with learning all the technology, she was worried about coming into a man’s world as a mechanic. But the men were generally supportive, often helping her out of rough spots

“They know we’re women and it’s a little tougher for us, and they’re okay,” she says. “It’s not bad, and the opposite of what I expected.”



Eva Torres on the job at Central City Division 1.

Looking for advancement

Eva Torres at Central City Division 1 stepped up and got involved after becoming a mechanic.

Starting as a rail service attendant in 1996, she completed a special training program offered through Metro, an 18-month course that helps transition service attendants into becoming bus mechanics (see sidebar).

"It's a trade you learn and you keep with you all the time," she says. "When you quit, you take this trade with you, and it's easier to get hired somewhere else."

About three years ago, Torres ran unsuccessfully for ATU union representative. Although unsure if she will try again this year, she has other ambitions, including going through training to become a rail maintenance specialist.

She has enjoyed the benefits of being a mechanic, including joking around with her male mechanic friends.

"A lot of us have things in common," she says of her fellow mechanics. "We talk about kids, and their problems with their wives and what I would do... suggesting from a female point of view."



Danya Elorriaga on the job at Metro Gold Line Division 21.

A do-it-yourself attitude

Although most female mechanics start out as service attendants and take classes to become bus mechanics, rail maintenance specialist Dyana Elorriaga was working on cars when she started working on buses for Metro at age 24.

"My parents passed away while I was going to college," she says. "At that point, I couldn't go to school anymore; I had to get working."

She has since moved up to working on rail cars at Metro Gold Line Division 21. She's maintained a do-it-yourself attitude that she carries from the workplace into her life.

"Once you start doing this, it leads to a lot of mechanical things," Elorriaga says. This has included various personal tasks, from working on her own car to tiling her bathroom.

"You start picking up on stuff, and it's actually cheaper," she says.

Working in a ‘man’s job’

All three women have different perceptions of working what had been for a long time “a man’s job.” When Saavedra went to her doctor and told her she was a mechanic, the doctor was amazed.

“She really got a kick out of it,” she says.

Others, however, are not even taken seriously. When Elorriaga meets people, she doesn’t like to tell them what she does for a living.

“But when I do tell them, they don’t believe me,” she says. “They ask if I’m a real mechanic.”

Elorriaga has faced issues with people that she’s worked with as well. She has worked as a mechanic for Metro for 21 years, long before sexual harassment became an issue in the workplace.

“People have a lot of respect for me, but I’m still female, and they’re still male,” she says, noting that male chauvinism still exists. “I’m female, I like being female. I work hard and I get dirty, but I’m still feminine.”

Sharing in family life

Saavedra, Torres and Elorriaga all have children who share in some aspect of their life at Metro.

Torres, for instance, brought her two children to “Take Your Son/Daughter to Work Day” for years.

“Until my kids said, ‘Mom, I don’t want to go again,’” she says with a laugh. Now Torres, along with being a mechanic at work, is helping her son work on his car.

These three women enjoy their jobs and working with their hands, no matter how much they get their hands in the grease.

“Being a mechanic is not that hard,” Torres says. “It’s just a dirty job.”

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Mechanics Victoria Bright, left, of Division 5 and Marilyn Archie of Division 7 are Metro's newest female mechanics. They graduated, May 31, from the mechanics training course at Operations Central Instruction.



Photo by Bill Heard

Women are Eligible for Metro's Mechanics Training Course

- Most recent training class graduated two women with 10 men

By REINA V. SLUTSKI

(June 6, 2006) Although some women come to Metro as qualified mechanics, most have moved up to becoming mechanics from service attendants, cleaning buses and rail cars.

"More and more, most divisions have women mechanics," says Milo Victoria, deputy executive officer, Operations. "And most of them went through the program."

The program, taught by maintenance instructors at Operations Central Instruction, is an 18-month training course set up 13 years ago by agreement between Metro and the ATU.

Offered twice during each three-year contract, the course is designed to help both male and female service attendants move up to becoming a mechanic "C". Ten men and two women graduated in the class that ended May 31.

Each person who applies for the program is required to take a test, and must pass with a minimum score of 70 percent in order to qualify.

Twelve people are selected by seniority to go for classroom instruction. For nine months, along with their normal work hours, they attend classes for four hours a day, twice a week. They are given two

books, and there are tests and homework every day of class.

‘Accelerated program’

“It’s a matter of dedication,” says Brian Markey, an instructor for the program. “Everybody has to make a commitment to come to class and learn, because it’s a very fast, accelerated program.”

After nine months of classroom time, the trainees go through another nine months of on-the-job training, receiving 85 percent of mechanic “C” pay. They are evaluated weekly and switch to different specialties, becoming well-rounded mechanics.

After graduating from the program, each new mechanic by seniority picks a division from those that need mechanics.

There is also a similar program for bus mechanics to become rail maintenance specialists.

Union encourages females

Neil Silver, president of the ATU Local 1277, the union that represents maintenance employees, encourages female members to apply for jobs as bus mechanics and rail maintenance specialists.

“It’s a hard job, but it’s also rewarding,” he says. “If you’re really interested in mechanics, in engines and new technology, do it!”

Markey says that women have tended to excel in the course of the program, most recently with two new female mechanics who have completed the training.

“The perception is ‘woman in a man’s world,’ so they try extra-hard,” he says. “But they excelled, and are well-respected after they go to divisions.”

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The mechanics class graduate are shown here are Marilyn Archie, Victoria Bright, Manual Cendejas, Sergio Gomez, Lawrence Kimp, Victor Lares, Glen Lujan, Benji Martinez, Rodney McRae, Ira Moore and Lawrence Turner. Graduate Richard Donelean is not pictured. Joining them at the ceremony were ATU Local 1277 President Neil Silver, center, and Steve Mullaly, Brian Markey, Mark Anderson and Richard Hunt.



Photos by Bill Heard

12 Former Service Attendants Certified as Metro Bus Mechanics

- Tough 18-month course combined classroom, OJT training

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(June 6, 2006) Clutching shiny new torque wrenches – a symbol of their trade – 12 newly certified Metro bus mechanics were all smiles, May 31, during graduation ceremonies at the Regional Rebuild Center.

The dozen graduates had survived an intense 18-month course that combined nine months of technical classroom instruction with another nine months of on-the-job training in operating division maintenance shops.

All 12 of the new mechanics started their Metro careers as service attendants. They were selected by union seniority from among 18 who qualified for the mechanics training class. A total of 88 service attendants originally applied.

Speaking at the ceremony, graduate Marilyn Archie said applying for the course was the “best decision I’ve ever made. Since becoming part of the program, I’ve gained an enormous amount of confidence, knowledge and the ability to perform any task.”



Newly minted mechanic Marillin Archie said her decision to complete the 18-month course was “the best decision I’ve ever made.”

Mechanics training classes are convened twice every 18 months under an agreement negotiated between Metro and the ATU, which represents maintenance employees.

'First rung of your life'

"This is the first rung of your life," ATU Local 1277 President Neil Silver told the graduates. "This is a trade no one can take away from you, but you can take it with you."



ATU Local 1277 President Neil Silver told the graduates they had learned a valuable trade and skills that will last them a lifetime.

The graduates and their new assignments are Marilyn Archie, Division 7; Victoria Bright, Division 5; Manual Cendejas, Division 3; Richard Donelean, Division 7; Sergio Gomez, Division 18; Lawrence Kimp, Division 8; Victor Lares, Division 7; Glen Lujan, Division 1; Benji Martinez, Division 7; Rodney McRae, Division 18; Ira Moore, Division 7; and Lawrence Turner, Division 5.

Among those attending the graduation ceremony were sector general managers Richard Hunt and David Armijo; Operations Administration Managing Director Andrea Burnside, Operations Training Director Mark Anderson, Equipment Maintenance Instructor Steve Mullaly, and Maintenance Instructor Brian Markey.

"I hope this training has opened new doors for you," Markey told the graduates. "Keep learning!"

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Image from Metro campaign contrasting public transportation with gas pump prices is also a banner ad on metro.net.



Metro to Mark National 'Dump the Pump Day' on June 8

By MARC LITTMAN

(June 7, 2006) In response to rising gas prices, Metro will participate in national "Dump the Pump Day" on June 8 to encourage residents to use public transit or join a carpool or vanpool.

Metro will join with other public transportation systems throughout the country to demonstrate that public transit offers the quickest, easiest alternative to the high cost of driving.

"With gasoline prices at record levels, many Americans are finding that mobility is becoming unaffordable," said CEO Roger Snoble. "Public transit is the quickest way to beat high gas prices."

To make the benefits – and savings – of public transportation tangible to the greatest number of Los Angeles County residents, Metro has undertaken a number of transit initiatives, including an ad campaign that depicts a motorist handcuffed to a gas pump and reads: "Free yourself. Go Metro."

The ads appear on billboards and bus shelters, the sides of buses and in newspaper advertisements throughout Los Angeles County.

Metro's online Trip Planner now features a gasoline savings calculator that estimates how much money a commuter could save per trip by switching to public transit.

'Save \$300 to \$3,000'

"By using public transportation on a regular basis, a person can save between \$300 and \$3,000 in fuel costs alone per year," Snoble said.

Yearly commuting costs on the Metro System are just \$624. Besides just fuel costs, it costs several thousands of dollars more to travel daily by car when the true costs associated with fueling, operating and maintaining an automobile are included.

As gasoline prices have increased, public transit systems across the United States are seeing an increase in ridership.

National Dump the Pump Day is sponsored by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), a non-profit association of more than 1,600 member organizations, including almost 400 public transit agencies.

“People use public transit more frequently when the cost of gas rises,” said APTA President William Millar. “National Dump the Pump Day will highlight that, by using public transit, people can beat high gas prices, help reduce traffic congestion and assist our country in beating our oil addiction.”


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Board OKs Grade Crossing Improvements, New Bus Division

(June 7, 2006) Metro Blue Line grade crossing improvements and construction of a new bus division across from the Gateway Building were among items approved by the Board of Directors in May.

Item 23, Grade Crossing Improvements. The Board approved a motion to add \$6.478 million to a multi-year project to upgrade deteriorated grade crossings on the Metro Blue Line with proven longer lasting low-maintenance, corrosion-inhibiting materials.

The first phase of the upgrade at grade crossings in the City of Long Beach is 90 percent complete. The second phase will upgrade the ballasted portions of track at 25 grade crossings. The cost of the project, which would continue through FY 2011, is estimated at \$10.6 million.

Item 27, New Bus Division. The Board approved a motion to build a new "Union Division" bus operations facility at Terminal 31, located across the intersection from the Gateway Building and adjacent to the Regional Rebuild Center.

Built on roughly six acres, the facility would house and operate a mixed fleet of some 200 CNG buses, including 60-foot articulated coaches. The cost of construction, which could begin in January 2008, is estimated at \$90 million, plus an estimated \$5 million if a cash counting facility is included.

The Board agreed to increase the current life-of-project budget from \$1 million to \$4.946 million to cover administration, environmental studies, project design and engineering and other costs.

Item 26, Division 20 Railcar Wash. The Board agreed to allocate \$15.4 million for construction of a new enclosed railcar wash facility at Metro Red Line Division 20. The current railcar wash facility and servicing platform were not designed to handle longer trains or the current volume of daily railcar washes required to keep the fleet at an acceptable level of cleanliness.

Enclosed in an all-weather structure to help reduce noise, the railcar wash facility will be capable of handling the present volume of railcars required for revenue service.

Item 30, Divisions 5, 10, 18 Improvements. Metro will modernize and expand the maintenance and transportation capabilities of Arthur Winston Division 5, Gateway Division 10 and South Bay Division 18. The Board approved a motion to establish a budget of \$18.3 million for the project.

The work at the three divisions includes replacement of outdated bus washing equipment, installation of bus exhaust systems, more storage space, maintenance shop upgrades, renovation of operator break areas

as well as maintenance and transportation administration spaces, improved shop and yard lighting and yard security.

Item 6, SCRRA Budget. The Board approved a \$47.7 million contribution of Proposition C, 10 percent sales tax funds to the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) for the Metrolink FY 2006-07 preliminary budget.

The sum includes approximately \$32.9 million for operations and \$14 million for rehabilitation and renovation. The Metrolink budget anticipates a 7.7 percent increase in ridership. A 5.5 percent fare increase is planned for July 1, 2006 to help offset rising operations costs, especially for diesel fuel.



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Metro Café welcomes manager Russell Carlson



Piece of Cake> Aramark managers treat Employer Programs coordinator Donna Blanchard and Metro employees to cake as a way of welcoming new manager Russell Carlson and bidding a fond farewell to outgoing manager Katherine Striggow.



Aramark manager Katherine Striggow moves on to manage two facilities in Fullerton. Russell Carlson, at right, leaves his culinary post at the Los Angeles Times to manage the Metro Café.

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See myMetro.net report: [Metro Wins Prestigious APTA 'Outstanding Transportation System' Award for 2006](#)



Congratulations to America's Best

**Metro has been named APTA's 2006
Outstanding Public Transportation System.**

Time and again, Metro has delivered service innovations, technological advances and customer-focused initiatives. And our efforts have really paid off: we're concluding one of the most productive years in our history, and now we serve some of the most satisfied customers in the nation. How did we do it?

Metro worked tirelessly to improve operations

Ridership and revenues are up - Metro's investment in new services and system improvements is paying major dividends. Ridership increased 4.7% while fare box collections grew 8.9%

Customer satisfaction is at an all-time high - The latest survey showed that 84% of customers were satisfied with Metro service, and 83% think service has improved over the previous year.

Complaints are at an all-time low - Metro's complaints have never been lower. In terms of both actual complaints per month and complaints per 100,000 boardings, monthly complaint totals have dropped 25% this year.

Service productivity has outpaced service allocations - Metro increased revenue service hours 1.4% while passengers per hour grew 4.7%. This nearly 3 to 1 ratio made Metro the second most productive

transit agency in the United States.

Metro aggressively added new services

BRT system grew Rapidly - With more than 300 Metro Rapid buses and 30 Metro Liners, Metro is at the halfway point in creating the most extensive BRT network in the country. Twenty-eight Rapid lines with 700+ vehicles will be in operation by 2008.

New Express services launched - The agency pulled out all the stops on two new Metro Express lines – 450X and 577X. Using existing transitways, these routes are faster than driving alone.

Metro Orange Line opens to 83,000 riders - “We begin a new era” Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa declared at the opening celebration of the 14-mile busway. Since its grand opening in October, the 18,000 daily boardings are three times the original projections.

Partnerships with local operators make system more seamless – Metro is fortunate to partner with local municipal operators to expand Rapid lines, create new services and offer the regional EZ Transit Pass program. Next on tap is TAP – a regional smart card system.

Metro attracted new customers

Metro Blue Line reached record ridership – The 2nd most successful light-rail line in the nation, the 22-mile Blue Line posted more than 76,000 average weekday boardings, the highest ridership since it opened in 1990. Overall rail ridership increased by 17% over last year.

L.A.’s Ridership doubles national averages - An APTA report confirmed Metro is doing relatively well in generating ridership. The report showed that Metro bested the national average by almost double.

Discretionary customers grew by 40% - Those hard-to-get “choice” riders now account for three of every 10 riders, up from two of every 10 just three years ago.

Metro added clean, bold, innovative, high-capacity vehicles

Metro offers the coolest, cleanest, most modern, vehicles on the road – Sleek designs and vibrant colors highlight one of the most modern fleets on the road today. Color scheme features red for Rapid buses; blue for Express buses; and orange for Local buses.

2,000th Clean Air Bus delivered - Commemorating Earth Day, Metro reached a milestone receiving its 2,000th CNG bus. Metro boasts the largest clean-air fleet in the nation.

Metro continues to order new buses – 200 new high-capacity CNG vehicles were ordered to replace older vehicles. These buses will be assigned to the busiest bus lines. The order includes 94 articulated buses – the 60-foot Metro Liners – and 100 45-foot buses and six 40-foot hybrid coaches.

New rail car airmailed to L.A. - The first of 50 new 2550 light rail cars was flown to Los Angeles via a giant Russian-built cargo plane. These new rail cars were designed to operate on any Metro light-rail

line. They are scheduled to run on the Gold Line when it extends to East Los Angeles.

Large capacity vehicles improved productivity – Metro was able to carry more people with fewer buses thanks to the new 46-seat NABI “Compo-Bus” which is bigger – but significantly lighter than a conventional steel-framed bus. In addition Metro added new 60-foot articulated CNG buses to the fleet that seat 50 percent more passengers than a standard 40-foot bus.

Metro advanced L.A.'s rapid transit system

Gold Line extension under construction - Metro initiated construction of the \$989.9 million Metro Gold Line’s Eastside Extension. The six-mile line, which includes 1.8-mile twin tunnels, is slated to open in late 2009.

Exposition Light-Rail line to start construction – The newest extension of the 62-station Metro Rail system is scheduled to break ground this summer. It will run 8.5-miles from downtown Los Angeles to Culver City and be completed by 2010. The second phase will extend from Culver City to Santa Monica.

Design/build process pioneered - Metro is using a design-build process to construct highway projects, sound walls, and new facilities and rail lines. It is projected to save 10% to 15% of development costs and 20 months in project delivery time. Using design/build, one contractor designs and constructs a project under a single contract.

Prototype bus terminal opened - Metro completed a new prototype bus terminal that offers passenger and employee amenities. This facility is the model for future Metro customer facilities.

National Panel gives subway tunneling the green light – Metro worked with federal officials to assemble an expert panel to revisit tunneling in Los Angeles. The panel endorsed safe tunneling under the heavily congested Wilshire corridor, paving the way to reverse a federal ban on subway construction in Los Angeles.

Solar panels lowered costs and reduced emissions – Successfully harnessing the Southern California sun, Metro’s Division 15 and Division 8 found a bright new way to provide 20 percent of its power needs.

I-710 Major Corridor Study approved – Metro moved ahead with plans to overhaul one of the area’s most heavily congested freeways. The project will improve goods movement, handle future growth and improve air quality. The estimated cost is \$5.5 billion.

Metro mastered the bottom line

Costs stayed well below inflation – Metro kept revenue service hour costs well below inflation. Over the last few years Metro service hour costs have increased by only 1.5% - at the same time L.A.’s CPI has risen 10%. This is even more impressive given how much fuel and security costs have risen.

Belt tightened by \$153 million - Metro’s budget came in \$153 million lower than the previous year despite rising fuel, insurance, security and other costs.

Metro provided so much more than transit

Freeway Service Patrol aids 350,000 stranded motorists - A fleet of 145 Metro-funded tow trucks assists stranded motorists on over 400 miles of Los Angeles County freeways. The program, operated by SAFE, assists motorists which keeps traffic moving and reduces congestion. This year the service expanded to include free Big Rig Tow Service for trucks traveling along the Long Beach Freeway.

HOV system extends to over 425 lane miles – Servicing 14 freeway corridors, the network ranks as one of the largest HOV systems in the country.

Metro is fully accessible – Metro is as close to being 100% ADA-compliant as an agency can get. All bus lines are accessible with wheelchair lifts or ramps. All stops are now announced through a new automated audio system that was activated this year. The rail system is equipped for passengers with hearing, mobility and visual impairments. In addition, Metro is the primary funding partner of Access Services – a regional paratransit service.

Metro helps keep Metrolink on track - Metro is a primary funding partner for Metrolink, southern California's 495-mile commuter rail system. Metrolink has nearly 40,000 daily boardings.

Metro was everywhere in the community

Sectors brought Metro to the community - Metro's five local Service Sectors bring operating decisions to the people. This decentralized community approach to transit management helped Metro give the people the services they wanted. In addition to Sectors, Metro was heavily involved in hundreds of local events and community activities.

Metro showed L.A. some love - Mark Clifford's spectacular photograph captured Metro's Valentine's Day display using its headquarters' office lights against the downtown L.A. cityscape.

Docent Council provided over 2,500 guided tours - While docent programs are common at museums, Metro is the first transit agency to create such a program for visitors.

Greater Los Angeles Vendor Fair draws 1,400 - Attendees at the 11th annual Metro-sponsored event crowded the LA Convention Center to learn how to tap into billions of dollars of local contract opportunities in Los Angeles County.

500 transportation leaders gather at Mobility 21 - Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa urged advocates to "work together as a region to secure funding." Metro, the L.A. Chamber of Commerce and AAA formed Mobility 21. Now in its 3rd year, leaders are working to fund L.A.'s "Top Ten Traffic Busters," including expansion of light rail lines, more carpool lanes, street and highway and freight corridor improvements.

Safety and security are top priorities

Metro operations exceeded lofty safety goals – Vehicle accidents and Workers Compensation claims went down 10.3% and 23.6% respectively. Agency-wide 'Safety's First' initiative coupled with vastly

improved Workers Comp management is credited for the accomplishments.

Canine ‘Deputies’ on the Job at Metro - These "deputy dogs" are used in search and rescue as well as firearms and explosive detection.

Metro security bolstered by \$6.9 million grant – The U.S. Department of Homeland Security provided funding for improved security. Metro took full advantage of the dollars to add high-tech surveillance equipment, Metro’s security is at a level unsurpassed by any other U.S. transit agency.

940 days without a lost-time injury – Metro’s concerted effort to remind employees that safety is first paid off big at Metro’s Regional Rebuild Center. Almost three years without a serious accident is quite impressive.

Safety at schools - Metro delivered safety presentations via 4-D ‘Metro Experience’ mobile theater to over 153,000 students, teachers and parents.

Metro seamlessly integrated technology

Website recorded over 200 million visitors – The popular metro.net launched new features including Metro Store online, a virtual rail tour and pass sales online. The site also offers an interactive trip planner, ridematching and comprehensive transit service information for the entire Southern California region.

Universal Fare System project moved into high gear – New ticket vending machines, validators and fareboxes are being installed throughout the Metro system in preparation for the launch of TAP or Transit Access Pass, a smart card fare payment system that will be launched within the year.

Signal synchronization is keeping traffic moving – Metro has partnered with cities to improve signal synchronization. The signal network helps move buses and cars along city streets up to 25% faster.

Metro put customers first

Patrons give Metro high marks - A recent customer survey showed that an overwhelming majority of customers give Metro high marks with regard to service: “I feel safe”- 87%; “I had a seat”- 80%; “Operators are courteous”–80%; “Metro is clean” - 77%; “Metro is on time” - 72%.

New Transit TVs get high ratings – Metro contracted with Transit TV to provide a new customer amenity. The TVs provide news, sports and entertainment. A survey revealed that nearly 9 out of 10 customers prefer riding with the TVs onboard.

Reported graffiti down 20% - Reports of graffiti on the fleet are down for the first time in Metro’s history. It may be the new buses or the onboard TVs - or it could be the aggressive law enforcement that has resulted in 24 graffiti and vandalism arrests over the last year. Regardless, graffiti is a great thing NOT to see.

Metro is making communities livable

Transit-oriented development making communities more livable

- A mixed-use transit village with low-income housing, retail space, and a daycare center appears at one station; a luxury W hotel, shops and restaurants are planned at another; apartment and condo residences top a row of shops and restaurants at a third development. Metro has accelerated joint development and mixed-use efforts and has 23 projects in various stages of development.

Metro Art receives 3 national awards – Citations include regional AIA award for "improving the quality of life in the region". Over 30 new artworks were installed during 2005, including displays for the new Metro Orange Line.

Metro maximized marketing by design

Metro's in-house Design Studio featured in Communication Arts

– For the first time in its 45-year history, Communication Arts, the world's largest design magazine will feature a public agency's design work. Metro was selected for its comprehensive approach to design.

Marketing kept in-house - All of Metro's award-winning marketing and advertising materials are produced in-house – maximizing resources and ensuring quality work.

Positive media coverage at record level – Metro reversed a negative trend and garnered 60%+ positive media coverage of agency's efforts. This market value of news media peaked at \$17 million in one month.

Metro got down to business

Employer pass sales double - Metro offers employers a complete line of transit and rideshare programs. As a result, monthly pass sales increased from \$272,158 in FY02 to \$579,333- and the reported number of riders has nearly tripled, increasing from 16,417 to 46,246. All-in-all, over 1,140 worksites and 557,450 employees are in some type of Metro employer program.

Registered carpoolers up 167% - Responding to programs such as Metro Rewards, carpool registrations explode, growing from 38,803 in FY02 to 103,710 today.

Universities offer Metro passes – USC, UCLA, LACC and Pierce College have enrolled in Metro pass programs for students and staff.

K-12 student pass sales grow 45% - The student pass program was greatly simplified – red tape was eliminated. The result: a 45% increase in student pass sales.

New Pass programs offered – The New Employee, New Resident, Jury Pass and Guaranteed Ride Home programs are all new and all are getting people out of their cars.

Vanpool participation is up 45% - Metro-organized vanpools have grown from 649 in FY02 to 945 today.

Day Pass boosts farebox revenues - Revenues increased thanks to a variety of customer choices, such as the popular \$3 Day Pass, which

35% of Metro customers use daily.

School Pool for parents and kids - Schools are participating in Metro's School Pool program, which creates ridesharing matches for parents to get their children to school.

Retail network makes pass buying easy – With 600+ outlets countywide, Metro passes are typically right around the corner.

Arthur Winston is Metro's Employee of the century – After 73 years of service to Metro, Mr. Winston celebrated his 100th birthday by retiring. His storied career was covered nationally.

Metro helped generate transportation funds

\$4.5 billion in federal funding secured for Los Angeles County - Metro lobbied hard to bring federal funds to the region. In the latest reauthorization bill, \$4.5 billion was allocated to Los Angeles County. A variety of critical items was funded, including \$833 million in specific highway and transit project funds programmed by Metro.

Eastside rail receives \$490.7 million full funding agreement - The pact funds the six-mile extension of the Metro Gold Line to East L.A. that is currently under construction.

New approaches applied to old problems

All administrative policies updated - Momentous team effort brings each and every Metro admin policy up to date. Much of the policy work serves as a model and is being utilized by other local agencies.

Interest-based labor approach utilized - Stressing cooperation and open communications, Metro begins negotiating three labor contracts with the goal of building trust beyond negotiations and improving labor/management relations.

Strength in numbers – With more than 87% of Metro's employees being women and/or minorities, Metro one of the most diverse organizations in the country from top to bottom. We believe this is one of our greatest strengths in addressing issues, relating to our constituents and improving our services.

Congratulations to each of Metro's 8,907 employees on this historic honor. We're proud to call you America's best.

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'We won hands down,' says CEO Roger Snoble



Metro Wins Prestigious APTA 'Outstanding Transportation System' Award for 2006

- A first-time honor for Metro. It will be presented in October.
- Read: [It's an L.A. story.](#)

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(June 8, 2006) Metro is the 2006 winner of APTA's prestigious "Outstanding Public Transportation System" award, CEO Roger Snoble announced, Thursday, during an all-staff meeting.

This is the first time Metro has ever received the honor, which APTA presents to transportation systems "that have demonstrated achievement in efficiency and effectiveness." Metro won in the category for properties that provide more than 30 million annual passenger trips.

Snoble said Metro faced competition from the nation's other large transit agencies and compared receiving the APTA award to winning the Super Bowl, the World Cup and the Nobel Prize. "We won hands down. It's really quite an honor for all of us."

The award will be presented to Metro at the APTA annual convention, October 10, in San Jose. He said plans are being made now for ways Metro and Los Angeles can celebrate the award.

CEO Snoble outlined Metro's achievements in a slide show presentation leading up to the announcement.

"I want to thank each and every one of

you for everything you've done, not only over the past year, but for as long as you've been with the agency," he said. "It really has made a difference."

Cited Board's leadership

He thanked members of the Board of Directors for their leadership and efforts "to improve our systems for the citizens of Los Angeles County." He also expressed appreciation to the state legislature, the LA City Council and the area's congressional delegation.

Deputy CEO John Catoe offered his congratulations, especially to "operators who, over the past year, have been working seven days a week because of the shortage of operators" and he thanked the mechanics, service attendants and management personnel.

"It's a great honor to be the Number One property in the United States," Catoe said. "It's an honor you deserve – that we deserve – one that over the next few years we will display very proudly."

Metro's predecessor agencies both won APTA awards for system innovation, the LACTC in 1989 and the SCRTD in 1990. Last year's winner of the outstanding transportation system award in the 30-million passenger category was the Orange County Transportation Authority.

Snoble cited a number of factors that he said helped Metro qualify for the APTA award for 2006. Among them were service innovations, technological advances, customer-focused initiatives and improved public recognition and acceptance of Metro services.

Winning elements

He included the opening of the Metro Orange Line, work on the Eastside Extension, the expansion of the Metro Rapid system, an all-time high customer satisfaction rating and an all-time low in customer complaints.

Snoble also thanked the Bus Riders Union "for their steadfast endeavor to improve the system." He said the BRU kept the issue before the community and "that's been a big help to us."

Although employees can take satisfaction in the APTA award, Snoble said, "this isn't a time for us to rest on our laurels. We have a heck of a lot to do yet...(and)...it's now a bigger challenge because we've raised the bar, set our sights higher."

Among the tasks ahead of Metro are living within tight budgets, the CEO said. "We need to continue to look for every single dollar we can save and be as innovative as we possibly can be to deliver higher quality service for a cheaper dollar."



Snoble said the agency is looking at a number of different avenues to solve the deficit, but he said, “We can go forward with confidence and get results that everyone can be proud of.”



Photos: Gayle Anderson



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A Mother’s Difficult Decision to Donate Her Son’s Organs Spared Two Lives

- Metro’s Barbara Facio-Gomez meets the men who carry her son Andrew’s heart and kidney

(June 9, 2006) On March 31, 1999, La Puente High School sophomore Andrew Ortiz was on his way home from school when he was attacked by two men who punched him and kicked him in the head.

When his mother, Barbara Facio-Gomez, learned he had been injured, she rushed Andrew to a hospital. He died of his injuries early the next morning.

Although reluctant at first, Facio-Gomez – now a Metro Bus operator at San Gabriel Valley Division 9 – donated Andrew’s organs for use by patients needing transplants.

In an April 27, 2006, article Orange County Register reporter Eric Carpenter recounted Facio-Gomez’s difficult decision in 1999 and her recent emotional meetings with two men whose lives were spared by the donation of Andrew’s organs.

This story is used with permission of the Orange County Register:

- [Death Do Us Unite](#) - Walking beside a mother at a Fullerton fundraiser will be two men her son's organs helped save. By Eric Carpenter, The Orange County Register. (pdf)



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12 Bus Lines to be Rerouted from Spring Street Contra-Flow Lane

By RICK JAGER

(June 9, 2006) Effective Sunday, June 18, 12 Metro Bus lines that operate on the northbound bus-only contra-flow lane on Spring Street in downtown LA will be rerouted to either Main and Hill streets or Grand and Olive.

The change is due to the conversion of the Spring Street northbound contra-flow lane between 1st and 9th streets in downtown Los Angeles to a southbound-only operation.

North of 1st street, however, the northbound contra-flow lane will resume as far as Cesar Chavez Avenue.

The 12 Metro Bus lines that will be impacted and rerouted off the contra-flow lane to adjacent streets are lines 83/84/85, 70/370, 38/71, 90/91, 94/394 and Line 92.



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You're Invited! Metro Rail Celebration, June 24

All employees, families and guests are invited to the Metro Rail Operations Celebration on Saturday, June 24. The event will be held from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. at Division 20, located at 320 South Santa Fe Ave., Los Angeles. Join in honoring the Metro Rail Rodeo team. Bring the family and have a great time, good food and lots of fun for the kids.

Metro Rail Maintainers Take 2nd Place at APTA Rail Rodeo

(June 13, 2006) The Metro Rail maintenance team of Ronnie Burt, Eric Czintos and Rafaele Mastrangelo took second place at the 2006 APTA International Rail Rodeo in New York City.

The maintenance competition, held last Saturday in Brooklyn, N.Y., was won by the MTA New York City Transit team of Jianmin Hsiao, Anton Samoylozich and Brian Randall. The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority team placed third in the maintenance event.

New York City Transit also won APTA's prestigious Rail Transit Team Achievement Award. Atlanta's MARTA won second place for the Achievement Award and the Chicago Transit Authority took third place.



Metro Rail Maintainers> Ronnie Burt, above, Eric Czintos, below, and Rafaele Mastrangelo (not pictured) took second place in the Big Apple.



Metro placed fifth in the Achievement Award rankings, just behind the Sacramento Regional Transit District.

New York City Transit operators Jesus Rodriguez and Clinton Blair won top honors in the rail operators' competition. Atlanta's MARTA team earned second place, while the Sacramento Regional Transit District team won third place.

Metro Rail operators Vicky Maes-Melendez and Tu Phan placed 8th of 18 teams participating in the operators' in the competition.

A total of 20 North American rail transit system teams with 32 operators and 48 rail maintainers participated in the 14th annual Rail Rodeo.


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Board Committee to Consider Adjusting Non-Contract Pay Ranges

(June 13, 2006) Adjusting non-contract employee pay ranges and subway ticket barriers are among items to be considered by Board committees this week.

Item 15, Employee Pay Ranges. Pay ranges for non-contract employees would be adjusted for inflation by 10 percent if the Board passes a motion by Director John Fasana. The motion, which will come before the Executive Management and Budget Committee on Thursday, says it is the Board's philosophy "that non-represented employee compensation will be equitable."

Fasana's motion is intended "to ensure equity of compensation" by adjusting non-contract employee pay ranges by 10 percent "to partially mitigate the impact" of inflation during years when adjustments were not made. The motion says employees' salaries actually were diminished "in excess of 20 percent" because pay ranges were not adjusted in eight of the ten years prior to 2004.

The motion notes that some 215 employees – 18 percent of non-represented employees – will be "at the end of their pay range due to the years in which increases were approved but no inflationary adjustment was made...."

While the FY 2007 budget contemplates a 2 percent pay increase for non-represented employees, the motion "adjusts the ranges only and will not result in employees receiving increases other than any annual increases...approved by the Board for other non-represented employees."

Item 22, Subway Ticket Barriers. At the request of Supervisor Yvonne Burke, Metro is investigating the possibility of installing a barrier ticketing system in Metro Red Line stations. The Executive Management and Audit Committee will hear a status report on the issue at Thursday's meeting.

A staff report says the agency has issued a Request for Information (RFI) about ticket barrier systems to equipment manufacturers and has set a deadline of June 30 for a response from companies interested in the project.

Responding companies are to provide ideas, potential solutions and

June Committee Meetings

Wednesday, June 14

- Planning and Programming, 1 p.m.
- Finance and Budget, 2:30 p.m.

Thursday, June 15

- Executive Management and Audit, 9 a.m.
- Construction, 10:30 a.m.

June Board Meeting

- Thursday, June 22, 9:30 a.m.

rough-order of magnitude costs for the construction, operation and maintenance of providing barrier gates for the Metro Red Line that would be compatible with the new UFS smart card system called TAP.

Manufacturers also have been asked to consider the impact on flow of patrons through the stations, fare media and fare evasion, and the impact on customers, among other issues. A presentation to the Board is anticipated in the fall.

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Westside/Central GM David Armijo Leaving Metro to Head Toll Operations for OC's Toll Roads

- Armijo was first of the bus operations service sector GMs
- Mark Maloney will be acting GM for Westside/Central

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(June 13, 2006) Westside/Central General Manager David Armijo has been named chief toll operations officer for The Toll Roads in Orange County, effective June 29. His last day at Metro will be June 28.

Armijo joined Metro in February 2002 and was the first of the general managers to be appointed when Metro reorganized bus operations into service sectors. He opened the San Fernando Valley sector in July 2002 and was reassigned to head the Westside/Central sector in September 2004.

Mark Maloney, director of Metro's Transportation Contract Services, will succeed Armijo in an acting capacity as general manager of the Westside/Central sector. Maloney joined the agency in 2003, following seven years managing contract transit services for the City of Glendale.

At The Toll Roads, headquartered in Irvine, Armijo will be responsible for a staff of about 95 along with the day-to-day operations of four toll roads totaling 67 miles. He will supervise toll collections of some \$300 million annually, customer service, toll enforcement and toll facilities.

"David's organizational skills and his management abilities were key factors in making the service sectors the success they have become," said CEO Roger Snoble. "He'll be greatly missed here at Metro, but we wish him all the best in his new position at The Toll Roads."

'Created excellent relationships'

"David had the San Fernando Valley and Jack Gabig had the San Gabriel Valley at a time when there was really a lot of apprehension about the sector concept," Deputy CEO John Catoe recalled. "Over time, he created excellent relationships with the business community and community organizations. On the Westside, David was responsible for responding to our highest ridership growth and to the additional services we were directed to put out under the



Westside/Central General Manager David Armijo



Consent Decree.”

“He played a big part in our being honored by APTA as the Outstanding Transportation System this year,” Catoe added. “He’s done a great job for us and it’s a loss for the agency. For him and his family, it’s a wonderful opportunity. We’ll miss him, but I wish him the best of luck.”

Mark Maloney, director of Metro’s Transportation Contract Services, will succeed Armijo in an acting capacity as general manager of the Westside/Central sector.

Recalling his early days as general manager in the Valley, Armijo says, “we delivered the service, got the first governance council going, established that the service sectors could be beneficial.” He also managed to come in \$3 million under budget the first year.

Armijo participated in early planning for the Metro Orange Line, including planning for service along the 14-mile transitway and the operations training plans.

One of many shining moments Armijo remembers from his time as a general manger was Metro’s response during the three days in June 2004 that the late President Ronald Reagan lay in state in Simi Valley.

Dozens of Metro buses – and a staff of more than 100 operators, supervisors and maintenance personnel – transported visitors between Moorpark College and the Reagan Library. To handle the crowds, the shuttle operated around the clock for some 35 hours.

“I’ll always remember that as being the finest moment during my tenure at Metro,” says Armijo. “It was the first major success story after the strike.”

Challenge on the Westside

Armijo faced a tough challenge on the Westside, where he took command as the third general manager in two years to oversee Metro’s busiest sector. With 30 percent of Metro’s service hours and more than 30 percent of ridership, Westside bus lines have the transit system’s highest average patronage.

“The key thing was pulling the staff together and getting them focused,” he says, noting that he brought in new division management and improved the sector’s safety plan.

“This has been a fabulous year” for the sector, he says. “We’re going to come in a little over \$6 million under budget on Workers’ Comp and Risk Management. We saved quite a bit of money.”

As he winds up his last year at Metro, Armijo remembers discussions four years ago about making Metro the best transit agency in the nation. He’s proud that the agency has won the APTA Outstanding Public Transportation System award for 2006.

“To do that meant a lot of sacrifices, a lot of commitment from a lot of people,” he says. “We had to be very forward-thinking and visionary. We became agency of the year because of a multitude of success stories.”

Although Armijo will miss Metro, the one thing he won’t miss is the commute from his home in Orange County.

Working in Irvine, he’ll avoid some 500 commuting hours annually and

he'll be able to spend more time with his 15-year-old daughter, Alicia, a student at Capistrano High School in Mission Viejo. He also has two other children – Rosalie, 16, and Christopher, 13 – who live with their mother.

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Ridership Surges in May as Gas Prices Remain High

• Orange Line patronage reaches 2020 ridership forecast

By MARC LITTMAN

(June 13, 2006) Metro ridership, particularly on the Metro Orange Line and Metro Rail, surged in May as gas prices remained stubbornly high.

Weekday ridership on the Metro Orange Line averaged 21,828 boardings, a milestone the Environmental Impact Report predicted wouldn't be reached until 2020.

Metro Rail ridership climbed 18 percent in May over last year, a gain of more than 1.1 million boardings. There were 7.7 million boardings in May 2006 compared to 6.6 million in May 2005.

Directly operated Metro Bus service, including the Metro Orange Line, carried 10 percent more riders – 34 million in May 2006 compared to 31 million in May 2005.

"With a \$3 Metro day pass costing less than a gallon of gas, it's a powerful lure for commuters," said Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa.

"Combine that with new and better service, such as the Metro Orange Line, and commuters are finding they really can free themselves from high gas prices if they go Metro."

To make the benefits – and savings – of public transportation tangible, Metro has undertaken a number of transit initiatives, including an ad campaign that depicts a motorist handcuffed to a gas pump with the text: "Free yourself. Go Metro."

The ads appear on billboards and bus shelters, the sides of buses and in newspaper advertisements throughout Los Angeles County.



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Metro Study Supports Tunnel Alternative for 710 Freeway Gap

- Public workshops set for Pasadena, neighboring towns

By RICK JAGER

(June 14, 2006) Metro will conduct a public workshop in Pasadena, June 22, to discuss a just-released study concluding that it would be feasible to construct a 4.5-mile tunnel extending the Long Beach (710) Freeway to the I-210 Freeway in Pasadena.

Noting that the closure of the 710 Freeway gap will relieve congestion in the area, the report said potential environmental impacts could be minimized, eliminated or mitigated and that there are no insurmountable environmental issues preventing further consideration of a tunnel.

The workshop set for Pasadena will be followed by similar presentations before city council meetings in Alhambra, La Canada Flintridge, Los Angeles, Pasadena, San Marino and South Pasadena and for the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments.

During a briefing for local media, CEO Roger Snoble and Caltrans District 7 Director Doug Failing stressed that the community must first reach consensus and form a partnership before additional studies are done or funding is sought.

The feasibility study, conducted by Parsons Brinckerhoff, considered several tunnel alternatives to extend the 710 freeway with construction costs ranging from approximately \$2.3 billion to \$3.6 billion in 2006 dollars.

Stacked and non-stacked

The possible tunnel configurations included stacked and non-stacked configurations with up to four lanes of traffic in each direction. Scenarios also included truck and non-truck movement through the tunnel extension.

The study found that both the tunnel boring machine (TBM) and sequential excavation method (SEM) methods were technically feasible options for constructing a tunnel in the area.

Over the past 40 years, many concepts have been proposed and evaluated to complete the 710 Freeway and close the 4.5-mile gap in the corridor. To date, none of those alternatives has been successful in satisfying the regional mobility needs and community and environmental concerns.

Alternatives have included traditional surface freeway links through the communities of Los Angeles, Pasadena and South Pasadena. Many members of the community were concerned with the impacts of those

surface roads and, consequently, opposed the extension of the 710 Freeway.

In response to this reaction from the community and to lessen the potential impact of completing the extension, tunneling was proposed as a potential option.

Caltrans, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), SCAG, and Metro support the completion of the 710 freeway to relieve regional and local traffic congestion and to enhance regional air quality.

The Metro staff will collect and summarize all community feedback resulting from the series of public meetings and will report to the Metro Board this fall.

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The Big Picture> San Gabriel Valley Division 9 sector staff, operators and mechanics team up for award-winning performance. Photo courtesy of San Gabriel Valley Maintenance Division 9.



Division 9 Wins 3rd Consecutive 'How You Doin'?' Award

By SARAH WINFREY

(June 14, 2006) San Gabriel Valley Division 9 took home its third consecutive quarterly award for the "How You Doin'?" program for FY 2006.

"There is a team spirit at Division 9; some call it a family atmosphere," says Maintenance Manager John McBryan.

"You must have a strong working relationship between Maintenance and Transportation Departments and have a lot of support from the Sector staff to even have a chance to get one quarterly award," he said.

"I was fortunate to be able to join a winning team here last July," says Transportation Manager Dan Frawley. "It's a pleasure to work with employees who take pride in what they do."

McBryan said that a tremendous amount of teamwork within the Sector is crucial to winning the competitions and that he is very proud to be part of Division 9.

San Gabriel Valley Division 9 received a check of \$1000. The award will be split between Maintenance and Transportation divisions and used for employee events.



General Manager Jack Gabig presents John McBryan with a pin symbolizing 35 years of service with Metro.

In addition to presenting the “How You Doin’?” Award, General Manager Jack Gabig presented McBryan a pin for his 35 years of service with Metro.

The “How You Doin’?” Program is a performance awareness program designed to increase productivity and efficiency among the operating divisions.



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Employees Invited to ‘Juneteenth’ Event, Friday, at West Valley Division

By JORDAN MASTAGNI

(June 14, 2006) Metro employees are hosting the annual “Juneteenth,” event on Friday, June 16 at West Valley Division 8 in Chatsworth.

Around 200 to 300 employees are expected to attend. Lunch and entertainment will be provided from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Professional hip hop dancer Alexis Fenderson, from Faithful Central Church in Inglewood, will showcase her skills while DJ D-Train spins records in the background. Beverly “BJ” Mosely will read poetry.

Krump Hip Hop dancers Ramape and Twin Ramape will perform the Krump style of dance —a high-energy mix of break-dancing, gymnastics and spasm-like movements.

Lunch includes a soul food-style menu—barbecue chicken, hot links, collard greens and peach cobbler for dessert, according to operators Stephanie Rhodes and Luther Philyaw who are coordinating the event.

Juneteenth—June 19, 1865—marked the end of slavery in America. Union General Gordon Granger rode into Galveston, Tex., to read the General Order Number 3, which freed the remaining 250,000 slaves. It is now an addendum to Independence Day.

The United Transportation Union is helping sponsor Friday’s event by donating \$500, along with contributions from Metro employees.

Raffle tickets will be handed out for various door prizes.



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Valley's New Line 734 Will Expand Metro Rapid Program

- Line will serve Sylmar Metrolink station and Ventura Boulevard.

By RICK JAGER

(June 15, 2006) Metro will expand its successful Metro Rapid program, June 26, by adding Line 734 on Sepulveda Boulevard in the San Fernando Valley. The line will operate between Ventura Boulevard and the Sylmar Metrolink station.

Line 734 will run every 10 minutes during morning and afternoon peak periods and every 20 minutes in mid-days and evenings, Monday through Friday.

Metro Rapid Line 780 (Hollywood/Glendale/Pasadena) will be merged with Line 717 (Fairfax Rapid) from the West Los Angeles Transit Center to Pasadena. The line will be numbered as Metro Rapid 780.

Metro also will begin operating high-capacity buses on six lines –60-foot articulated buses on Metro Rapid lines 720 (Wilshire-Whittier) and 761 (Van Nuys). New 45-foot buses will be deployed on Metro Rapid lines 711 (Florence), 740 (Hawthorne), 745 (Broadway) and 750 (Ventura).

An all-day shuttle service – Line 634 – between the Metrolink Sylmar Station and Mission College in the San Fernando Valley will be operated on a 30-minute headway.

Metro will add service to 13 bus lines: 108, 161, 166, 209, 450X, 484, 490, 634, 710, 711, 740, 754 and 757. The added bus trips will occur mostly in the morning and afternoon peak periods. The June shakeup also includes a number of other route adjustments and service modifications.



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Metro Wins 4 TRANNY Awards for Transit Excellence

By KIM UPTON

(June 15, 2006) Metro has earned four California Transportation Foundation (CTF) TRANNY awards – two for the Metro Orange Line, one for the Intelligent Transportation System for Bus Transit and another for Mission Meridian Village, a transit oriented development in South Pasadena.

The annual awards, which recognize innovative transit projects, were announced, June 7, at the 17th Annual TRANNY Awards luncheon in Sacramento.

The Metro Orange Line won both Project of the Year and Transit Project of the Year.

"This is further proof of the success of the Metro Orange Line," said Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky. "We are delighted with the award but we are even more gratified by what it stands for."

"The people of Los Angeles have an easier way to get where they need to go and an alternative to ridiculously high gas prices," he added. "The timing couldn't be better."

The CTF recognized Metro, LADOT, Gruen Associates, Shimmick Construction Co./Obayashi Corporation and Washington Group International for their involvement with the Orange Line project.

The CTF also gave Metro's Intelligent Transportation System for Bus Transit, the signal priority system set up for Metro Rapid, an award as Transit Management Program of the Year. The recognition included the City of Inglewood, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works and Parsons Brinckerhoff Farradyne.

The Mission Meridian Village transit oriented development won the Program Special Recognition award. Metro's partners in the Mission Meridian Village project included the California Transportation Commission, City of South Pasadena, Creative Housing Associates and Lambert Development.

The CTF is a non-profit public benefit corporation dedicated to the promotion and recognition of excellence in California transportation. Awards were decided by a jury that included experts from the public and private sectors.


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CEO UpDate

Pride in Our 'Outstanding' APTA Award; A Word About the Budget

By CEO ROGER SNOBLE



CEO Roger Snoble

I hope everyone is as excited as I am about winning the APTA Outstanding Public Transportation System award for 2006. This is a very prestigious award and a high honor for any transit property. It confirms Metro's standing as a national transportation leader.

As I mentioned during the recent all-staff meeting, we will receive the award on October 10 at the APTA convention in San Jose. Between now and then, we'll be putting together a marketing and public outreach program to let our customers – and all of Los Angeles – know that their transportation system has been named America's best.

We want every resident of LA to be as proud of this achievement as we here at Metro are. We owe a lot to our patrons who ride our system; to the taxpayers who have voted dollars for transit; to our local and state leaders who have fought for funding; and to our Board members for the great support they give us.

I want to thank you for making it possible for Metro to win the APTA award. Whether you drive a bus or train, clean or maintain our vehicles; whether you're involved in planning, construction, operations, procurement, communications, customer relations or staff support – it was your individual contribution that helped bring us this great honor.

Further budget reductions

A word or two about the budget. As you know, the Board approved our \$3 billion FY 2007 budget in May, but asked us to come back this month with ideas for ways to reduce our spending by another \$10 million.

Among the measures we'll take is to eliminate 17 vacant non-contract positions. Beyond this, I don't plan to recommend and I don't foresee staff layoffs. In fact, in future years as we receive the state bond funding being worked on in Sacramento, I believe we'll have to expand our staff to handle new transportation projects.

Another topic I know you're interested in is salary increases. The FY 2007 budget includes a 2 percent across-the-board pay increase. Labor negotiations are still ongoing, but our chief labor negotiator, Deputy CEO John Catoe, is optimistic about signing labor agreements

this month.

In closing, let me again express my appreciation and admiration for all everyone at Metro has done to help us win the APTA award. It's a well-deserved honor.

June 15, 2006

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'Big Rig' Freeway Service Patrol Assists 886 Trucks in 8 months

(June 16, 2006) During the first eight months of a two-year demonstration project, the Metro Freeway Service Patrol "Big Rig" service assisted 886 disabled vehicles on the I-710 freeway.

Since last October 3, two heavy-duty tow trucks provided by Metro have patrolled a 17-mile stretch of the I-710 between Pacific Coast Highway and 3rd Street in the City of Commerce, just south of Rte. 60. The service is operated from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m. on weekdays.

Statistics collected between October 2005 and May 2006 show the highest number of assists – 139 – were made the first month of the demonstration. Assists averaged 110 a month over the eight-month period, with 5 to 7 assists per day.

Figures show that the great majority of assists – 47 percent – were for mechanical problems, while 13 percent involved collisions. Some 239 trucks, or 27 percent, required towing.

"While the demonstration project is still in its early stages," says Byron Lee, Metro's director of Motorist Services, "the results from the first eight months indicate that there is a need for this kind of operation."

Tow truck operators can assist by either doing minor repairs, or by providing sufficient fuel to get the vehicle to the nearest gas or diesel station. More seriously disabled vehicles are towed off the freeway to designated drop locations.

The purpose of the demonstration is to ease traffic congestion by more quickly locating and providing assistance to a disabled truck weighing three tons or more. The demonstration project is for a two-year period, with an option for a third year.

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The LAUSD Police bus pulls up to the Imperial/Wilmington Station to pick up another group of students to be taken to the Carson Community Center.



Gotcha! Sheriff's Deputies Catch 100s in School Truancy Sweep

By SARAH WINFREY

(June 16, 2006) It was a typical morning on the Metro – except on this day the deputies from Metro's Transportation Services Bureau were conducting a sweep for truant students.



Fare Inspectors and Sheriffs deputies made sweeps of the Metro Blue Line trains to look for truant students. Two girls were detained after the Fare Inspectors and deputies determined that they were under 17-years old. Below, Fare Inspectors at the Imperial/Wilmington Station stood guard at the exit of the platform to check

On Thursday, May 25, deputies were looking for anyone under 17-years-old who was traveling Metro trains after school had started. Deputies were patrolling from Willow station up to Imperial/Wilmington station.

At the Imperial/Wilmington station, where the Metro Green and Blue Lines connect, deputies asked for identification from kids as they walked by. If they were 17 and younger, they were sent upstairs where the deputies could issue citations.

Then the kids were patted down and loaded onto black and white LAUSD police buses. The buses were sent to the Carson Community Center where the

identification of suspect students as they got off the trains. youngsters were processed.



Photos by Sarah Winfrey

The Sheriffs Department conducts random truancy sweeps about once a month. On this particular day they detained approximately 275 to 300 kids.

The tickets issued to the truant students required them to go before a judge where they could be ordered to pay a fine as high as \$250 or to do community service. Additionally, the parents of the students could face a fine of \$750.

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Joined by friends and family, Metro employees marching in the Christopher Street West Parade included, from left Jody Litvak, Tim Papandreou, Scott Page, Travis Seawards, Lynda Bybee and Brian Soto.



Photos by Russell Jones

Metro 'Wows the Crowd' at Christopher Street West Parade

By JODY LITVAK

(June 16, 2006) More than 300,000 people cheered Metro and others in the annual Christopher Street West Parade in West Hollywood, June 11, cruising right by Metro's Division 7 on Santa Monica Boulevard.

About two-dozen Metro staff, family and friends waved to the crowds, handed out souvenirs and accompanied the star of the show – a sleek, new, articulated bus.

Drawing the biggest cheers from the crowd were the king ads on the sides of the bus, and the banner held in front of the bus with the message, "Ride with Pride."

Created by the Metro Design Studio, the king ads featured artwork by Lead Designer Neil Sadler. The ad message by Intern Kurt Jeske matched the parade theme of "Love, Equality, Pride."

"Once people saw the message on the banner and on the bus, they just went wild," said North Los Angeles Division 3 Operator Laura Davila, who marched in the parade.



Created by the Metro Design Studio, the king ads featured artwork by Lead Designer Neil Sadler.



West Hollywood Division 7 Operator Theresa Jacobs also used the bus horn to get the crowd going.

'A great reception'

"It's a lot of fun and we always get a great reception from the crowd," said Ilda Licon, a countywide planning analyst. "It makes all of us proud to represent Metro, and gives the agency positive exposure within this community and to the hundreds of thousands of people who come to the parade from throughout the county."

The "Ride with Pride" message was received so well that Creative Director Michael Lejeune is considering how to use it for other Metro promotions.

Tim Papandreou, a transportation planning manager who "captained" the crew carrying the banner said it provides a very positive message that "transit customers ride with pride and with dignity."



Star of the show: A sleek, new, articulated bus.

Metro has participated in the parade and accompanying festival in one form or another since it began 36 years ago.

"The parade and festival go right by our operating division and we want to continue to be a good neighbor in this community where we do

business,” said Lynda Bybee, Deputy Executive Officer for Community Relations, who marched in the parade for the first time. She noted that participation in the parade is consistent with Metro policies supporting diversity.

Meanwhile, Transportation Operations Supervisor Steve Rank, Assistant Transportation Manager Derick Mahome and their teams, together with Metro Security and LA Sheriff’s Transit Services Bureau kept things running smoothly at Division 7.

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Division 3 Honors 4 Retirees with Total of 98 Years' Service



(June 16, 2006) North Los Angeles Division 3 welcomed back four retired bus operators, June 14, during a noontime ceremony. Collectively, the operators have a total of 98 years' service. Shown with their retirement plaques are, from left, Michael Chavarria, 22 years' service; Richard Salido, 23 years; Margaret Sifuentes, 26 years; and Michael Murray, 27 years' service. The four retired operators were honored at a luncheon with their former coworkers. Photo courtesy of Mike Greenwood

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Metro's John Flores, vacationing in London, snapped this close-up of Queen Elizabeth greeting subjects outside of St. Paul's Cathedral.



Metro's John Flores remembers his moment with Elizabeth II

- From La Puente to London and a Chat with the Queen of England

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(June 20, 2006) It was a last-minute shopping trip that, for Metro's John Flores, turned out to be the biggest thrill of a three-week European vacation. He met the Queen of England.

After beginning his vacation in London, then spending a week in Madrid and a week in Barcelona, Flores and his friend, Vladimir Martinez, were spending a last couple of days back in London before flying home.

While Martinez – who uses a wheelchair – rested at their Piccadilly Circus hotel, the 30-year-old Building Services clerk headed off the morning of June 15 to buy some souvenirs at St. Paul's Cathedral.

It was about 10 a.m. and the streets around the cathedral were blocked. Noticing that some people were dressed for church, Flores was told the queen would be coming to the cathedral for a service that would be a prelude to her official 80th birthday celebration the following Saturday, June 17.

At that moment, he saw a limousine drive by with former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. That's when Flores decided this was too good an opportunity to miss.



Metro's John Flores rests on the steps of St. Paul's Cathedral in London.



Prince Charles, left, says a word to his father, Prince Phillip, as princes Harry and William follow.

An impressive scene

He plunged into the crowd around the entrance to St. Paul’s and wormed his way to the front, seeking a good camera angle. It was an impressive scene as soldiers in ceremonial dress lined the steps up to the cathedral’s massive stone pillars.

Soon, a large tour bus pulled up and people Flores assumed were part of the royal family stepped out and walked into the church. More limousines arrived with the heir to the throne, Prince Charles, and his sons, princes William and Harry.



Soldiers of the Household Cavalry march to their places on the steps of St. Paul’s Cathedral.

Flores was snapping photos as fast as he could when a burgundy Bentley drove slowly up and Queen Elizabeth II and her husband, Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, stepped out and walked up the steps of the church.

Flores spent the next hour jockeying for what he hoped would be a

better vantage point for photos. He wound up near a group of media in what turned out to be his lucky spot.

Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip greet their subjects and tourists outside the cathedral as plainclothes security officers look on.



Around noon, the doors of the cathedral opened and members of the royal family began to exit. People he didn't recognize, then Prince Charles, William, Harry and some others. People near Flores were whispering about whether the queen would make a "walkabout."

Then out she came, Queen Elizabeth II, dressed in a peach-colored sheath with a lace-edged spring coat and wearing a large hat with a white feather. She was trailed by the Duke of Edinburgh, and shadowed by a phalanx of stern-faced security officers in civilian dress.

Flores was snapping photos as the queen slowly worked her way along the row of foreign tourists and British subjects, chatting with some and receiving flowers from others.

'She came up to me'

"She kept coming and coming," he recalls. "And she came up to me and smiled."

"I said, 'Hello, Your Majesty. Congratulations.' She smiled and said, 'It's a lovely day, isn't it?' Her smile was so bright."

"I said, 'Yes, it is and I came all the way from Los Angeles to see you.' She said, 'Thank you,' and I thought to myself, 'How do I get to meet royalty?'"

After speaking to only one more person in the crowd, the queen and her consort stepped into their waiting car and drove away.

"It didn't hit me until afterward," says Flores, "that – wow! – I met the queen."

Then, John Flores, an ordinary guy from La Puente who on a summers' day in London met Elizabeth the Second, by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, thinks and says, "This will be something to tell my grandchildren!"

More about Queen Elizabeth II

Queen Elizabeth II was born April 21, 1926 as Elizabeth Alexandra Mary Windsor, daughter of King George VI and the Queen Mother Elizabeth.

She ascended to the throne on Feb. 6, 1952, following the death of her father. She was crowned on June 2, 1953.

Although born in April, the queen officially celebrates her birthday on a Saturday in June. The official celebrations in 2006 included a service at St. Paul's Cathedral, June 15, and the "Trooping the Color" on June 17.

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Still Going- Senior Equipment Maintenance Instructor Russell Homan, shown here at 2004 Metro Rail Celebration, will crank up the unicycle for his annual one-wheel tour of Division 20.

You're Invited to the Metro Rail Celebration, Saturday, June 24

(June 20, 2006) All employees, their families and guests are invited to the Metro Rail Operations Celebration on Saturday, June 24.

The event will be held from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. at Division 20, located at 320 South Santa Fe Ave., Los Angeles. A brief ceremony will honor the 2006 Metro Rail Rodeo and APTA International Rail Rodeo winners and participants.

Highlights of this year's celebration will include a display by the Sheriff's Department and Metro Security featuring a helicopter, K-9 units and a mounted unit.

Metro employees will participate in a classic motorcycle show; there will be live music by the Bobby Z Band and DJ sounds courtesy of Metro Rail Operator Melvin Henderson.

Kids can work off a lot of energy in the Megazone Kids Jumper and there will be Mexican cuisine by El Cholo Restaurant. The Chivas USA cheerleaders and the team mascot are scheduled to attend.

Join in honoring the Metro Rail Rodeo team. Bring the family and have a great time, good food and lots of fun for the kids.

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Members of the Metro Art Docent Council add the new installation at the Metro Gold Line portal to their Metro Art itinerary.



The Sun also Rises in the Metro Gold Line Portal

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(June 21, 2006) Today is June 21, the Summer Solstice, the longest day in the solar year when the Sun is at its highest path through the sky.

From the perspective of the 34th parallel, L.A.'s geographical address, the Summer Solstice is perfectly depicted in Metro Art's newest artwork installation -- artist Roy Nicholson's "Solar Shift: San Bernardino and Santa Monica, 2006."

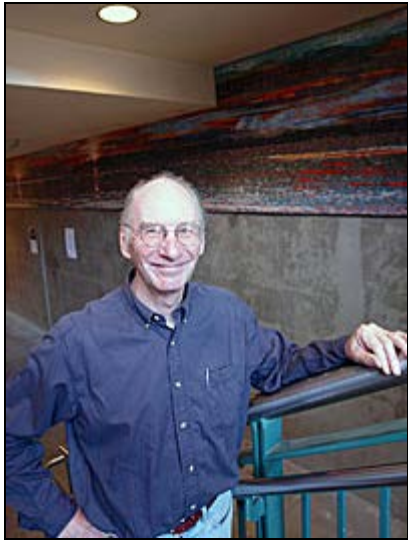
Transforming the gloomy, dark concrete lobby that houses an elevator and ticket vending machines, two 55-foot-long glass mosaic murals and skylight well frame the entrance to the Metro Gold Line platform at Union Station.

"Recognizing the importance to our customers of this active entry portal and its somewhat dreary appearance, we commissioned an outstanding mural that relates specifically to the Los Angeles environment and is composed of timeless materials, " said Jorge Pardo, Art and Design Manager, Metro Art.



The Sun at Summer Solstice is depicted at sunrise on the east panel, at right, and at sunset in the west panel, at left.

At the Metro Gold Line portal, the sun rises and sets every day, revealing its own mosaic of sky, mist, smog and shadows. The sun's path across the northern hemisphere is measured by the solstice and equinox of the four seasons.



Artist Roy Nicholson

"The piece relates this place to the environment and also what's just beyond the walls," said Nicholson, on site in June to direct the installation and apply finishing touches to the shimmering panels of impressionistic color.

"Solar Shift" went from concept to installation in just under a year – about the same amount of time it takes the sun to complete its solar path around the world.

Positioning himself on Santa Monica beach for the setting of the sun, Nicholson captured the images on the exact time of solstice/equinox. Images of the sun rising were captured by the University of San Berdardino's webcam that Nicholson found

online.

Nicholson produced meticulously rendered drawings and traveled to the Franz Mayer Studio in Munich, Germany, for the artistic Mexican and Italian glass mosaics used in the panels. Under his supervision, artisans there transformed the images of Los Angeles' equinox and solstice into the murals. Some 308,000 tiny pieces of tile were assembled in strips onto a wire base and shipped to the United States. In the final phase of the installation, the strips of mosaic were applied to the concrete wall at the entrance to the Metro Gold Line.



The mosiac skylight well echoes the colors of morning to the east and evening to the west, with mid-day blue to the north and south.

Completing the installation June 16, construction workers installed a metal strip beneath each mural rising on the concrete horizon.



The mosaic murals celebrate the natural beauty of Los Angeles' geographic environment, reflecting the east-west orientation of the Metro Gold Line portal walls by depicting sunrise and sunset at various points in the annual solar cycle. Looking west, above, the Sun is at its lowest path in the sky at the Winter Solstice, which occurs on December 21. After that day, the Sun follows a higher and higher path through the sky each day until it is in the sky for exactly 12 hours at the Spring Equinox on about March 21. At the Summer Solstice, which occurs on June 21, the Sun is at its highest path through the sky and the day is the longest. Because the day is so long, the Sun does not rise exactly in the east, but rises to the north of east and sets to the north of west allowing it to be in the sky for a longer period of time. After the Fall Equinox on or about Sept. 21, the Sun will continue to follow a lower and lower path through the sky and the days will grow shorter and shorter until it reaches its lowest path and the Earth is back at the Winter Solstice. Looking east, below, the Sun also rises.





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Metro to Salute Graduates with Publication of 2006 Honor Roll

(June 21, 2006) Metro will salute its graduates, Thursday, with publication of the 2006 Metro Honor Roll – a list of 130 employees and their family members.

This year’s list of honorees includes 63 high school graduates, 12 who earned associate’s degrees, 32 college graduates, 21 who earned master’s degrees and two who achieved doctorates.

Some households had more than one graduate. There was a husband/wife combination; three daughter/son combinations, a mother/daughter graduating pair, three sets of two daughters and a father/son combination.

Look for the entire list of graduates, along with some unusual individual graduation stories, when the Metro Honor Roll is published, Thursday, on myMetro.net.



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Metro Grads> from left, Barbara Burns, Woody Yee, Tom Jasmin and Martha Butler earned Master's degrees at CSU Los Angeles and graduated together.



Four Long, Hard Years But These Employees Earned Master's Degrees

- Jasmin, Burns, Butler and Yee graduated together from CSULA

- MORE> Graduation is a Family Affair – [Click here for 3 Families' Stories](#)

By REINA V. SLUTSKE

(June 22, 2006) Back in 2002, Tom Jasmin was up for a promotion in Bus Operations Control when the supervisor called him in.

"Well, you have the experience," he said of Jasmin's Metro years. "But you've done nothing with your education in thirty years. You have a bachelor's degree, but I have someone else who has less experience, but he has his Ph.D. Now, who would you pick if you were me?"

Jasmin, now director of Operations Control, knew it looked like he had done nothing to advance his education. The supervisor suggested that Jasmin go back to school and get an advanced degree. Within a week, he was registered in CSU Los Angeles' program for an MS in Public Administration.

He wasn't alone. Three other Metro employees were registered there as well: Barbara Burns, assistant manager of Transit Safety Education; Martha Butler, a Transportation Planning manager; and Durwood "Woody" Yee, a Stops and Zones supervisor.

Together, the four of them celebrated their graduation from the program this year.

Thirty years later

Jasmin had received his bachelor's degree from CSU Los Angeles, so returning to the campus after a 30-year absence was jarring.

"Each quarter when you have to introduce yourself,' he says. "The first day I said, 'I remember this class thirty years ago. They haven't painted it, they haven't changed the floors, and the air conditioning in this building probably still doesn't work.'"

Woody Yee, like Jasmin, received his bachelor's degree from CSU Los Angeles. He noticed the cultural shift at Metro, where top positions were requiring higher levels of education, and was interested in continuing his education.

"We decided to take the challenge, go back and see if our study skills improved or not," he laughs. "Mine didn't."

All four would take one class per quarter, working full-time, going to school at night, and doing homework on the weekends—or at least, trying to find the time to do homework.

Cut into lots of fun

Working full-time and going to school means cutting into a lot of fun time, or even into other obligations.

In addition to work and studies, Burns was also in the Naval Reserve until 2004. She remembered that, while on weekend duty with the Navy in Dallas, she was working on her first grad paper. She researched it in the hotel room, and wrote it in the airport.

"It became a real juggling act," she says.

Meanwhile, Martha Butler, whose daughter Tara also graduated this year from UC San Diego, had been missing all the fun family events that her large family does together, opting for studying as opposed to days at the races.

Yee had to work out a schedule with his wife to spend part of the day with her on weekends and study the other part.

"The program is demanding," Yee says. "Even though the professors say, 'We understand that you're working full-time,' they still pile the work on."

Suddenly they were classmates

Butler, Burns, Jasmin and Yee all work in different Metro departments and most didn't even know each other until they showed up in a college class together.

Since master's classes are so small, the four of them could comprise up to one-third of the class.

Working at Metro allowed them to apply their experiences to their school assignments. Burns' thesis was developing a bus safety program for kids, while Jasmin worked on job succession planning.

Of course, his workload at times Metro made it hard. Jasmin is on call with Bus Operations Control 24 hours a day, and was contacted about incidents during two final presentations. He finished his presentations, and immediately excused himself from the class.

Now it's over

After four years of master's classes, Jasmin seems almost startled by at the amount of free time he now has.

"I go home and I realize, 'There's nothing to do,'" he said. "When you're in college, there's always so much."

What all four have in common is that they're all looking forward to relaxing in their spare time and doing what they love.

"My house is neglected," Butler said. "I liked working out in the yard a lot, and I didn't have a chance to do that."

Meanwhile, as they all look for other activities to do, Burns may have said it best: "Right now, I'm going to take some time off."


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- [How to Nominate](#) an Employee of the Quarter
- [Read more](#) about the Employees of the Quarter

(June 22, 2006) Seven employees, whose work exemplifies six of the seven core Metro values, have been selected as Employees of the Quarter for the third quarter of FY 2006.

The employees are being honored in the categories of safety, employees, integrity, innovation, customer satisfaction and teamwork. The seventh category is fiscal responsibility.

Safety

Senior Safety Specialist Richard Long investigates and reenacts accidents to develop measures that will prevent future incidents. He tracks safety issues and the cause of accidents and ensures that the sector complies with federal and state safety regulations. He takes seriously his charge to move the agency towards higher safety standards.

Employees

Senior Administrative Analyst Theresa Arslanian consistently meets the needs of three departments. She supports the Operations Board Report process and manages administrative items, supports the Deputy CEO and the executive secretary, and has filled in for an offsite analyst. For months, she juggled numerous jobs and responsibilities that demanded working from multiple sites and weekend hours.

Integrity

Mechanic "A" Leader Curtis Magruder, a 24-year Metro veteran, played a key role in improving Central City Division 1's rollouts during the second quarter of FY 2006 through his proactive methods in prioritizing shop duties. His leadership abilities are put to the test on the graveyard shift, which he characterizes as challenging and "almost like a race every morning."

Innovation

Scheduling Documents Technician Cindy Viramontes of the Gateway Cities Service Sector demonstrated innovation by designing bus decals and redesigning timetable maps to show major streets. Her work has helped customers to see at a glance where a bus line travels without having to open the timetable.

Customer Satisfaction

Messenger Clerk Leonardo "Nicky" Astilla's discerning memory, boundless energy and warm smile are constantly evident as he delivers mail to the 1,100 employees at Metro Headquarters. He has

managed to learn everyone’s name in the process. His positive attitude, consummate professionalism and consistent work performance has distinguished Astilla as an outstanding provider of customer service.

Teamwork

Senior EEO Investigators Tony Martin and Phil Waldman conduct discrimination complaint investigations in a timely manner, despite the twofold increase in workload over the past three years. Their investigative and mediation efforts have assisted the agency in avoiding serious liability. In the last 12 months, they have taken on extra complaint investigations, conducted numerous new employee orientations and helped train supervisory staff and new bus operators in sexual harassment prevention.

How to Nominate an Employee of the Quarter

The Employee of the Quarter program is administered by the Communication Services Department, which is now accepting nominations for the fourth quarter of FY 2006.

The nomination form is located on the Employee Recognition web page at http://intranet1/employee_recognition/eoq.htm. Once the form is completed by the person making the nomination, it must be approved by the department head and the executive officer, then forwarded to Jennifer Salamanca at Mail Stop 99-19-3.

Final selection of the Employee of the Quarter winners will be made by the Employee of the Quarter selection committee, whose members are appointed by business unit executive officers for a period of one fiscal year. Questions about the program should be directed to Salamanca at 922-2263. [>top](#)

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College Degrees are a Family Affair at Metro

- [Father and son](#) Patrick and Brian Astredo
- [Sister and brother](#) are children of Eduardo Perez
- [Husband and wife](#) Joel and Leticia Felix-Sanchez

Like Father, Like Son

When he received his AA from Cerritos College more than 10 years ago, continuing his educated wasn't in the cards for Patrick Astredo, Equipment Maintenance manager. But, this spring, Astredo and his son, Brian, both graduated with their Bachelor's degrees.

Astredo received a BA in Business from the University of Phoenix, graduating with honors. His son graduated from Loyola Marymount University with a BA in communications.

Astredo explains that timing was everything for him to be able fulfill his dream of going back to get his degree. With Brian living and working on campus at LMU, Astredo could devote the time needed for his studies.

"I thought about upper mobility and doing it for myself," says Astredo. "I wanted to prove that I could do it." – *Sarah Winfrey*

One After the Other

Eduardo Perez's children seem to follow each other around a lot. It seemed that way when Edward, 23, and Stephanie, 22, chose the same university.

Both the Perez children, who immigrated to the United States from the Philippines as children, went to the University of California at Riverside. Edward received his Bachelor's in political science last fall and Stephanie received her Bachelor's in mathematics this spring.

"It's like paying for two Mercedes-Benzenes'," says their father.

The family immigrated to the U.S. when the kids were just four and five years old, and one of their first priorities was the children's



Grad Brian Astredo, at left, with his father Patrick Astredo. Both graduated with bachelor's degrees. "I am very proud of my children for completing their education... I was just glad I could keep up them," said proud father Patrick, equipment maintenance manager at Fleet Services.

education.

"We are happy that they finished college...this is what we wanted for them," says Perez.

It looks as if their university experiences are far from over. Edward will be attending CSU Fullerton in the fall, and it seems that his sister might not be too far behind.

Perez says that he told his children they can either find a full time job or continue their education. – *Sarah Winfrey*



Family grads> Leticia Felix-Sanchez and husband Joel, with daughter Audrey, celebrate dual degrees.

Family Kept Them Together

Leticia L. Felix-Sanchez, Human Resources Employment Services clerk, and her husband, Joel, have hectic schedules.

She works during the day and went to school at night. He has an unpaid internship, works as a transporter for an Arcadia hospital, and studied to become a radiology technician.

But it was worth it, as both Leticia and Joel graduated this year—he from Pasadena City College with an AS in radiology, she from Cal Poly Pomona with a BS in human resources.

Meanwhile, Audrey Lauren Sanchez—the couple’s four-year-old daughter currently in pre-school—watched her parents work hard for their respective degrees.

"She had a graduation for her preschool," said Leticia, "so she

was like, 'Okay, now it's mommy's turn, and it's daddy's turn next weekend.'" – *Reina V. Slutske*


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METRO HONOR ROLL - Class of 2006

- Compiled by Reina V. Slutske and Sarah Winfrey.

Congratulations, Class of 2006! The years, hours and late nights of study you have dedicated to reaching your goal of graduation all now seem worthwhile and you can celebrate! You and your families – those who supported you over the years – also can take pride in your accomplishment. Trust in the skills you have acquired and the foundation you have laid for your future. Celebrate your achievement. You have truly earned it.

-- Roger Snoble, CEO

Click on links below to find a graduate's name.

[A](#) [B](#) [C](#) [D](#) [E](#) [F](#) [G](#) [H](#) [I](#) [J](#) [K](#) [L](#) [M](#) [N](#) [O](#) [P](#) [Q](#) [R](#) [S](#) [T](#) [U](#) [V](#) [W](#) [X](#) [Y](#) [Z](#)

A

Arcadio Alvarez, son of Rail Operator Ramon Alvarez, graduated from the California Culinary Institute with an AA in the Le Cordon Bleu program.

Veronica S. Alvarez, daughter of Bus Operator Manuel Alvarez, graduated from Warren High School, Downey.

Maureen E. Andrade, daughter of Rail Operator Gladis E. Nuila, graduated from Mt. San Antonio College with an AA, Psychology, honor roll student.

Yasmeen I Andrade, daughter of Rail Operator Gladis E. Nuila, graduated from Walnut High School, "Best of the Best" National award.

Jennifer Angulo, daughter of Bus Operator Carlos Angulo, graduated from Citrus College with an AS in Social Behavior Sciences and an AA in Cosmetology.

Karla Angulo, daughter of Bus Operator Carlos Angulo, graduated from Cal Poly Pomona with a BA in Communications.

Angela Arreola, daughter of Master Mechanic Albert Arreola Semadeni, graduated from Etiwanda High School, Cum Laude Society, Golden State Seal Merit Diploma, GPA Academic Honors.

Brian Astredo, son of Fleet Management and Support Services Manager Patrick Astredo, graduated from Loyola Marymount University with a BA in Communications.

Patrick Astredo, Fleet Management and Support Services Manager, graduated from the University of Phoenix with a BA in Business, Magna

Cum Laude.

Angelo Atienza, son of Management Audit Services Senior Auditor Willie Atienza, graduated from Don Bosco College of Science and Technology with an AS, Power and Transportation, First honors, second in class.

John Phillip Autry, II, son of Storekeeper John Autry, Sr., graduated from Fairfax High School.

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B

Maria E. Barbosa, daughter of Mechanic "A" Jose A. Barbosa, graduated from Norwalk High School.

Maribel E. Barbosa, daughter of Mechanic "A" Jose A. Barbosa, graduated from Norwalk High School.

Brooklyn Beckwith, daughter of Bus Operator Veronica Beckwith, graduated from Victor Valley High School, Honor Roll student, College Bound program scholar.

Joel O'Neal Bell, son of San Gabriel Valley Sector Service Director Delandrea McDaniels, graduated from Wilmer Amina Carter High School.

Wayne Bryant Bergeron, Administrative Analyst, graduated from University of Redlands with an MA in Management, Whitehead Leadership Society.

Nicholas Blake, son of Service Performance Schedule Checker Holly Blake, graduated from CSU Fullerton with a BA in Psychology.

Ri'Nesha Blue, daughter of Bus Operator Shemika Blue, graduated from Norwalk High School.

Danielle Boutier, Director, Communication Services, graduated from USC with an MA in Communication Management.

Bridget Nicole Bozeman, daughter of Benefits Technician Brenda Bozeman, graduated from Junipero Serra High School in Gardena.

Barbara Burns, Assistant Manager, Transit Safety Education, Community Relations, graduated from CSU Los Angeles with an MS in Public Administration, with honors.

Cindy Butalia, Customer Information Agent, graduated from CSU Los Angeles with a BA in Liberal Studies.

Martha Butler, Transportation Planning Manager IV, graduated from CSU Los Angeles with an MS in Public Administration.

Tara Butler, daughter of Transportation Planning Manager IV Martha Butler, graduated from UC San Diego.

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C

Ana Luisa Katigbak Cabrales, daughter of Accounting Supervisor Sonny Cabrales, graduated from Rio Hondo College with a BS in Nursing, College Scholar.

Phillip Cano, son of Service Attendant Cheryl Rakisits, graduated from Crescenta Valley High School in La Crescenta.

Eddie Martin Carter, son of Bus Operator Venetta A. Carter, graduated from California Tech High School.

Casey D. Cervantes, daughter of Rail Transportation Operations Supervisor Esperanza Diosdado, graduated from Glendora High School.

Ricardo J. Chairez, son of Pension and Benefits Technician Rudy Chairez, graduated from Alta Loma High School in Rancho Cucamonga.

Michele Chau, Recording Secretary, Board Administration, graduated from CSU Long Beach with a Masters of Public Policy/Administration, Outstanding Graduate Student Award, 4.0 GPA Award.

Bianca Suzanne Collins, daughter of Procurement Purchase Contract Manager Brian J. Collins, graduated from Chaminade College Preparatory in West Hills.

Angela B. Cox, daughter of Acting TOS Richard D. Cox, graduated from Westchester High School.

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D

Christopher Dames, son of Deputy Executive Officer Roger F. Dames, graduated from Massachusetts Institute of Technology with a Ph.D in Mechanical Engineering.

Molly Dames, daughter of Deputy Executive Officer Roger F. Dames, graduated from UC Santa Cruz with a Masters of Education.

Britney Daniels, daughter of Rail TOS Joe Daniels and Schedule Checker Cheron Anthony, graduated from Taft High School in Woodland Hills, Honor Roll.

Nicole Day, daughter of RFS Supervisor Ronald Green, graduated from Richard Gar High School in Cerritos, High Honors, Cerritos College Honors Society, Who's Who of American High School Students, full scholarship to UC Berkeley.

Grace C. De Guzman, daughter of Senior Accountant Silverio A. De Guzman, Jr., graduated from UC San Diego with an MD in Emergency Medicine.

Angelica Diana DePompa, daughter of Office of the CEO Executive Secretary Rubi DePompa, graduated from Schurr High School in Montebello.

Brian Christopher Dominguez, son of Senior Real Estate Officer Diane Dominguez, graduated from Don Bosco Technical Institute and High School.

Brian Anthony Douglas, son of Senior Risk Analyst Bill Douglas, graduated from Monrovia High School.

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E

Angelo Erese, Financial Analyst, Treasury, graduated from University of La Verne with an MBA in Finance and International Business.

Albert Escarcega, Digital Systems Technician, ITS, graduated from Azusa Pacific University with a BS in Computer Information Systems.

Lisa Marie Esquivel, daughter of Operations Central Instruction TOS Brenda Esquivel, graduated from Azusa Pacific University with a BA in Human Development.

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F

Alexis T. Fenderson, daughter of Bus Operator Stephanie Rhodes, graduated from Antelope Valley College with an AA in Liberal Arts.

Weihua Feng, Research and Development Intern, graduated from USC with an MA in Public Administration.

Timothy Finn, son of Gateway Cities Service Sector Administrative Analyst Donna Finn, graduated from Cal Poly Pomona with an MA in Urban and Regional Planning.

Karen Fitzgerald, daughter of Maintenance Specialist Bruce Fitzgerald, graduated from St. Bernard High School in Playa Del Rey, President's Education Award, Diploma with Honors, UC Riverside Honors Program.

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G

Oscar Gamboa, Jr., son of Equipment Records Specialist Oscar C. Gamboa, Sr., graduated from the Los Angeles Police Academy.

Autumn Gayles, daughter of Equipment Maintenance Supervisor Ernest Gayles, graduated from Pasadena High School.

Stephan Gayles, son of Equipment Maintenance Supervisor Ernest Gayles, graduated from Palmdale High School.

Phillip Michael Garcia, son of Bus Operators Phil Garcia and Judy Garcia, graduated from Schurr High School in Montebello.

Ryan Gephart, son of Regional Transit Planning Director Rex Gephart, graduated from Yale University with an MS in Computer Science and Economics, Magna Cum Laude.

Ryan Anthony Griffen, son of Maintenance Instructor Darryl Griffen, graduated from Montebello High School.

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Angela Therese Guevara, daughter of Payroll Clerk Edwin Guevara, graduated from Cal Poly Pomona with a BS in Business Administration, Finance Real Estate and Business Law.

Carla Therese Guevara, daughter of Payroll Clerk Edwin Guevara, graduated from Holy Family High School.

Gabriel Guillen, Bus Operator, graduated from UCLA with a BA in Sociology.

Angelina Cristine Guterrez, daughter of Materiel Supervisor Dino Gutierrez, graduated from Nogales High School.

Noah Dino Gutierrez, son of Materiel Supervisor Dino Gutierrez, graduated from UCLA with a BA in Anthropology.

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H

Adrienne Higbee, daughter of Bus Operator Robert Higbee, graduated from Moorpark College High School. **Marcia A. Howard**, daughter of Bus Operator Lourdes M. Pagan, graduated from Paramount High School.

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J

Kelley Jackson, Administrative Intern, Research and Development, graduated from UCLA with an MA in Urban Planning.

Tom Jasmin, Director, Bus Operations Control, graduated from CSU Los Angeles with an MS in Public Administration.

Amy Vanessa Jimenez, daughter of Bus Operator Gabriel Jimenez, graduated from San Gabriel Mission High School, National Honor Society, Service Leadership award.

Gregory L. Johnson, son of Service Attendant Leader Karen L. Hall, graduated from UCLA with a BA in African-American Studies.

Donte Lamar Jones, son of Bus Operator Sonja Jones, graduated from Gardena High School.

Paula J. Jurado, Administrative Intern, Diversity and Economic Opportunity and daughter of TOS Martin Jurado and TOS Fransica Montes-Jurado, graduated from CSU Long Beach with a BA in Anthropology.

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K

Jenna Kachour, Administrative Intern, Central Area Team, graduated from USC with a BS in Policy, Management and Planning, Dean's Letter of Merit, Presidential Scholar, Town and Gown Scholar.

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L

Courtney Lancton, daughter of Risk Management Administrative Aide Bernadette Wesley, graduated from John Muir High School in Pasadena.

Jeanette C. Lee, daughter of Rail Operator Michael E. Lee, graduated from Lancaster High School.

Michael E. Lee, Jr., son of Rail Operator Michael E. Lee, graduated from Grizzly Youth Academy.

Anna Lonyai, daughter of Maintenance Manager Frank Lonyai, graduated from Harvard University with a BA in Neurobiology, Magna Cum Laude.

Christopher Ian Lopez, son of Procurement Contract Administrator Leonardo M. Lopez, graduated from UCLA with a BS in Biochemistry.

Denise C. Lozano, daughter of Mechanic "A" Jaime D. Lozano, graduated from West Covina High School, Honor Roll student.

Diane Ly, daughter of Electronic Communications Technician Buu Ngoc Ly, graduated from UC Riverside with a BS in Business Administration.

John Ly, son of Service Attendant Leader Van Ly, graduated from UC Davis with an MA in Law.

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M

Ayisha Macias, daughter of Facilities Maintenance Supervisor Isabel Sanchez, graduated from UCLA with a BA in History.

Heaven Leigh Maddox, daughter of Logistics Receiving Clerk Anthony P. Maddox, graduated from Wilson High School, San Luis Obispo.

Terry Martin, son of Equipment Records Specialist Les Candler-Martin, graduated from Long Beach Polytechnic High School.

James P. Martinez, son of Weld Shop Leadman Phil Martinez, graduated from UC Riverside with a BA in Political Science.

Alex Matias, son of Human Resources Supervisor Emily Matias, graduated from Quartz Hill High School, Valedictorian.

Justin McWhorter, son of Revenue Senior Supervisor Beverly Williams, graduated from Rialto High School, AVID.

Jessica Meaney, Administrative Intern, Customer Programs and Services, graduated from CSU Long Beach with an MS in Urban Sociology.

Melody Yolanda Medina, daughter of Mopper/Waxer Yolanda Becerra, graduated from CSU Los Angeles with a BA in Criminal Justice.

Marc R. Mendoza, son of Senior Administrative Analyst Annette Mendoza, graduated from Canyon High School in Anaheim.

Oscar O. Mendoza, Jr., son of Mail Carrier Oscar O. Mendoza, Sr., graduated from Monroe High School in North Hills.

Sarah D. Mills, daughter of Assistant Treasurer Donna R. Mills, graduated from Harvard-Westlake High School in North Hollywood, National Merit Scholar.

Ashley Molina, Administrative Intern, Community Relations, graduated from USC with BA in International Relations and a BS in Public Policy, Management and Planning.

Caroline Moreno, daughter of Rail TOS Hector Moreno, graduated from Gahr High School in Cerritos.

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N

Corey James Newman, son of Non-Revenue Rail Mechanic James Newman, graduated from Cresenta Valley High in La Cresenta, John Phillip Sousa Award, Community Service Award.

James Nicasio, son of Controller Josie Nicasio, graduated from Loyola High School.

O

Michelle Lauren Ortiz, daughter of Executive Secretary Margarita Ortiz, graduated from Cal Poly Pomona with a BA, International Business, and a BA, Marketing.

P

Edward R. Perez, son of Bus Operator Eduardo A. Perez, graduated from UC Riverside with a BA in Political Science.

Stephanie R. Perez, daughter of Bus Operator Eduardo A. Perez, graduated from UC Riverside with a BA in Mathematics.

Jessica N. Portis, daughter of Service Attendant Darrell Portis, graduated from Garey High School in Pomona.

Kathleen Prater, daughter of Customer Information Agent Diana Prater, graduated from Granada Hills Charter School, Honor Roll.

Shawnita C. Preyer, daughter of Bus Operator Estralletta Wilson, graduated from CSU Northridge with a BS in Biology, Dean's List.

Michael Aaron Price, son of Senior Communications Officer Yvonne Price, graduated from Los Alamitos High School.

Elizabeth Pulido, Administrative Intern, Contract Compliance, Diversity & Economic Opportunity, graduated from Loyola Marymount University with a BA in Sociology, Outstanding Service Medal for Mock Trail.

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Q

Marisa Quintanar, daughter of Los Angeles City Fire Dept. Battalion Chief John L. Quintanar, graduated from University of Massachusetts at Amherst with a BA in English, Cum Laude.

R

Martin Reyes, son of Bus Operator Gloria Arzu, graduated from Woodrow Wilson High School in Los Angeles.

Maria E. Rodriguez, wife of Mechanic A Leader Johnny Rodriguez, graduated from Cerritos Community College with an AA in pharmacy technology.

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S

Clarissa A. Salazar, daughter of Bus Operator Lorena Arellano, graduated from Garfield High School.

Joel Sanchez, husband of Human Resources Employment Services Clerk Leticia L. Felix-Sanchez, graduated from Pasadena City College with an AS in Radiology.

Leticia L. Felix-Sanchez, Human Resources Employment Services Clerk graduated from Cal Poly Pomona with a BS in Human Resources.

Nicholas Alexander Sanchez, son of ITS Senior Secretary Rose Ann Sanchez, graduated from Mt. San Antonio College with an AA in Natural Sciences and an AA in Social Behavior Science, Alpha Gamma Sigma, Phi Theta Kapa, National Society of Honors Program.

Sherwin Sanchez, son of Mechanic "A" Jesus Sanchez, graduated from Cal Poly Pomona High School.

Corinne L. Santos, daughter of Senior Accountant Danny A. Santos, graduated from UCLA as an MSN, Family Nurse Practitioner.

Kosala Seneviratne, daughter of Bus Operator Srilal Seneviratne, graduated from CSU Northridge with a BSC in Accountancy/Business Administration.

Joshua David Serrano, son of Non-Revenue Rail Mechanic Leader Roger Serrano, graduated from Diamond Bar High School.

Peter Brian Serrano, Jr., son of Accountant Peter Serrano, Sr., graduated from South Pasadena High School.

Jennifer Shelburne, daughter of Rail Service Development Manager Bruce Shelburne, graduated from CSU Channel Islands with a BA in Liberal Studies, Cum Laude, Program Honors, Liberal Studies Department.

Christopher Scott Shelton, son of Passenger Relations Representative Monica Macon, graduated from Fairfax High School.

Ashley Gladys Sheppard, daughter of TOS Jural J. Sheppard, graduated from Orville Wright High School in Los Angeles.

Amy Shimamoto, daughter of Mechanic "A" Glenn Shimamoto, graduated from Schurr High School in Montebello.

Anthony Simiele, Mechanic "A", graduated from CSU Bakersfield with a BS in Economics.

Denise Marie Silva, daughter of Executive Secretary Elizabeth Silva, graduated from UCLA with a BA in Political Science.

Reina V. Slutske, Communications Intern, graduated from CSU Fullerton with a BA in Communications, Golden Key Honors Society.

Damian C. Spells, daughter of Administration and Financial Services Manager Myrine White, graduated from Pacific Lutheran High School in Torrance.

David Sutton, Jr., son of Director of Metro Commute Services David Sutton, Sr., graduated from Brethren Christian High School in Huntington Beach.

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T

John Tena, son of Service Attendant Frances Hammond, graduated from Cerritos College with an AA in Electronics, High Honors.

Ron Michael Terrazas, son of Property Maintainer A Leader Ronny E. Terrazas, graduated from Don Bosco Technical Institute with an AS in Power and Transportation.

Andrew Trujillo, son of TOS Gabriela Higueros, graduated from Gamesha High School in Pomona, Superior Cadet Award and Purple Heart in Leadership, JROTC.

Pamela Tu, daughter of Transportation Planning Manager III Kathy Banh, graduated from Arcadia High School.

Andrey Tucker-Wells, son of Bus Operator Jimmy Sullivan, graduated from Wilson High School.

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V

George A. Vargas, son of Mecharic Leader Julio Vargas, graduated from Lancaster High School.

W

Sarah R. Wielandt, daughter of Procurement Buyer Henry J. Wielandt, graduated from South Hills High School in Covina, All-League Scholar, President's Outstanding Academic Achievement Award.

Larry Willis, husband of Facilities Engineering/Maintenance Analyst Renee C. Willis, graduated from Azusa Pacific University with an MA in Education.

Sarah Winfrey, Communications Intern, graduated from Cal State

Fullerton with a BA in Communications.

Victoria Woods-Jenkins, Senior Community Relations Officer, graduated with an MA in Organizational Management.

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X

Zhefei Xiong, Administrative Intern, Diversity and Economic Opportunity Department, graduated from USC with a Masters in Planning.

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Y

Jonathan Peter Yanez, son of Mechanic "A" Leadman Pete Yanez, graduated from El Rancho High School.

Durwood Yee, Stops and Zones Supervisor, graduated from CSU Los Angeles with an MS in Public Administration.

Lisa Patricia Hawk Young, daughter of Office of Board Secretary Administrative Aide Joanne Harper, graduated from Woodbury University with an MBA in Finance.

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Z

Thomas Zhao, Engineer, Rail Fleet Services, graduated from Cal Poly Pomona with an MBA in Management.

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Mayor of Los Angeles Antonio Villaraigosa conducts last meeting of his term as Board Chairman June 22.



Photos by Deniz Durmus

Mayor Villaraigosa Passes Board's Gavel to Supervisor Molina

- He praises Metro staff and cites year's accomplishments

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(June 23, 2006) "It's been fun," Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa told fellow Board members, Thursday, as he presided over his final meeting as chairman of the 13-member panel.



Mayor Villaraigosa praises Metro staff and cites year's accomplishments during the session.

"I have a great affection for this agency and the people who work in it," he said. "I recognize that they often work under trying circumstances; they really do a good job."

CEO Roger Snoble thanked Villaraigosa on behalf of the staff "for your leadership and for all the hard work that you've put into the agency...your attention to the MTA has been very much appreciated."

In July, Supervisor Gloria Molina will begin a one-year term as Board chair. Director Pam O'Connor will be 1st vice chair and Villaraigosa will move into place as 2nd vice chair.

In his remarks, the mayor enumerated more than a dozen Metro accomplishments during his term as Board chairman. They included improved

transit security measures, new Metro Rapid service, the opening of the Metro Orange Line, the start of tunneling on the Eastside Extension and the beginning of the Exposition Line project.

He also noted that an independent panel of experts has concluded that a Wilshire extension of the subway could be built and operated safely. A separate analysis showed that a downtown connector would improve rail system ridership and link rail lines that don't currently connect, he said.



County Supervisor Gloria Molina, center right, begins a one-year term as Board chair in July. (Gayle Anderson photo)

"I look forward to continuing to work with the Board and the staff to focus on transportation and to address the need for more public transit," Villaraigosa said. "(We need)...to keep a first-class bus system, which I agree has to be a priority, but also to have a multi-modal system."



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Former Bus Operator Enters Guilty Plea to Workers’ Comp Fraud

By PAM MURANO

(June 23, 2006) Former Metro Bus Operator Demita Carter entered a guilty plea to misdemeanor insurance fraud, last week, and was fined and ordered to perform community service.

Carter’s plea will be considered final if she completes at least 125 hours of the mandatory 250 hours of court-ordered community service and pays at least half of the \$2,748 in restitution ordered by the court no later than Sept. 13, the date of her sentencing hearing.

If she fails to meet those conditions by the sentencing date, her plea will revert back to a felony conviction.

Carter was arrested Nov. 1, 2005 and charged with two counts of Workers’ Compensation insurance fraud and one count of presenting a fraudulent claim.

The staff at Crossroads Depot Division 2 played an active role in securing Carter’s guilty plea by attending court hearings in support of Metro throughout the judicial process.



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A large forklift begins easing a new office unit onto steel plates protecting a sidewalk at the Metro San Fernando Valley site in Chatsworth.



Photos courtesy of Doyle Flock

SFV Service Sector Office Sees Sudden Space Expansion



(June 23, 2006) The San Fernando Valley Service Sector office experienced a sudden expansion of space on Monday, when four large office trailer sections were hauled onto the Chatsworth property.

Added to an existing triple-wide, the new 12-foot by 70-foot office trailers will provide space for as many as 30 Sheriff's deputies and eight fare inspectors, along with 13 Metro transportation operations supervisors and an assistant transportation manager.



The need for extra office space became apparent last October following the opening of the Metro Orange Line when the number of Sheriff's deputies and fare inspectors was expanded.

Once utilities are hooked up and a hallway is completed to connect the



new and existing offices, they will provide space for employee lockers, weapons storage, desks and computers and a conference room.

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Court Affirms Metro’s \$5.2 Million Judgment Against Subcontractor

(June 23, 2006) In a ruling Thursday, the Court of Appeal affirmed Metro’s judgment for \$5.2 million against a Metro Red Line subcontractor for violation of the California False Claims Act.

Oved & Associates, Pinhas Oved and their principals subcontracted under many of the contractors, such as Tutor-Saliba-Perini and Kajima Ray/Wilson, during the Red Line construction project. Oved sued Kajima for contract damages and Kajima sued Metro to recover any damages that Kajima might owe Oved.

After investigating Oved’s claims and finding them false, Metro then sued Oved for violation of the California False Claims Act.

During the course of trial preparation, Metro requested Oved’s electronic accounting files in an effort to prove that the company’s claims were false. Oved’s employees destroyed the evidence before it could be reviewed.

Metro then asked the court to terminate Oved’s case, due to willful destruction of evidence, and requested an entry of judgment in favor of the agency.

The Court of Appeal granted the request for termination and judgment was entered against Oved for \$5.2 million.





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Metro Rail Celebration - 2006



Honored for their second-place standing in the maintenance event at the 2006 APTA International Rail Rodeo were, from left, rail maintenance specialists Rafaele Mastrangelo, Ronnie Burt and Eric Czintos and their coach, Russell Homan. Joining them are, rear row, Deputy Executive Officer Dave Kubicek and General Manager Gerald Francis. Below, Metro Rail Rodeo 2006 winner, Operator Vicky Maes-Melendez, center right, also led Metro's operator team at the APTA Internationals. With her, from left, are Deputy Executive Officer Melvin Clark, Rail TOS Esther Pippins and General Manager Gerald Francis. Not shown is Maes-Melendez's teammate, Tu Phan, or Robert Rodriguez, who placed third in the local event.



Photos by Bill Heard

Metro's Rail Celebration Was Fun for the Whole Family
By Sarah Winfrey and Reina V. Slutske

(June 26, 2006) Metro Employees and their families enjoyed a day in the sun, last Saturday, at Metro's Rail Operations Celebration at Division 20.



"I will repeat!" Rail Operator Vicky Maes-Melendez shouts as she celebrates her win in this year's Metro Rail Rodeo.

Families enjoyed presentations by the Los Angeles Fire Department, Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, and the "Just Us" Motorcycle Club. Lunch was provided by El Cholo Restaurant.

Local winners of the 2006 Metro Rail Rodeo were announced and given plaques for their participation and for representing Metro at the APTA International Rail Rodeo in New York City.

Taking second place in the maintenance competition at the International event were rail maintenance specialists Ronny Burt, Eric Czintos and Rafaele Mastrangelo.

Rail operators Vicky Maes-Melendez and Tu Phan, who competed in the operators' event at the Internationals, and local Rodeo runnerup, Robert Rodriguez, also

were honored during the family day celebration.

Division 20 employees and supervisors got involved in preparing the yard for festivities, which were open to all Metro employees and their families.



Chivas soccer team cheerleaders Jessica, left, and Violeta sign autographs for the kids.

'Brings us all together'

"It's worth it because it brings together all of us together," said Victor Valenzuela, a rail operations supervisor at Division 20.

The "Just Us" club brought their bikes in for a classic motorcycle show and competition. The club has 50 members, 15 of whom are Metro employees, including Arnold Johnson, vice resident and one of the seven founding members of the club.

The female members of the "Just Us" Motorcycle Club are, front row from left, Kendra Bruce, Cindy Johnson, Stephanie Lee and Betty Davis. Back row, from left, Ann Matulin, Helen Taylor and Artlette Murray.



"It's about enjoying life," Johnson said of the club, which rides to places like Reno, Mexico and Las Vegas.

The audience chose the winners of the motorcycle competition by a show of hands. In first place was Lorenzo "Shorty Mac" Belser; second place, Helen "Lady Teal" Taylor; and in third place Gabriel Pedraza.



Damion Joe Moore, 4, son of Valerie Harrison-Boyer of Community Relations, and, at right, Nicholas Martinez, 7, son of Signal Inspector Rafael Martinez, get a firefighter lesson from fireman Steve Lopez of LA City Fire Department Battalion 1, Fire Station 9.

The Sheriff' Department brought a helicopter and a Sheriff' Camaro patrol car for the kids to sit in; and a Segway human transporter for people to ride. Two dogs from the Sheriff's Department, Debra and Hero, as well as Metro Security's dog, General Grant, came along to visit as well.



It was a warm, sunny day for the Metro Rail Operations Celebration.

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Backed by Board members, labor union leaders and Metro officials, Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa announced a tentative agreement in labor negotiations.



Photo by Luis Inzunza

Metro, Three Labor Unions Reach Tentative Contract Agreement

- Mayor credits new 'interest-based negotiation' process for early agreement
- Proposals to be presented to union membership for ratification
- Board expected to approve pacts at July 27 meeting

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(June 27, 2006) Metro has reached tentative agreements with its three largest labor unions, the UTU, ATU and TCU, following a bargaining period that marks what was called "a better way to approach negotiations in the City of Los Angeles."

Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa announced the tentative agreements – the first in at least 18 years to be reached before current union contracts expired – at a Tuesday afternoon news conference on Patsaouras Plaza.

"There are hundreds of thousands of Angelenos who rely on mass transit each and every day," said a jubilant Villaraigosa. "And I can tell them that the buses will continue to roll and the trains will keep on running without interruption."

"These negotiations were concluded in a way that respects that we have a structural deficit and were within the authorization given by the Board

of Directors," Villaraigosa said.

The unions are expected to present the tentative agreements to their membership for ratification very soon. The agreements will be presented to the Board of Directors in a closed session later this week. If ratified by the unions, final approval of the agreements by the Board is expected at its next regular meeting on July 27.

Backing the mayor at the news conference were union leaders, members of the Board of Directors, CEO Roger Snoble and Deputy CEO John Catoe, Metro's chief labor negotiator. Local TV, radio and print reporters gathered to hear the announcement.

'Backbone of vital services'

"Throughout all this, I never lost sight of the fact that the men and women who work at the MTA are the backbone of the vital transportation services that we provide," the mayor said. "It's our operators, our mechanics, our service attendants – all of the people who are involved in making sure our transportation system is running on time – that we have to thank today."

The mayor credited the "interest based negotiation" approach used for the first time by Metro and its unions. During negotiations, both sides focused first on understanding each others interests and then worked together to develop mutually agreeable solutions.

"By working together in a partnership, we've reached an accord that is both fair to our employees and fiscally responsible to (Metro)," Villaraigosa said. He thanked management and union negotiating teams "for their collaboration and their commitment to resolving" the labor agreements.

"Today marks the start of a better way to approach negotiations in the City of Los Angeles," the mayor said.

Commenting on the new approach, incoming Board chair Supervisor Gloria Molina said, "I am so very impressed with the outcome," and she thanked the union leaders and the management negotiating team for their efforts to wrap up the negotiations early. "It has been a win-win."

"We certainly didn't want to repeat the mistakes of the past, so we embarked on a new process to reach agreement in a positive way and avoid any disruption in service," said Snoble. "I'm very proud of the union leadership and the Metro management team. These new agreements give us the ability to continue the momentum of the last six months, during which Metro has gained substantial new ridership, and continue to improve mobility for the region."

In brief remarks to the media, the heads of all three unions indicated the tentative agreements would be presented, soon, to their respective memberships.

'A good package'

"We got a good package for our members," said UTU General Chairman James Williams. "We're glad this is over and done with and we will be presenting the agreement to our members for ratification."

"The new negotiating process worked well and benefited from professional, credible, and creative individuals at the table," said ATU Local 1277 President Neil Silver. "I'm very happy."

Happy about having just completed negotiation of her fifth labor contract with Metro, Olivia Nelson, division chair of TCU Local 1315, said she is "very relieved to have reached agreement so early. I'm pretty proud (of the agreement) and I think my members are going to be very pleased."

Speaking on behalf of Metro's negotiating team, Catoe said, "We built trust between the negotiating teams and we were able to resolve issues."

"Today is a great victory for the customers of the MTA," he added.
"Today is great day for the employees...because they can focus on the jobs they must do in providing mobility in Los Angeles County. Today is a great day for the relationship between labor and management."

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Consultant Jeff Klompus demonstrates how Metro employees use the TAP validator during testing of the UFS system. The equipment will help track travel patterns, recording the time, location and which bus or rail line an employee boarded.



The screen on the TAP validator signals, "Go," when an employee ID badge touches the circular target.

Time to Start TAPPING – Employees Asked to Test TAP Machines

- A 'culture change' from flashing badges to tapping them

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(June 28, 2006) Admit it. You've been ignoring the TAP machines when you enter a Metro Rail station or board a Metro Bus. Maybe you haven't even noticed them.

Well, it's time to start TAPPING. All Metro employees and others who are currently eligible for Metro transit benefits are being asked to participate in a pilot test of the "smart card" system before it is expanded to include customers.

TAP – Transit Access Pass – is the branded regional smart card that will be used with Metro's new Universal Fare System (UFS).

Beginning now, Metro ID badge holders should get in the habit of tapping their ID badge on the blue target positioned at the top of the validators, ticket vending machines or fare boxes whenever they enter a station or board a bus.

Metro Bus operators will be instructed to ask all Metro ID badge holders to tap their badges on the onboard validator, rather than just showing them to the operator for a visual inspection. The automated validation is intended to help relieve operators from having to be fare enforcers.

Human Resources is currently working to convert dependent and retiree ID badges to be "TAP-enabled." Some 30,000 new badges will be distributed to dependents and retirees this fall with instructions about tapping the badges on a validator.

3,200 validators total

Every Metro Rail station and every Metro Bus is now equipped with the TAP validators, a total of 3,200 machines in all. The new UFS equipment will record each TAP and will note whether the transaction was by an employee, a dependent or other eligible person.

TAP project manager Jane Matsumoto is asking Metro ID badge holders to assist in making sure the validator machines are working properly and that the data is being accurately recorded by the central computer system.

Employees should report to Matsumoto any TAP validator that fails to recognize their ID badge or a machine that seems to take too long to note a transaction, flashes an error message or beeps to indicate a failed tap.

"This will give us an opportunity to start a transition from paper transit passes to smart cards," she says, noting that the demonstration will be expanded later this year to include about 7,000 institutional, business and annual passholders.

In addition to collecting electronic fares, the TAP machines will provide data that – when the program is in revenue service – will give Metro valuable information about its ridership.

'Identify all rider categories'

"The equipment will be able to identify all rider categories," says Matsumoto, "whether they are students, seniors, employees, regular adult riders or a zone rider – all the fare categories we have."

Other types of Metro passes will be phased into the UFS system over the next several years. "In order to ensure we are ready and the equipment is working for the public, our Metro employees are critical to assessing the reliability of the system," says Matsumoto.

Eventually, the TAP program also will be expanded to include buses operated by a dozen local municipal transit agencies that are Metro's partners in the smart card system. All TAP transactions will feed into a regional customer service center that is expected to open in late 2007 and will be located somewhere in downtown LA.

In the meantime, Metro employees, dependents, retirees and others should get accustomed to tapping their badges.

“Beginning now, we’re trying to change our culture,” says Matsumoto.
“We have to change our practice from just flashing our badges to tapping them.”

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With exceptional skill, Operator Eric Davis was able to bring the bus safely to a halt at the bottom of the embankment before helping his three passengers back up to the road.



Photos by Bill Heard and Frank Cecere

Operator's Driving Skill Keeps Patrons Safe as Bus Plunges Down Embankment

- Passenger calls Eric Davis a hero following head-on collision in Pico Rivera
- Crash kills one, critically injures two in oncoming car

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(June 29, 2006) One grateful passenger called him a hero. Others praised his skill in keeping his bus upright as it careened down a steep, boulder-strewn embankment moments after an oncoming car struck the coach just before 6 p.m., Wednesday, in Pico Rivera.



Metro Bus Operator Eric Davis

But Eric Davis, 41, a Central Division 1 bus operator with six years' service, told Fox 11 News: "All I can say is, 'Thank God. God is good.'"

Three passengers were onboard the bus as Davis drove south on Rosemead Boulevard in a rural area about a mile south of Route 60. Witnesses said a silver Chevrolet, northbound on Rosemead, suddenly swerved into the southbound lane and hit the bus head-on.

A young male passenger in the Chevrolet was killed in the collision and the male driver and another young man were critically injured and helicoptered to County-USC Hospital.

Two of the three passengers on Davis' bus were slightly injured and transported to a nearby hospital.



Metro field equipment technicians inspect the damaged bus as it sits at the bottom of the embankment off Rosemead Boulevard. It required two large tow trucks to winch the bus back up the embankment and onto Rosemead Boulevard.



Called Davis a hero

The third passenger, Gloria Urbina apparently was unhurt and told Fox News, "The bus go all the way down and I am safe. And I think God, you know, protect me." She called Davis a hero.

After bouncing and scraping over boulders as it hurtled diagonally down the 150-foot embankment, the bus came to rest right-side-up with Davis still at the wheel. He and the passengers were able to get off the bus and climb back up to the road.

"He did an absolutely fantastic job," said Tom Mattocks, Division 1 assistant transportation manager, who went to the scene of the accident. "It takes an incredible amount of skill to keep one of those buses upright while driving over loose boulders. And a lot of good luck."

Tom Jasmin, director of

Operations Control, also was at the scene and was amazed that Davis was able to maintain control of the bus. "Then, to lead those passengers up that rocky hillside. That was heroic."

It took two large tow trucks to winch the bus back up the embankment, an operation that ended about 11 p.m. The accident scene cleared about 20 minutes later.



Firefighters and local media responded to the accident scene.



The Line 265 bus, shown here after it was recovered, was struck on the left front by the oncoming car.


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Metro Distributes 31,000 Orange Line Safety DVDs in the Valley

- Videos include safety, security and parking information

By DAVE SOTERO

(June 29, 2006) Metro has mailed a new interactive DVD presentation about Metro Orange Line traffic safety to more than 30,000 residents within a mile radius of the transitway.

An additional 1,000 DVDs also were given to nearby schools, libraries and community groups in the San Fernando Valley.

The presentation, which features messages from local officials, urges drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists to heed all traffic precautions to ensure the safe operation of the 60-foot articulated buses through the 36 intersections along the 14-mile alignment.

Produced by Metro Community Relations, the presentation is available in both English and Spanish. Viewers can click on each station on an interactive transitway map to get a driver's-eye view of traffic safety unique to that station.

"Please do not shortcut your safety," Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa says in the presentation. "Pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists must pay extra attention to all traffic signs and signals when approaching the Orange Line intersection."

Other public officials featured in the video include Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky and Los Angeles City Councilwoman Wendy Greuel.

Many safety measures

Metro and LADOT have installed many safety measures to help ensure safe travel for everyone along the Metro Orange Line alignment.

Most recently, the agency has ordered the installation of photo enforcement cameras at about a dozen intersections to deter people from running red lights.

The number of traffic incidents due to drivers running red lights has decreased precipitously since the line's opening last year, but the public's continued cooperation is required to avoid future traffic incidents.

The presentation also shows customers how to operate Metro's ticket vending machines, and provides an overview of station security, including video surveillance cameras, public assistance emergency callboxes and electronic message signs.

Viewers can visit – virtually at least – Bus Operations Control to learn how the agency monitors activity at Metro Orange Line stations.

The presentation also shows the locations of all parking lots and provides directions and entry points for accessing them.

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Open House at Expo Construction Authority Headquarters

(July 30, 2006) -Los Angeles City Councilman Bernard Parks and Santa Monica Council Member Pam O'Connor – both Board members – along with Metro employees and others attended an open house, June 28, at the new headquarters of the Exposition Metro Line Construction Authority. Parks is shown here with Construction Authority CEO Rick Thorpe. The Authority's offices are at 707 Wilshire Blvd. Groundbreaking for the first phase of the Exposition Line, which will provide service between downtown LA and Culver City beginning in 2010, is being planned for later in the summer. -- *From Bill Heard*




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Metro at 'Quality-of-Life Crossroads,' Says New Board Chair Gloria Molina

- Metro will continue to build the transit network, Molina says

By KIM UPTON

(June 30, 2006) Los Angeles is at a "quality-of-life crossroads, facing a multitude of challenges," says Supervisor Gloria Molina, who will chair Metro's Board of Directors during FY 2007.



Supervisor Gloria Molina will chair Metro's Board in FY 2007.

Molina assumes the Board chair, July 1, succeeding Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, who is completing his one-year term. Director Pam O'Connor, a Santa Monica City Council member, is the Board's new 1st vice chair, while Villaraigosa will be 2nd vice chair.

"Los Angeles is at a quality-of-life crossroads, facing a multitude of challenges, including too much traffic and gas prices that are putting a serious strain on the budgets of all people – working families in particular," says Molina.

As the Board's new chair, the county supervisor says she will "make sure our growing network of trains and buses and the services that help make our freeways and roads less congested move aggressively forward."

'Continue to build'

"We will continue to build this network through projects like the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension...and through creative ideas like the Metro Rapid network...so that the people who depend on mass transit receive service that just keeps getting better," says Molina. "That will be my mission."

Molina is no stranger to firsts. She was the first Latina to be elected to the California State Legislature, the Los Angeles City Council and the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors.

She was elected to the State Assembly in 1982, to the Los Angeles City Council in 1987 and the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors in 1991. She joined the Metropolitan Transportation Authority Board in 1993.

Prior to being elected to public office, Molina served in the Carter White House as a Deputy for Presidential Personnel. After leaving the White House, she served in San Francisco as a Deputy Director for the Department of Health and Human Services. Currently she serves on the board of directors of the Mexican American Legal Defense and

Educational Fund (MALDEF).

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Sector Governance Council Meetings Scheduled for July

By RICK JAGER

(June 30, 2006) Metro’s service sector governance councils will hold their regular monthly public meetings in July to discuss various transportation issues in their service sectors.

The following is a list of the governance councils’ July meetings.

- San Fernando Valley Service Sector, 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, July 5, Marvin Braude Constituent Service Center, 6262 Van Nuys Blvd. Van Nuys.
- San Gabriel Valley Service Sector, 5 p.m., Tuesday, July 11, San Gabriel Valley Sector Office, 3369 Santa Anita Ave., El Monte.
- Westside/Central Service Sector, 5 p.m., Wednesday, July 12, La Cienega Tennis Center, Sunset Room, 325 S. La Cienega Blvd., Beverly Hills.
- Gateway Service Sector, 2 p.m., Thursday, July 13, The Gas Company, 9240 Firestone Blvd., Downey.
- South Bay Service Sector, 9:30 a.m., Friday, July 14, Carson Community Center, Room 206, 801 E. Carson, Carson.



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A Metro Moment:

Not the Same Old Face on Metro Rail



TA-DA...Click on image for surprise ending.

(June 30, 2006) On most days, mass transit commuters see the same tired faces of fellow passengers as they head for home. So, commuters were startled, Wednesday afternoon, when a brightly dressed character with a bulbous red nose and wearing a yellow, orange and green fright wig scooted across the platform at 7th and Metro dragging a suitcase and a gaggle of balloons. We didn't catch his name, but he's obviously an enthusiastic Metro Rail rider. – *From Bill Heard*

