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Carreening vehicles crash into Wilshire Customer Center.

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Lola's Big Break: Tunneling machine bursts through final segment of the Eastside Extension tunnel.

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A gaggle of princesses and other Halloween sprites gathered in Customer Relations for treats with the Cat in the Hat, also known as Mariano Blanco of the Child Development Center.



Photos by Alonzo Williams

Kids Pick Best Costumes, Most Creative Cubicles at Customer Relations Halloween Party

(Nov. 1, 2006) Dressed in their Halloween finery, some 60 kids turned the tables on the adults, Tuesday, and were the judges of the best costumes and most creative cubicles during Metro Customer Relations' second annual holiday party for children from the Gateway Child Development Center.

Wizard Debbie

Coddington, a Customer Information agent, was in the Halloween spirit – and may have been afraid to look in the mirror – for Tuesday's festivities in Customer



Jackie Exeart’s scarecrow costume was selected as “most original.” Karla Duran as Minnie Mouse and Debra Coddington as a Wizard were “most creative/unique”; Frank Sahlem as a gorilla was “most scary”; and Cindy Butalia, who came as Dorothy from the “Wizard of Oz,” best depicted the theme.

The kids selected cubicles decorated by LaTonya Greathouse, Debra Coddington and Karla Duran for first, second and third prizes, respectively.

“We were so happy to see the kids and many of them remembered us from last year,” said Gail Harvey, director of Customer Relations.

The event was coordinated by the Customer Relations Recognition Committee – Steven Texada, Jackie Exeart, Virginia Sanchez, Diana Prater, Paula Grigsby, Alonzo Williams and Gail Harvey.



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Against a balloon background, Rail Maintenance Specialist Hy Do holds a plaque commemorating his 23 years with Metro. Do was honored at a Oct. 25 retirement luncheon by his co-workers at Division 22.

Hy Do Retires from Metro Rail with 16-Year Safety Record

(Nov. 1, 2006) Hy Do, a Metro Green Line maintenance specialist with a 16-year injury-free record, was honored by co-workers, Metro Rail managers and ATU officials at a retirement party recently.

Beginning his Metro career as a service attendant, Do retired as a rail maintenance specialist with 23 years' service. Over the years, he worked at Crossroads Depot Division 2, Non-Revenue Division 4 and, finally, at Metro Green Line Division 22.



Do and his wife, Ann, cut one of his retirement cakes. Do also received a Metro Corporate Safety Award, signifying his 16 years of injury-free work.

During his retirement luncheon, Rail Fleet Services Manager Edward Smith, noted Do's exemplary work record. Neil Silver, president of ATU

Local 1277, also attended the luncheon along with union officials who presented Do with a silver pocket watch and a \$150 gift certificate.

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Board Approves \$5 Mill. for Solar Panel Project at Division 18

- Agency directed to develop plan for solar at all Metro facilities

By DAVE SOTERO

(Nov. 1, 2006) The Board of Directors has approved \$5 million for a new solar generation project at Division 18 in Carson and has directed the agency to start a comprehensive three-year plan to install solar panels at every bus and rail facility.

The Division 18 solar panels will be installed on the maintenance building rooftop and erected as "shading structures" in the employee parking lot. Some 1,600 solar panels together will generate 417 kilowatts of electricity, enough power to save Metro about \$25,000 per month, or \$300,000 per year.

Scheduled to be completed in September 2007, the system is expected to pay for itself in 10 to 11 years.

A motion by Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and Los Angeles City Councilman Bernard Parks directs Metro to concurrently develop a three-year plan to install solar panels on every feasible Metro facility.

Board to see plan

The plan will detail a schedule, staffing, costs, rebate availability and other project requirements and benefits for future Board consideration. The agency would work in cooperation with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, The Gas Company and Southern California Edison.

"Metro has already proven that it can harness the power of the sun to demonstrate its environmental stewardship and, at the same time, lower its operating costs," said Villaraigosa. "I want to see that commitment extended agencywide, so that Metro can achieve responsible energy management throughout its offices and divisions wherever it is cost-effective."

Metro already has two successful solar panel installations in operator at East Valley Division 15 in Sun Valley and at West Valley Division 8 in Chatsworth. Outfitted last year with a total of 1,648 solar panels, the two divisions are now realizing a savings of about \$160,000 per year in electricity costs.

The project, the largest solar power installation of its kind in the transit industry, produces a combined AC 425 kilowatts of clean, renewable electricity — enough electricity to provide up to 20 percent of each bus division's total energy requirements.

Other Board actions:

- [Item 9, Lankershim Depot Restoration](#)
- [Item 10, Westlake/MacArthur Park Development](#)
- [Item 11, Victory Boulevard Development](#)

The Board also took the following actions during its October meeting:

Item 9, Lankershim Depot Restoration. The Board approved a “life of project” budget of \$3.6 million for restoration of the Lankershim Depot Transit Center in North Hollywood.

The historic train depot will be restored for potential future use as a customer service center, a small café or concession stand, restroom facilities for Metro staff and bike racks. The Lankershim Depot Transit Center would link the Metro Orange and Red Lines, local bus service, the Chandler Bikeway and the neighboring NoHo Arts District.

Item 10, Westlake/MacArthur Park Development. The Board approved a motion authorizing the CEO to enter into a joint development agreement and ground lease for the development of a residential and retail complex on 2.75 acres at the Westlake/MacArthur Park Metro station.

The agreement calls for construction over two phases of 199 affordable apartments, 53,200 square feet of commercial space and a 186-space parking structure with a minimum of 100 spaces for use by Metro riders, employees and contractors during normal service hours.

Under the agreement, the number of apartments eventually could reach 210 and the parking structure could include between 370 and 495 spaces.

Item 11, Victory Boulevard Development. The Board also authorized the CEO to enter a joint development and ground lease agreement with a developer who is proposing to build a 31,000 square foot office building on a 1.9-acre Metro-owned parcel near the Metro Orange Line’s Balboa station.

The property is located along Victory Boulevard, west of Balboa Boulevard and about a half-block from the Orange Line station.


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Annual Benefits Enrollment Begins Nov. 6 for Non-Contract, AFSCME, Teamsters

(Nov. 2, 2006) The annual benefits open enrollment period for non-contract, AFSCME, and Teamster employees is scheduled to begin on Monday, Nov. 6, and will continue through close of business, Friday, Nov. 17.

Employees can complete the enrollment online by accessing the system - from any computer - at <http://fisben.mta.net>. The link is also located in the right-hand column of the myMetro.net home page. The website will be active beginning Monday, Nov. 6, and will continue through close of business, Friday, Nov. 17.

Easy-to-follow instructions are included to explain an employee's unique ID and password.

The online system will allow employees to review current enrollment choices, add, delete, or update dependent information, and make changes to benefit plans for calendar year 2007, if desired.

Employees should pay particular attention to instructions (printed in red), to successfully completing the enrollment.

Some require annual election

If an employee makes no changes, current benefits plans will remain in effect during calendar year 2007, with the exception of the Flex Spending Accounts and the Non-Tobacco Users Life Insurance, both of which require an election each year.

The 2007 Guidebooks, brochures, plan enrollment forms, and links to insurance carrier websites are included on the system. Specific insurance carrier websites require Internet access, and are provided as a convenience, but are not required to complete the enrollment process.

These benefit changes are scheduled for 2007:

Kaiser prescription benefits will change from a \$5 co-pay to \$5 for generic prescriptions and \$10 for brand name prescriptions.

Sun Life Financial is the new carrier for Life Insurance benefits. Current levels of coverage for Employee Life, Spouse Life, and Child life will be automatically carried over to SunLife. If changes are, employees should follow the instructions included on the Online Open Enrollment system.

Employees should print a copy of the Confirmation Statement and retain it as a record. For questions or assistance, employees should contact Vera Neal at 922-7186 or Ed Myatt at 922-7185 of the Pension and Benefits staff.


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New Bike Path Dedicated in Sylmar's San Fernando Road

(Nov. 2, 2006) LA City Councilman Alex Padilla, Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky and other officials gathered, Thursday, to dedicate a 1.8-mile bike path on San Fernando Road in Sylmar.

The paved bike path is located between Roxford and Hubbard streets along the east side of the Metrolink rail line and San Fernando Road.

The bike path is lighted and landscaped, and features bicyclist- and pedestrian-activated push buttons at intersections. As a safety measure, a fence separates the path from the rail line, and improvements have been made to street traffic and railroad signals in the area.

Total cost of the project is \$4.15 million, of which the City of Los Angeles funded 70 percent (\$2.8 million) and Metro funded 30 percent (\$1.3 million).

Possible Shots Fired at 2 Metro Buses on MLK Boulevard

(Nov. 2, 2006) Two Metro buses operating on Martin Luther King Boulevard near Leimert Park were struck, Wednesday, by what may have been shots fired from a high-powered BB gun or pellet gun, police said.

LAPD investigators believe the incident occurred in the vicinity of MLK Boulevard and Roxton Avenue. The windows of the buses were shattered at the point of impact, but no one was hurt on either bus.

No suspects were in custody as of noon Thursday.

The first incident, reported at 9:18 a.m., happened on Line 42. The operator reported damage to several windows. About a minute later, the second incident, in which bus windows were damaged, was reported on Metro Rapid Line 740.

Deputies from the Sheriff's station at Marina Del Rey also responded to the incidents, which is in the LAPD's jurisdiction, according to Sheriff's Lt. Melva Mitchell.

New Gold Line Schedules Save Patrons 5 Minutes

(Nov. 2, 2006) Metro Gold Line trains will run about every 10 minutes during rush periods, according to a new schedule put into operation Oct. 29.

Passengers can also shave additional time off their daily commutes by using the Metro Gold Line Express, which has limited stops. The improvements are the result of Metro Rail Operations system modifications and train control upgrades.

On the new schedules, the run time for Local Service between Sierra Madre Villa and Union Station will drop from 34 minutes to 29 minutes – a five-minute time savings. The new Express Service run time between the two stations also will save riders five minutes, decreasing from 29 minutes to 24 minutes.

On average, passengers can expect to spend 30% less time waiting for Metro Gold Line trains between downtown and Pasadena.



Brochures and icons created by the Metro Design Studio were chosen for publication in *Print Magazine*.

Metro Brochures and Illustrated Icons Featured in Magazine

(Nov. 2, 2006) Metro Design Studio work is being recognized in the November/December 2006 issue of *Print Magazine*, a national publication featuring quality design in printed communications materials.

Metro's series of covers for rider brochures – the System Map, Riders Guide, Destination/Connections, and Bike Map – as well as custom illustrations and icons were included in the magazine's regional design annual under the "Far West" category.

This is the third year *Print Magazine* has selected Metro's design work for publication. More than 25,000 entries were submitted to the magazine.

Previous featured works include Metro's Late Night Campaign, Neighborhood Art Posters and the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension construction poster.

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LAMTA Car 3022 trundles down the R Line tracks on owl service in 1963. The R Line traveled along Whittier Boulevard, through downtown LA and continued west on 3rd Street. Photo by Alan Weeks.



Photos courtesy of Dorothy Payton Gray Library

The 24-Hour City: 100 Years of Owl Transit Service LA

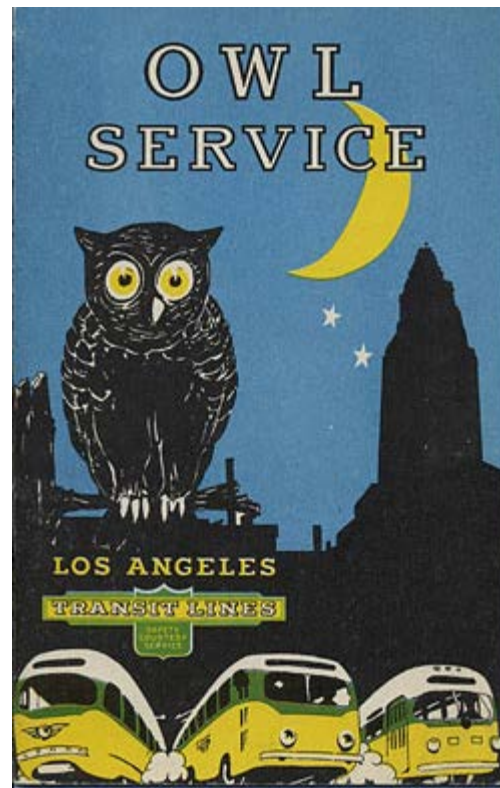
- Streetcars eventually were replaced by motorbuses
- [Metro's Current Owl Service Lines](#): Metro currently operates 60 buses on 25 owl service lines.

By MATT BARRETT

(Nov. 2, 2006) Los Angeles has been a 24-hour city for much longer that most would imagine, and transit service has played an important role in keeping the city moving overnight for 100 years.

According to the September 11, 1906 edition of the *Los Angeles Examiner* newspaper, in a brief article entitled "Owl Cars Are Run on Principal Lines":

The "owl" car service began last night. Cars on the principal lines left First and Spring streets at 1 and 2 o'clock. They were well



This 1947 brochure advertised LAMTA's owl service.

patronized. The lines included are Boyle Heights, Grand Avenue, Vernon Avenue, University, Main Street, and Pico Heights.

At the time service began, these lines linked Downtown with what were then LA's most populated neighborhoods around 6th and Rampart, Central and Slauson, Boyle Heights, 46th and Wesley, Vermont and 54th, and Pico and Wilton.

Owl service continued in operation as the fledgling network of streetcar lines, buses and interurban rail lines was purchased in 1911 and organized into two main transit companies: Pacific Electric, for long-distance interurban service, and Los Angeles Railway serving urban inner city Los Angeles.

As Los Angeles grew outward, so did the length of the lines offering owl service. Special owl service guides were published and system maps included extensive owl service information for passengers.

Even as streetcar service slowly began the conversion to bus service, beginning as early as 1925 and continuing until the last rail line was shut down in 1963, owl service remained a part of the transit system – as it does today.

Currently, Metro has 60 buses running on 25 lines during its overnight owl service, roughly midnight to 5 a.m., connecting Downtown to points north to the San Fernando Valley, south to Long Beach, east to El Monte and west to Santa Monica and Venice.

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Evidence found by Sheriff's detectives at the home of the suspect included Metro route maps and timetables, along with examples of tagger monikers.

Photo courtesy of Transit Services Bureau

LA Man Linked to \$37,000 in Damage to Metro Buses

(Nov. 3, 2006) A Los Angeles man accused of 19 cases of vandalism that caused \$37,000 in damage to Metro buses, was arrested Thursday by detectives from the Sheriff's Transit Services Bureau.

Detectives searching the Serrano Avenue home of Roberto A. Jimenez, 21, turned up evidence depicting his alleged tagging moniker and linking him to a notorious tagging crew. Among the items found were Metro route maps and timetables.

Jimenez is the fifth alleged member of the tagging crew to be arrested by Sheriff's detectives. Deputies Matt Haire and David McAllister led the investigation and made the arrest. Jimenez is being held at the Sheriff's Regional Detention Facility in Lynwood.

Based on the evidence, the Transit Services Bureau expects to conduct additional searches and make more arrests in the case.



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Photo Enforcement Cameras Now Monitor Orange Line Safety

- 24 cameras now installed at 12 intersections in the Valley
- Safety program stresses education, engineering, enforcement

By NED RACINE

(Nov. 3, 2006) They wait patiently in their bland bulletproof cases, almost invisible, high above an intersection. But when a driver cruises through a red traffic signal, the Metro Orange Line photo enforcement cameras snap to attention and photograph the law breaker.

"When we first opened the Orange Line and it became apparent that a handful of motorists were not sensitive to the [Metro Liner] vehicles now crossing their path, we took a three-pronged approach: education, engineering, enforcement," explains Richard Hunt, General Manager of the San Fernando Valley Service Sector.

Metro's Transit Safety education program reached out to residents, schools and businesses along the Orange Line route. Engineering included moving traffic signs and adding "bus coming" signs. The photo enforcement cameras represent the enforcement approach.

"If you've done everything you can to make people around an active transit crossing aware, then obviously enforcement plays a role," Hunt says.

Cameras at the first three Orange Line intersections – Tujunga/Busway, Oxnard/Bufalo and Oxnard/Woodman – became operational on July 18.

3,446 traffic citations

The film cameras and their multiple flash units resulted in the Sheriff's Transit Services Bureau issuing 3,446 citations along the Orange Line, as of Nov. 3. Although a judge sets the final amount of fines, citations carry a minimum fine of \$271.

The De Soto, Mason, and Lindley intersections have just received their cameras, raising to 24 the number of cameras installed on the 14-mile line. Now, the north/south traffic flow through 12 intersections will be monitored by camera. The intersections with the highest number of near-miss reports by Metro Liner operators received the cameras.

After the cameras were installed, they were tested for several days. By law, Metro issues warning letters for 30 days to anyone captured on film committing a red-light violation. In those letters, Metro states that violators captured on film after the 30-day period will receive a citation.

Abdul Zohbi, a Systems Safety manager in Corporate Safety, has worked for Metro for 12 years. He managed the project to install photo enforcement cameras and "train coming" signs on the Metro Blue Line.

Zohbi considers the Orange Line's photo enforcement camera network a safety tool as well as an enforcement tool.

"Once burned, twice shy," he says. "Because if you get a ticket, you're not going to do it again. It's a deterrent. Our optimum goal is not to issue a lot of citations. Metro isn't in it to make money, but to enhance safety."

Near-miss reports decreased

The number of near-miss reports has decreased at some Orange Line intersections, an early sign that the cameras deter red-light violators. "This is exactly what we want to see," Zohbi says.

The cameras are triggered by electrical loops embedded in the intersection pavement. When the traffic control system displays a red light, the loops are activated and waiting for a heavy object to cross over them. If a vehicle crosses the loops, the camera photographs the vehicle, its license plate and its driver's face. The 120-shot-capacity cameras capture violators on 35-mm film cartridges that are changed each day.

A camera contractor retained by Metro reviews the photograph to verify that a violation has occurred. The contractor also checks that the vehicle's license and driver's face are both visible. If they are not, a citation cannot be issued.

The contractor prints the citation and sends it to the Transit Services Bureau. The TSB examines the citation, signs it and sends it to the violator. Because the photographs are taken on film, they are not easily modified, a feature the courts prefer.

In case of a collision at an Orange Line intersection, the cameras could produce an additional benefit: fixing responsibility for the accident.

Similar cameras are planned for the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension and the Exposition Light Rail project.

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Computer-generated view of the planned "Union Division" shows a perspective looking northeast from Metro Headquarters. Note the third-story parking lot covered by solar panels and the automobile bridge that crosses over Cesar Chavez Avenue on the right side of the picture. The Regional Rebuild Center is in the right background and the Twin Towers jail on the left.

Metro to Build New 200-Bus 'Union Division' Adjacent to RRC

- Construction begins in May 2008, opening in November 2009
- Should relieve pressure on divisions now over-capacity

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Nov. 7, 2006) With every one of its 11 bus divisions now at or above capacity, Metro is moving forward with plans to build a new operating facility – currently named the Union Division – across from the Gateway Building, adjacent to the Regional Rebuild Center.

The environmental clearance phase already has begun, according to Facilities Operations Project Manager Tim Lindholm, and a design contract should be awarded next May. Pending Board approval of the project budget in early 2007, construction of the \$95 million project would begin in May 2008, with completion expected in November, 2009.

Once opened, the Union Division is expected to relieve overcrowding at the downtown bus operating divisions – 1, 2, 3 and 10 – and even at Division 9 in the San Gabriel Valley.

"Once we open the Union Division and free up space at the other divisions," says Lindholm, "they'll work better and more efficiently, and that will lead to cost savings."

The Union Division construction site will encompass Terminal 31, now an OCI training facility and parking lot at the corner of Vignes Street and Cesar Chavez Avenue, and RRC Parking Lot A, also being used as a layover zone. Lyon Street, which runs between the two layover zones,

will be closed and folded into the construction site.

Will accommodate 200 buses

A three-story, 113,361-square foot building will be constructed to accommodate up to 200 buses – 120 40-foot buses, 48 articulated coaches and 32 buses in a layover zone – and some 500 employees.

The Union Division also will occupy part of the second floor of RRC Building 1, which will be used for transportation offices. Employees in those offices, many of whom work in Vehicle Technology and Support, probably would be relocated to the Gateway Building, says Lindholm. Offices for RRC managers and others will remain at that building.

A 20-bay maintenance facility capable of handling both standard 40-foot buses and articulated buses, will be located on the ground floor of the new Union Division building. That level also will have two bus washers, along with CNG fueling and vaulting facilities.

The second level of the building will be devoted to bus storage, while the third level will provide parking for about 450 employee, visitor and non-revenue vehicles. The third level also will be covered by solar panels that will provide a large portion of the division’s electrical needs.

Division 1 Transportation Manager Sonja Owens and Maintenance Manager Hector Rojas, Crossroads Depot Division 2 Transportation Manager Thom Pelk and Maintenance Manager Donell Harris, along with staff members from the RRC, the Gateway and San Gabriel Valley service sectors, and Facilities Engineering participated in the project planning.



View of the “Union Division” looks southwest and shows the new building connected to division offices on the second floor of the Regional Rebuild Center just out of view on the left. Also pictured are solar panels and, in the background, the automobile bridge and circular ramp.

An automobile bridge

A major architectural feature of the Union Division development will be an automobile bridge that will connect the building’s third-level parking lot with a circular ramp across Cesar Chavez Avenue. Employees and visitors will drive up to the parking level by using the circular ramp entrance on the Lyon Street extension.

“Keeping cars and buses from using the same entrance and exit will be

safer for employees and will help avoid traffic congestion on Cesar Chavez,” says Lindholm.

Locating the Union Division adjacent to the RRC will permit some sharing of facilities. The RRC’s CNG fueling station will be expanded and upgraded from slow-fill to fast-fill to handle the division’s 200 buses. The division won’t have a paint booth, Lindholm says, but will send its buses to the RRC for painting.

Lindholm expects the new building to qualify for an LEED – Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design – Silver designation by meeting strict water conservation, energy efficiency, recycling and environmental standards.

“Since we’re going to be making the investment in sustainability as we construct these facilities,” he says, “we should make the investment in things that have a return on our investment. You have to look at sustainability and energy efficiency in economic terms; that’s the only way we can really do what’s best for the environment and for Metro’s operations.”

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Photos courtesy of Metro Art



The Metro Customer Center, now newly clad with decorative panels, brings a contemporary presence to the corner of Wilshire and La Brea. A remodeling of the building's interior will reflect the new look and will improve service to customers. At right, the "before" version.



Metro Customer Center on Wilshire has Bold New Look

(Nov. 7, 2006) Metro's Customer Center at the intersection of Wilshire Boulevard and La Brea Avenue has a bold new look that already has attracted attention in the local media.

The patterned panels attached to the building's exterior were created by Jim Isermann, a Palm Springs artist whose work is shown at galleries around the world. The artwork was funded by a federal grant for transportation improvements.

Meanwhile, the interior of the Customer Center also is being renovated, with a remodeled lobby, customer and agent areas, office space, kitchen and employee break room. The work includes new floors, tile, carpets and paint and installation of new computers.

The Lost and Found department also has been reorganized to improve cataloging and storage of items left on Metro buses and trains. Workers also built a new annex for storage of up to 120 lost bicycles.

Senior Public Arts Officer Alan Nakagawa oversaw fabrication of the building's exterior art work and Senior Public Arts Officer Angelene Campuzano supervised the installation of the panels and the neon signage. The exterior signage was designed by Lead Designer Neil Sadler and Public Arts Design Manager Jorge Pardo.

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[CONSENT DECREE UPDATE: Another Court Hearing Set]

(Nov. 8, 2006) A hearing has been scheduled in U.S. District Court, Nov. 27, on a motion filed by the Bus Riders Union to amend Judge Terry Hatter's order of Oct. 24.

That order denied a motion by the BRU to extend the Consent Decree for another four years and a companion motion to hold Metro in contempt. But, the judge retained jurisdiction until Nov. 30, 2010 to ensure that Metro's New Service Plan is implemented.

The BRU is claiming that to facilitate the portion of the judge's order retaining jurisdiction over implementation of the New Service Plan, it is necessary to extend related sections of the Consent Decree. Those sections pertain to new bus service, the Joint Working Group, the Special Master, and attorney's fees.

Metro plans to oppose the BRU's motion.

Metro Compiled Record of Achievement During Consent Decree

- Expansion, upgrade of bus fleet marked 10-year period
- Metro leaders pledge to carry on in the spirit of the decree

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Nov. 8, 2006) Despite continued attempts by the Bus Riders Union to prolong the life of the Consent Decree, Metro can now mark the expiration of the federal order with a look back at a record of achievement that not only earned the agency the transit industry's highest honor in 2006, but also won praise from the special master overseeing the 10-year agreement.

The decade saw an unprecedented expansion and upgrading of the Metro Bus fleet with the purchase of more than 2,100 new high-tech coaches and articulated buses. Transit Operations also made measurable improvements in bus service quality, cleanliness, safety and security.



Metro added more than a million service hours to the bus system, established a series of new local bus lines, and introduced such innovations as Metro Rapid service, freeway express service and the Metro Orange Line with its 14-mile dedicated transitway.

"Since the inception of the Consent Decree, the MTA has made the improvement of bus service a high priority," wrote Special Master Donald Bliss in a letter announcing his resignation last February. "The progress has been substantial."

And, in his Oct. 23 ruling denying a request to extend the Consent Decree, U.S. District Judge Terry Hatter declared that Metro had "substantially complied" with the agreement and said, "...the quality of life has improved for Los Angeles's public transit dependent poor

population.”

Spirit of the Consent Decree

CEO Roger Snoble, Board Chair Gloria Molina and members of the Board of Directors all have pledged to continue improving the Metro Bus system in the spirit of the Consent Decree.

“We welcome this ruling,” Molina said during the October Board meeting. “It will give us an opportunity (to be) in the driver’s seat but, more importantly, to work in partnership with the transit dependent to continue the improvements we’ve made, to expand on those improvements and find ways to expand our ridership. This system is vitally important to the well-being of the entire region.”



“We want to have good bus service because that’s the only way we’re viable,” added Supervisor Yvonne Burke, who thanked the Bus Riders Union for its cooperation over the years and noted that Metro had entered the Consent Decree voluntarily.

“But, we’re now starting anew and the Consent Decree is behind us,” she said. “We are committed to maintaining the service that we agreed to provide.”

In previous discussions with employees, Snoble has said that Metro would not “let the bus system go to seed,” but would work to “make the system more relevant to today’s travel patterns, make the service available to more people. We have a whole different story to tell today than we had ten years ago.”

New rail lines

Throughout the Consent Decree years, Metro continued to expand Metro Rail service, completing a subway line through Hollywood and into North Hollywood, opening the Gold Line to Pasadena and starting construction on both the Gold Line’s Eastside Extension and the Exposition Line to Culver City.

Metro Rail also introduced a new fleet of rail cars – the P-2000s – for service on the Green Line, and began testing the AnsaldoBreda 2550 light rail car for service on the Gold Line.

In addition, Metro carried out a massive Transit Operations reorganization by creating five geographical bus service sectors and appointing governance councils of local citizens to advise each one.



The agency also initiated the Universal Fare System TAP program and the Metro Connections program, both of which are expected to go into full swing beginning in 2007.

Among other measures taken to comply with the Consent Decree, Metro:

- Achieved between 98.5 percent and 99 percent of its bus passenger load factor goals,
- Converted 333 ethanol buses to diesel,
- Repaired 594 CNG buses,
- Installed Automated Passenger Counters on all Metro Buses,
- Activated Automatic Voice Annunciators on Metro Buses,
- Installed Transit TV monitors on Metro Buses,
- Developed a new Transit Service Policy,
- Conducted a \$500,000 bus shelter improvement program,
- Completed the Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative Program,
- Implemented signal priority on 14 bus routes,
- Implemented high-tech surveillance and security systems on the Metro Rail system, and
- Implemented heightened safety features and photo enforcement cameras at critical Metro Blue Line intersections.

Quickening the pace

Although the term of the Consent Decree has expired, Metro will honor the spirit of the agreement by achieving cost and service efficiencies and by quickening the pace of its plans for innovative bus and rail services.



As an example, Metro Rapid service will grow from the current 15 lines to a total of 28 lines – many of them featuring articulated buses – by June 2008. That will give Los Angeles County more than 400 miles of high-capacity bus service to 34 cities and 11 unincorporated communities.

The implementation of Metro Connections will reorient bus service from the grid system to a “hub and spoke” system in which major lines will be established between transit centers at heavily used destinations. Smaller bus lines, municipal transit services and shuttle buses will feed into those transit centers.

Both the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension and the Exposition Line are due to open within the next three years. There's talk about light rail service on Crenshaw, a light rail connection to LAX, in addition to the hoped-for “subway to the sea.”

These and other changes are intended to keep Metro in the forefront of transit innovation and to ensure that the agency lives up to its hard-won reputation as “America’s Best.”


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Metro Welcomes Passage of Measures for Transportation-Related Funding

- Prop 1A, 1B ensure money for roads and transit; 1C includes funds for transit-oriented development

(Nov. 8, 2006) Metro officials today are welcoming the passage of transportation-related Propositions 1A, 1B and 1C, which won voter approval by wide margins in Tuesday's election.

Prop 1A, which at last report had received 80 percent of the vote, closes the loophole that allowed the state to take \$2.5 billion over the past three years from gasoline sales tax funds intended to finance road and highway projects and to use the money for general fund expenses.

Prop 1B, which received at least 61 percent of the vote, will provide \$20 billion through bonding to battle traffic congestion and pollution. Included in the funds are \$12.25 billion for improving freeways, highways and roads and \$4 billion for improving transit.

Prop 1C, which garnered 57 percent of the vote, would provide \$2.85 billion through bonding to finance housing programs. These would include the Transit-Oriented Development Implementation Program.

"Clearly, voters recognized that these critical transportation bonds will have significant, far-reaching benefits for our region. And they're right," said Board Chair Gloria Molina. "The funding will help us resolve many of the pressing transportation challenges affecting California – and they will help us expedite our goals faster than would normally be possible."

Work to ensure region's fair share



Statewide Proposition Results

Proposition	✓ Percentage
Proposition 1A	80%
Proposition 1B	61%
Proposition 1C	57%
Proposition 1D	56%
Proposition 1E	64%
Proposition 83	70%
Proposition 84	53%
Proposition 85	45%
Proposition 86	47%
Proposition 87	45%
Proposition 88	23%
Proposition 89	25%
Proposition 90	47%

California 2006 General Election Results as posted on [www.votecircle.com](#) with 100.0% (25090 of 25090) precincts reporting as of Nov 8, 2006 at 11:34 am

Molina said she would work with the LA County delegation in Sacramento to ensure that the region receives its fair share of the funding included in the propositions.

“The passage of these propositions signals a real mandate by voters to tackle our region’s mobility challenges head on,” said CEO Roger Snoble. “These bond funds will enable us to realize many of the objectives in our Long Range Transportation Plan on a much earlier timeline. That will mean faster relief to some the region’s most congested roadways.”

Snoble said Metro and Caltrans already have identified several urgent, ready-to-go transportation improvements that could be eligible for immediate funding.

Those recommendations will be prioritized by the Board of Directors at its December meeting, and then will be submitted to Sacramento for competitive bid early next year.

“We have the roadmap for Los Angeles County’s better mobility,” the CEO said, “and working together, we can make it happen.”

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Eastside Developments, Wilshire Express Bus Service on Committee Agendas

In this report:

[Item 11, 1st and Boyle Development.](#)[Item 12, 1st and Soto Development.](#)[Item 28, Wilshire Rapid Express Service](#)[Item 36, Bus Seat Upholstery.](#)

- Due to the Thanksgiving holiday, the November Board Meeting will be held at 9:30 a.m., Thursday, Dec. 7.

(Nov. 9, 2006) Two transit-oriented developments for the Eastside, a proposed new express bus service for Wilshire Boulevard and a massive program to refurbish the seats in 2,200 Metro buses are among items on Board committee agendas this month.

The November Board meeting will be delayed by the Thanksgiving holiday and will be held on Thursday, Dec. 7.

November Board Committee Meetings

Wednesday, Nov. 15

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

Thursday, Nov. 16

Executive Management and Audit, 9 a.m.
Operations, 12 p.m.
Construction: Cancelled

Thursday, Dec. 7

Due to the Thanksgiving holiday, the November Board Meeting will be held at 9:30 a.m., Thursday, Dec. 7.

Item 11, 1st and Boyle Development. The Planning and Programming Committee will consider a motion authorizing the CEO to begin negotiations with a company that plans to build a mixed-use development at the Metro Gold Line Boyle Heights/Mariachi Plaza station.

JSM Construction, Inc., is proposing to build on three parcels a community-oriented center with more than 100,000 square feet of retail and restaurant space, a food market, underground and surface parking and community rooms, 35,000 square feet of medical office space, and more than 100 housing units.

Item 12, 1st and Soto Development. The Planning and Programming Committee will consider a motion authorizing the CEO to begin negotiations with a developer who plans a community-oriented retail center on two parcels at the Metro Gold Line station at 1st and Soto in East LA.

The developer, 1st and Soto LLC, is planning to build 14,500 square feet of retail space, 11,500 square feet of office space, 41 apartments, a community room, 85 underground parking spaces, a conference room and a preschool/childcare facility.

Item 28, Wilshire Rapid Express Service. Metro's heaviest traveled bus corridor – Wilshire Boulevard – would see even faster bus service, according to a plan to be presented to the Executive Management and Audit Committee.

Called the Wilshire Rapid Express Service, the proposed new peak period bus line would pick up passengers at Wilshire/Vermont and Wilshire/Western and make only four other stops heading west to Santa Monica. The Rapid Express would be in service in both directions from 6 to 10 a.m. and from 3 to 7 p.m. Planners expect a 20 percent savings in travel time over the existing Metro Rapid service.

The Operations Service Planning staff is recommending that Rapid Express service begin in June 2007. It would operate on 5- to 10-minute headways with stops at Wilshire/Vermont, Wilshire/Western, Fairfax Avenue, Beverly Drive in Beverly Hills, Westwood Boulevard and 4th Street in Santa Monica.

Item 36, Bus Seat Upholstery. The Operations Committee will consider a motion authorizing the CEO to award a five-year, \$4.9 million contract to reupholster the seats on Metro's 2,200 buses.

In the first two years, Molina Gaskets would refurbish 195,760 seats. Over the next three years, the contract calls for reupholstering 97,880 seats per year. In all, the plan calls for refurbishing a total of 489,400 seats over the five-year period.

According to a report to the Board, "Wear and tear on the bus seat components as well as acts of vandalism necessitates an ongoing effort...to provide safe and clean interiors for the riding public."

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Employees crossing into the Division 15 yard not only have two safety reminders, they are directed to the crosswalk by a yellow railing.

- Photos by Michael Lambeth

Pedestrian Railings Improve Safety in Division 15 Yard

- Andy Gonzalez's ideas should help prevent accidents

By MICHAEL LAMBETH

(Nov. 9, 2006) Getting to work in the maintenance shops at East Valley Division 15 is safer now, thanks to the ideas of a concerned maintenance employee.

Following suggestions by Equipment Maintenance Supervisor Andy Gonzalez, pedestrian control railings and caution signs were added at each crosswalk entrance in the Division 15 bus yard to alert employees and remind them to be careful when crossing to their work areas.

Walking from parking lot to their work areas, maintenance personnel enter an area of heavy vehicular traffic. The railings direct them to the crosswalks, which makes them more visible to approaching vehicles.

On a number of occasions, Gonzalez – then a mechanic leader – received reports of near misses with maintenance personnel as they hurried into work from the parking areas.

His idea was to place barriers at each entrance to the yard and before the crosswalks as a reminder for everyone to be careful before entering the yard

"The railings make our people redirect their path before entering the yard", he says. "That will give them a little extra time to see oncoming traffic, or for anyone driving in the yard time to see them."



EMS Andy Gonzalez's concern for safety in the yard led to installation of pedestrian railings like this one.

Gonzalez brought his concerns and idea to Division 15 Maintenance Manager John Roberts, who asked the Facilities Maintenance staff to begin the installation. As an added precaution, Facilities Maintenance Supervisor Dave Ratcliff added the signage at each entrance as a further reminder to be careful.

"Any safety precaution we can take that makes the workplace safer is a plus for our division and employees", says Roberts. "The safety of our staff comes first."

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Celebration: 2 Years and no Lost-Time Injuries at Arthur Winston



Arthur Winston Division second-shift maintenance employees wave victory signs to mark two years without an serious injury. Below, first-shift maintenance crew gathers to celebrate their safety accomplishment.



(Nov. 9, 2006) The Arthur Winston Division 5 maintenance team reached a high point, Oct. 24, when it celebrated two years without a lost-time accident.

Both Maintenance Manager Alex DiNuzzo and Assistant Maintenance Manager Sergio Rubalcava expressed pride in their team's accomplishment. They proved it by serving a celebration lunch to first-shift employees.

South Bay General Manager Dana Coffey also was on hand to congratulate the maintenance staff. Flashlights and ball caps were raffled off to the staff.

"We're going to continue ensuring that our staff works in a safe environment," said DiNuzzo. "Safety is Number 1 at the AWD!"


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Deputy CEO John Catoe Will Head Washington, D.C., Transit System

- Plans to assume leadership of WMATA in January, 2007



Deputy CEO John Catoe

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Nov. 14, 2006) Deputy CEO John Catoe has been chosen as general manager of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, the chairman of the transit agency's Board of Directors announced today.

"John's enthusiasm for customer service and his proven record of success in transit is consistent with the Board's commitment to meet the region's transit needs," said Board Chair Gladys Mack. "The Board is pleased that John has accepted our offer."

Catoe, 59, who joined Metro in August 2001, expects to begin his new job in late January. Chosen for the job over seven other candidates, according to the *Washington Post*, he will assume the leadership of one of the nation's premier transit agencies under a three-year contract.

"I look forward to working with the WMATA Board and staff," said Catoe. "It's known as 'America's Bus System' and my job will be to make it 'America's Best Bus System.'"

Thinking back on his years at Metro, however, he added, "When I think of leaving Metro, I'm a little sad. I like the people here. I love this organization and, to me, an organization is its people. Not to work with them day-to-day is a loss to me and I'll miss that."

"For the past five years, John Catoe has been my partner here at Metro," said CEO Roger Snoble. "I have depended on his deep knowledge of transit, his innovative ideas and his leadership skills to help move the agency forward. John's work has been essential to Metro's many successes, and I give him great credit for his role in helping the agency win this year's APTA award. I will miss having John by my side and his departure will be a great loss to Metro. But, I'm confident he will be a great CEO for WMATA, and I wish him all the best."

1,500-square mile area

WMATA operates a 106-mile, 86-station Metrorail system that records 206 million annual boardings, and a fleet of some 1,400 buses with 131 million boardings. The agency, which has 11,000 employees, serves a 1,500-square mile area that covers the District of Columbia, southern Maryland and northern Virginia.

During his tenure as deputy CEO, Catoe considers his major accomplishments to include developing and putting Metro's service sectors into operation. He also points to considerable improvements in Metro's safety record with significantly fewer employee injuries and a 60 percent reduction in Worker's Compensation claims.

He gives great credit to the Transit Operations and Planning staffs for their response to the Consent Decree and for making measurable improvements in service, as well as for the development of such innovative services as Metro Rapid, Metro Express and the Metro Orange Line.

"I'm proud of the things we've done," he says. "This management team and this organization under Roger's leadership has done things people thought couldn't be done. And, while there are many more things yet to do, this agency is in good hands and I think it's just going to have more successes in the future."



Catoe led the team that successfully concluded labor negotiations in June.

Catoe also points to this year's successful labor negotiations that avoided a strike, were concluded ahead of their contract deadlines and were within the Board's authorization.

He thanked the Board of Directors for "the opportunity to do what I've done and for the support they've given me. I want to thank the Board for understanding during the labor negotiations that we had to take a different approach, and for having the confidence to give me complete authority to resolve conflicts. It was a tremendous political risk."

Homecoming for Catoe

Taking the WMATA job will be a homecoming for Catoe, the son of a taxi driver and a native of Washington, D.C. He plans to keep his current house in Santa Monica, with the idea of returning to California someday. His son Justin, 18, is a freshman at the University of Montana.

Prior to joining Metro, Catoe was director of Transit Services for the City of Santa Monica, having joined the Big Blue Bus in December 1995. Under his leadership, Santa Monica Municipal Bus Lines won the APTA Outstanding Transportation System Achievement Award.

He previously served for five years as director of operations with OCTA. Joining that agency in 1977, he rose through the ranks as transit

services analyst, superintendent of operations, manager of operations and director of transportation.

Catoe earned a Bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Redlands in 1981. He is a former chairman of the California Transit Association and is a member of APTA and the American Society for Public Administration.

Reflecting on the past few years, Catoe says Metro's successes should be attributed to the hard work of employees, "the mechanics, service attendants, operators, supervisors, assistant managers, managers and all the support people. They've done an outstanding job."

"The recognition we received at APTA this year was well-deserved," he says. "We've come up from an agency that was perceived in the industry as being troubled, to an agency that is perceived as being the best in the country. Our employees have a lot to be proud of and I have complete confidence that they'll take this honor and move higher."

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CEO Roger Snoble and Eastside Extension Sr. Construction Engineer Fred Smith greet tunneling machine Lola as she breaks through the final segment of the 1.7 mile tunnel beneath East Los Angeles on Tuesday.



Photos by Gary Leonard

Lola's Big Break

DATELINE: 11:20 a.m., Tuesday, Nov. 14, 2006> Lola, the tunnel boring machine, broke through the 1.7 tunnel she and partner Vicky have been digging beneath East Los Angeles at First St. and Lorena St.

The breakthrough took place at the 1st and Lorena station site in Boyle Heights, about 1.7 miles east of where tunneling began on the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension last Feb. 23.

The second tunneling machine, Vicky, is not far behind Lola in digging a parallel tunnel.

With Vicky close behind, Lola broke through the first segment at 1st and Soto on July 21. The two machines continued on to complete the excavation of the 1.7-mile tunnel through to Lorena Street where the above-ground portion of the rail line resumes en

Move your mouse over image to see "Lola" break through the Eastside Extension tunnel underneath Mariachi Plaza at First and Lorena streets.



route to its terminus at 3rd and Atlantic.

Throughout the tunneling operation, the 344-foot machines maintained a depth of 50 to 60 feet below the surface, carving out 21-foot, 4-inch-diameter tunnels and installing pre-cast concrete tunnel liners.

The 5.9-mile Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension is expected to open in late 2009.

So noted: Metro Board Chair Gloria Molina and Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, CEO Roger Snoble, Metro executives, elected officials and community leaders will celebrate the arrival of “Lola”, the massive Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) for the Light Rail Eastside Extension, at a media event this Thursday at 10:30 a.m. onsite at First and Lorena streets in Boyle Heights.



It took a Herculean effort of construction crew and tunneling machines to do the job.



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Metro Urging Hollywood Parade Goers to Use Buses, Subway

(Nov. 14, 2006) Metro is urging patrons to use the bus and subway to get to the 75th annual Hollywood Christmas Parade on Sunday, Nov. 26



The world-famous Hollywood Christmas Parade starts in front of Grauman's Chinese Theatre at 5 p.m. on Sunday, November 26. Photo courtesy of Hollywood Chamber of Commerce
> [More](#)

Comedian George Lopez will serve as Grand Marshal, TV personality Regis Philbin has been named Diamond Jubilee Honorary Grand Marshal, and teen pop artist Brooke Hogan and singer Michael Bolton will perform during the parade.

Other celebrity appearances include actors Isaiah Washington, Shawn and Marlon Wayans, and the cast of the film "High School Musical."

Metro suggests arriving in Hollywood an hour or two before the parade to get a great spot for watching. The parade will run from 5 to 7 p.m. but crowds begin assembling by 3 p.m. Metro Rail has subway stops at prime parade viewing locations at Hollywood/Highland and Hollywood/Vine.

On Sunday, avoid Hollywood Boulevard, Vine Street, Highland Avenue and Sunset Boulevard in

Hollywood, which will close beginning at 2 p.m. in preparation for the parade and remain closed until 10 p.m.

Parade starts at Grauman's

The 2.3-mile route starts near the corner of Hollywood Boulevard and Orange (in front of Grauman's Chinese Theatre), then heads east on Hollywood Boulevard to Vine Street where it turns right (south) on Vine to Sunset Boulevard. It turns right (west) on Sunset and continues west to Orange, ending in front of Hollywood High School.

Metro will add extra cars to all subway trains on parade day. Prior to the parade, trains will operate every 12 minutes to Hollywood from downtown Los Angeles and from the San Fernando Valley. Following the parade, trains will depart the Hollywood area every 12 minutes. Service will begin operating every 20 minutes at approximately 9 p.m.

The last train to the San Fernando Valley will depart Hollywood/Vine at 12:36 a.m. and Hollywood/Highland at 12:38 a.m. It will connect with the last Metro Orange Line bus to leave North Hollywood at 12:56 a.m.

The last train to downtown, connecting to the Metro Blue Line, will depart Hollywood/Highland at 12:22 a.m. and Hollywood/Vine at 12:24 a.m. The last train to downtown (no connection with the Metro Blue Line) will depart Hollywood/Highland at 1:02 a.m. and Hollywood/Vine at 1:04 a.m.

Parade attendees using Metro Bus service should plan trips according to Sunday schedules. Additional buses will supplement lines servicing the Hollywood area as needed. Those Metro Bus Lines providing access to this year's parade route include lines 2, 26, 156, 163, 180, 181, 210, 212 and 217.

Due to parade route and street closures, Metro will re-route nine bus lines in the Hollywood area. The lines to be detoured are 2, 26, 156, 163, 180, 181, 210, 212 and 217. Detours will begin at about 2 p.m. on Sunday and last until the conclusion of the parade.

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Editor's Note: Due to a misunderstanding, the title given for Carolyn Flowers in previous stories was incorrect. The title has now been corrected. The editor regrets the error.

Carolyn Flowers to Serve as Acting Chief Operating Officer



Carolyn Flowers

(Nov. 15, 2006) CEO Roger Snoble has selected Carolyn Flowers, executive officer for Operations Administration, to serve as acting Chief Operating Officer.

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority announced, Tuesday, that Deputy CEO John Catoe has been named WMATA's next general manager. He expects to begin his new job in January 2007.

Snoble said the next month or so will be a time of transition for Transit Operations and that Flowers will begin assuming some of Catoe's responsibilities right away.

"It's a natural move on an interim basis to allow Carolyn to keep things moving," he said. "She's certainly capable of doing that and she'll be fine. I'm very comfortable with having her fill that role."

Noting Flowers long experience in a number of top positions at Metro and her recent transit leadership training, the CEO said, "I expect everyone to give her all the support that's necessary for us to continue with all the great things we do."

Chosen for leadership programs

In 2002, Flowers was one of 25 people chosen to participate in the American Public Transportation Association leadership program, a year-long course of study that prepares participants to serve in top leadership positions in the transit industry.

In 2005, Flowers was selected from among 56 candidates to participate in an international fact-finding mission co-sponsored by the Transportation Cooperative Research Program and the Eno Foundation of Washington, D.C. Along with 11 other transit agency executives, the group visited Spain, Denmark, China and Japan.

She also just completed the Eno Foundation's transportation leadership program.

Flowers, who joined Metro in January 1993 as an administrative analyst, has served in her current position since July 2003. She is responsible for Metro's operations budget, manpower planning and scheduling.

She is a veteran of almost 30 years in administrative and financial

management positions in industry and government. At Metro, she previously served as executive officer, Administration, and as deputy executive officer, Finance, in the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

OMB budget director

Earlier, Flowers was OMB budget director. During 1998 and most of 1999, she was head of the budget department for the City of Beverly Hills. She also was a chief administrative analyst in Bus Operations and Procurement.

After completing an MBA in finance and marketing at UCLA, Flowers was a financial analyst and budget officer for more than five years at Rockwell International Automotive Operations. She worked for Wang Laboratories for more than 10 years in financial management positions and as district sales administration manager for computer hardware and software.

Flowers earned a BA in history and political science from UCLA and an MBA from UCLA's Anderson School of Business. She is a member of the National Forum of Black Public Administrators and the Women's Transportation Conference.

In 2002, she was honored for exemplary professional development and career advancement by Metro's African American Employees Assocization.

A native of Jackson, Miss., she makes her home in Los Angeles.


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Court Rules for Metro in \$1.7 Million Age Discrimination Lawsuit

(Nov. 15, 2006) The California Court of Appeal ruled in favor of Metro in an age discrimination lawsuit, earlier this month, and reversed a trial jury verdict that would have given almost \$1.7 million to a former employee.

Warren Fu, former Director of Facilities Engineering, had sued the agency in March 2004 alleging that he had been wrongfully terminated based on age discrimination. He also alleged that he had been discriminated against based on age when he sought to be rehired by the agency.

The court ruled, however, that Fu had signed a valid waiver of his state law claims in May 2003 when he accepted severance pay, service credit and other benefits. The court also found there was no substantial evidence proving that he had been discriminated against when he was not rehired. Metro was awarded its costs for the appeal.

Fu, who joined the SCRTD in 1975, was told in April 2003, when he was 65, that his position would be abolished as part of an agency-wide reduction in force.

Before the layoff took effect, he applied for three other jobs within Metro but wasn't hired for any of them. One position opening was cancelled and Metro determined other candidates were more qualified to fill the two remaining positions.

The court agreed that Metro had not discriminated against Fu when it cancelled one of the positions. The court also agreed that the candidates Metro selected were more qualified than Fu for the other two jobs.

"There are approximately 10 other cases currently pending against the MTA filed by the same attorney and based on the same now discredited legal theory..." according to Assistant County Counsel Charles Safer. "The Court of Appeal decision in this matter should help to resolve those other cases in MTA's favor."



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Board Chair Gloria Molina applauds the impromptu efforts of Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa as he documents the dusty debut of tunneling machine "Lola," which broke through the final segment of the Eastside Extension tunnel on Tuesday.



Photos by Gary Leonard

Officials Mark Latest Milestone in Eastside Rail Construction

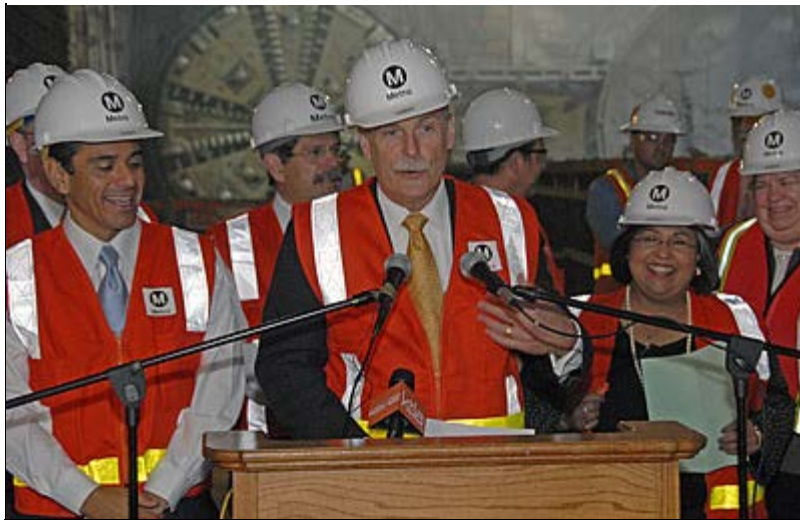
By JOSE UBALDO

(Nov. 16, 2006) Metro officials gathered at a media event in Boyle Heights, today, to mark the latest milestone in the construction of the Eastside Light Rail construction project.

"Lola" – the massive tunnel boring machine – finished burrowing a 1.7-mile eastbound tunnel of the underground segment for the Metro Gold Line to East LA. The TBM reached the underground box of the East Portal at First and Lorena streets on Tuesday, Nov. 14.

Her twin sister, "Vicki," is a few weeks behind in the westbound tunnel. Tunneling began last February.

CEO Roger
Snoble
announces
the tunneling
breakthrough



at
underground
media event

The breakthrough "marks a watershed moment in the history of this project," said Board Chair Gloria Molina. "I know that my mentor, the late Rep. Ed Roybal, would be so proud of our progress. The Eastside Extension was his dream – and today we are that much closer to connecting the Eastside to Metro's mass transit network."

"This is truly an historic day for eastside residents with the completion of the first of two tunnels being constructed for this eastside extension of the Metro Gold Line," said Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa. "Once completed, this project will go a long way in easing traffic congestion and will provide a usable transportation option for this densely populated area."

6-mile rail extension

The tunnels are part of the six-mile extension of the Metro Gold Line that will link Union Station in downtown Los Angeles with Little Tokyo/Arts District, Boyle Heights and East Los Angeles by late 2009.

"I'm excited about this crucial project being built for eastside residents and can't wait for this important passenger service to begin," said Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard. "Today's breakthrough puts us just that much closer to the opening of this light rail line that will provide real transportation alternatives and new opportunities for the residents of the eastside communities."

Eastside construction workers have logged nearly 1.3 million hours with no lost-time injuries, setting a record that has astonished long-time construction safety executives since starting work on the project in July 2004.

"This is an incredible accomplishment and speaks volumes to our commitment in making safety priority number one," said Metro CEO Roger Snoble.


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Annual Gift Giving Drive Will Benefit Fred Jordan Mission

By JORI STERN

(Nov 16, 2006) With 2006 nearing it's end, and another year approaching quickly it's time for the annual Fred Jordan Mission Holiday Gift Giving Drive, coming up Dec. 17.

To celebrate the event and open house, gift tag distribution is happening this Friday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the Gateway Building 3rd floor. Additional days have been added through Nov. 21.

Drop off a gift anytime during business hours, Nov. 27 through Dec. 6, at the Diversity and Economic Opportunity Department on the 13th floor.

In addition to toys, donations of new unwrapped gifts can include blankets, games, backpacks, pencils and paper, soccer balls, basketballs, raingear and even canned goods. The deadline is Dec. 6 at 4 p.m.

Gift tags also will be available for employees at the Regional Rebuild Center and at participating divisions. Gift Giving coordinators at each location will have information about the toy drive.

"Hopefully we can get one gift from every employee in the whole agency; I would like that to be our goal," says Tashai Smith, Gift Giving Drive coordinator.

Volunteer are needed to help with distribution of toys, Sunday, Dec 17, at the Fred Jordan Mission. In prior years, toys and food bags wee prepared for up to 10,000 children and their parents.

For further information, contact Elizabeth Pulido at 922-2603.



Pick up your 'gift giving tag' on Friday, at the first open house of the season. Below, Gift Giving Drive poster decks the Metro halls to remind us to pick up our gift tags in time to deliver new and unwrapped gifts to the 13th floor by Wednesday, Dec. 6.





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Rideshare vendors from Enterprise Rent A Van to Midway Rideshare Van Pools, VPSI, Inc, and Santa Monica's Big Blue Bus offered alternative transportation options, Tuesday, to rideshare coordinators from nearly 200 participating employers.



Photos by Gayle Anderson

How to Market Rideshare: It's a Good Thing!

(Nov. 16, 2006) Employee Transportation Coordinators from across Los Angeles County gathered at Metro Headquarters, Tuesday, for training on how to market rideshare services in their companies.

The "Share the Ride Workshop," hosted by Metro Commute Service on Nov. 14, provided tips on effective rideshare marketing.

In California, companies with 250 or more employees are required to offer rideshare programs.

The ETCs also were introduced to new and ongoing Metro programs, and attended a seminar on "Gorilla Marketing" conducted by Jim Moore of Moore and Associates.

To interest their employees in using Metro and other commuter



Metro Commute Services Director David Sutton demonstrates the TAP fare card system.



services, Moore presented marketing tips on how to utilize or improve their rideshare programs at their worksites.

Jill Smolinsky, Rideshare associate, and Harlan West, HWDS & Associates help get the word out.



Dexter Galvez: Everything you need to know about Santa Monica's Big Blue Bus.

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Canoga Station Rising> Lifted above Canoga Ave., a worker replaces the lamp in a street light on the western border of the Canoga station. At left, a worker plants a flowering plum tree in one of the parking lot islands of the Canoga station. The extension project adds almost 400 trees to the Metro Orange Line. Photos by Ned Racine.

Canoga Station to Join Metro Orange Line-Up in December

- 14th station will be convenient to jobs, shopping at Warner Center

By NED RACINE

(Nov. 17, 2006) The San Fernando Valley grows more orange in December when the highly successful Metro Orange Line adds another station, reaching the jobs and shopping spots in Warner Center and offering more commuters an alternative to the Ventura Freeway.

Constructed just north of the Canoga Avenue and Victory Boulevard intersection, the new Canoga station – the 14th on the cross-valley transitway – extends the Orange Line west 0.3 miles, from Variel Avenue to Canoga. Pedestrians and bicyclists will gain an equivalent extension of the multi-use bike and pedestrian path.

Since early 2003, Metro planned and developed this new station with local businesses and residents.

Now workers plant California sycamores and flowering plums around the parking areas, haul ticket vending machines (TVMs) into place and monitor the new station's electronic "conversations" with the Bus Operations Center in the Gateway Building.

Including the 6.5-acre Canoga station, extension of the transitway and extension of the multi-use bike and pedestrian path, the project budget totaled \$26 million.

"This should make the Orange Line more convenient to potential riders who live in the western Valley, riders who might otherwise be commuting by car on the Ventura Freeway," says Roger Dames, Orange Line project manager and deputy executive officer, Project Management.

'A great success'

"This [station] is going to be a great success because the closest Orange Line parking lot [to Warner Center] was Winnetka," says Ghulam Shaikh, the construction manager for the Canoga station project.

In common with the completed Orange Line stations, the Canoga station includes both an east-bound and a west-bound platform.

Each platform features four canopies, sheltering passengers from sun and rain. Stations also include emergency telephones, lighting, real-time electronic signage, seating, system and neighborhood maps, security cameras and ticket vending machines.

Because of lessons learned from the recently completed Orange Line, Shaikh found several elements of construction went swiftly. "The busway paving, parking lot paving, bikeway paving all went better than I thought they would."



A worker rolls a ticket vending machine into place for installation under a canopy in the Metro Orange Line Canoga station. Scheduled to open in December, the station extends the Metro Orange Line 0.3 miles. Below, Truck used to raise workers above street level patiently waits at Rocketdyne Driveway, an entrance to the Canoga station.



The Canoga Park station is not only the Orange Line present but the Orange Line future.

In September 2006, the Metro Board authorized the staff to commence environmental clearance and preliminary engineering for a six-mile extension from the Canoga station north to the Metro Link station in Chatsworth. Consultant proposals to perform this work are due in December.

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Getting in the Holiday Spirit

• CEO Signs Up for Annual Gift Giving Drive

"I have fun doing this every year," said CEO Roger Snoble as he helped kick off the 2006 Gift Giving Drive for the Fred Jordan Mission by becoming the first to sign up for the toy drive. "Year after year, employees come through with quality toy donations, I encourage all employees to participate and to pick up a gift tag."

Gift tags will be available for pickup on the 3rd floor at the Gateway Building through Tuesday, Nov. 21. Gifts can be delivered to the Diversity and Economic Opportunity Department on the 13th floor during business hours from Nov. 27 through Dec. 6. Gift tags also will be available from Gift Giving coordinators at the Regional Rebuild Center and at participating divisions.

Photo by Bill Heard






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CEO UpDate

A Parting, A Welcome and A Word About the Election

- **And, congratulations to the Arthur Winston Division**

By CEO ROGER SNOBLE



CEO Roger Snoble

I want to begin this month's column by congratulating our deputy CEO, John Catoe, on being selected as general manager of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority. It's a tremendous opportunity for him and I wish him well.

But, after five eventful years with him by my side here at Metro, I also will feel his loss – as I'm sure many of you will. I won't recount here all of John's accomplishments, but they include initiating the service sector organization, overseeing major improvements in bus and rail service, setting a course for Metro Connections, and the successful conclusion of this year's labor negotiations.

In Washington, John will have an opportunity to put his stamp on one of the nation's high-profile transit agencies. WMATA is known as an outstanding transit system, and I'm sure they'll strive for even greater excellence under John's guidance. Let's all wish him the best of luck!

I also want to welcome Carolyn Flowers as the acting Chief Operating Officer. She will ensure that we'll have a smooth transition without missing a beat.

Carolyn has wide experience in many areas of administration, finance, management and procurement, both here at Metro and in private industry. She also has a solid foundation in transit operations. She has served as executive officer for Operations Administration since 2003, and she received intensive transportation leadership training through the APTA and Eno Foundation programs.

I look forward to working with Carolyn, and ask that all of you give her your support.

A quick word about the recent election. We can take pleasure in the wide margins by which voters approved three measures we needed to keep us moving forward – Propositions 1A, 1B and 1C.

Passage of Prop 1A means that we can depend on a steady flow of funds from the tax on gasoline sales, year after year, without worrying that the state will take the money to finance operating expenses. This

proposition makes it very difficult for the state to borrow that money, and it ensures that, when it is borrowed, it is paid back with interest within three years.

Prop 1B is important to us because it not only provides \$12.25 billion in bond funding for highway improvements, but also includes bonding of \$4 billion for bus and rail transit programs. Even Prop 1C, which primarily concerns housing, encourages transit-oriented development.

Along with Caltrans, we've already have identified several urgent, ready-to-go transportation improvements that could be eligible for immediate funding.

I want to close by congratulating the maintenance team at the Arthur Winston Division. They recently celebrated two years without a lost-time accident. That's a great achievement and I'm very proud of all the mechanics, service attendants, support staff and managers for their great safety record. I know Arthur would be proud, too!

Have a happy Thanksgiving!

November 17, 2006

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ACCOLADES

myMetro.net welcomes reports on achievement, honors and recognition of Metro employees from community, volunteer and professional organizations. Click here to send information to [ACCOLADES](#).



WTS Names Carol Inge 'Woman of the Year'

Carol Inge, Metro's chief planning officer, has been named "Woman of the Year" by the Los Angeles Chapter of the Women's Transportation Seminar (WTS).

The award honors women who serve as role models, who contribute to the advancement of women and minorities, and who advance the reputation and credibility of women through their career achievements in the transportation industry. Inge, who serves WTS as a director-at-large, was named Metro's chief planning officer earlier this year.

Inge joined the SCRTD in 1987 as a joint development specialist, moving to the LACTC in 1990 as a senior project manager in the Planning Department. She was named director of the Westside Area Team in 1993 and was promoted to deputy executive officer for Transportation Development and Implementation in 2001. She was named interim chief planning officer in 2005.

Photo by Bill Heard



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Division 9 Mechanic Jaime Lozano (left), and his brother Alfred, Division 9 equipment maintenance supervisor and former Marine, stand before the temporary memorial to fallen comrades, part of the Nov. 9 celebration of the Marine Corps Birthday. Jaime holds a photo of his stepdaughter, Army private Laura Melodona.



Division 9 Event Marks Marine Corps' 231st Birthday

- Celebration honored all military branches, POWs and MIAs

By NED RACINE

(Nov. 21, 2006) San Gabriel Valley Division 9 held its fourth Marine Corps Birthday celebration, Nov. 9, and paid homage to the Marine Corps and to fallen comrades.

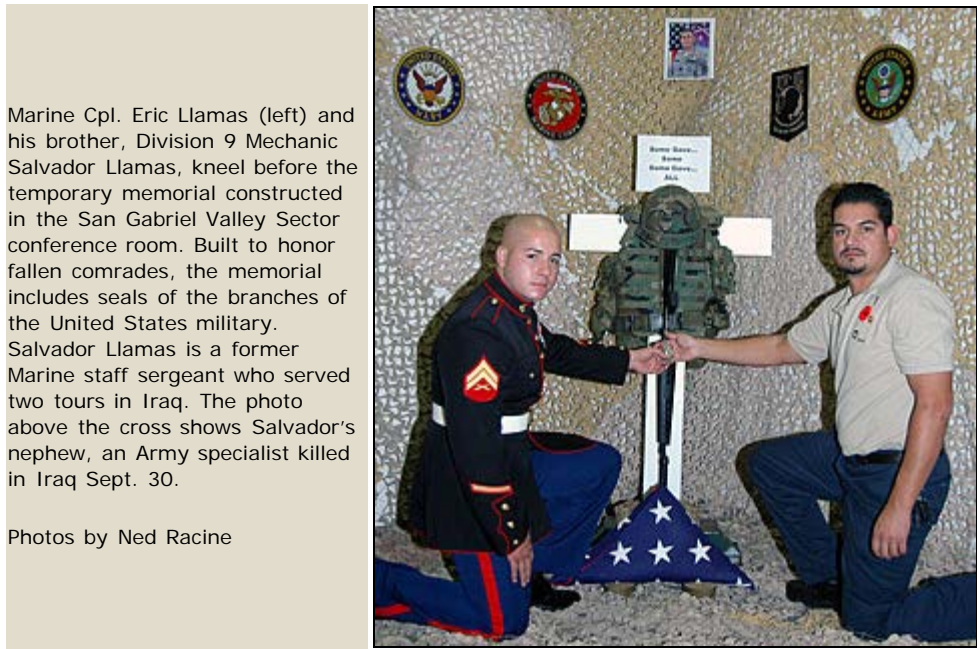
Some 35 Metro employees met in the San Gabriel Valley Sector conference room to hear guest speakers, see presentations, swap stories and share cake marking the Corps' 231st anniversary.



Although the audience featured a high percentage of current and former Marines, the pre-Veteran's Day event made a point of recognizing each branch of the United States military.

"It's not just for veterans; it's for everyone," Alfred Lozano, Division 9 equipment maintenance supervisor and former Marine, said of the annual event. The celebration struck a contemplative tone; even the gaily dedicated cake paid tribute to United States prisoners of war and those missing in action.

Organizers converted a corner of the conference room into a memorial for fallen veterans, using a wooden cross, rifle, bayonet, boots and a helmet worn in Vietnam, all displayed against a background of camouflaged netting. Lozano supplied four Marine swords.



Marine Cpl. Eric Llamas (left) and his brother, Division 9 Mechanic Salvador Llamas, kneel before the temporary memorial constructed in the San Gabriel Valley Sector conference room. Built to honor fallen comrades, the memorial includes seals of the branches of the United States military. Salvador Llamas is a former Marine staff sergeant who served two tours in Iraq. The photo above the cross shows Salvador's nephew, an Army specialist killed in Iraq Sept. 30.

Photos by Ned Racine

A 'quiet pride' in service

"We're very proud of people who served, including ourselves," explained John McBryan, a Division 9 maintenance manager and former Marine. He describes the birthday event as having a "quiet pride." Speakers included Lozano and Procurement Chief Lonnie Mitchell, a retired Navy officer.

McBryan noted that the birthday celebration grew from casual get-togethers begun by Paul Lennon, Metro's former Director of Intelligence.

Now McBryan and other Division 9 veterans are planning a permanent memorial at the division to honor military veterans.

"Once a Marine, always a Marine," Jack Bartman, bus operator and 1950s Marine drill sergeant said, in explaining the closeness of the Marine veterans.

The Continental Congress established the Marine Corps on November 10, 1775. The Marine Corps currently has approximately 177,000 active troops.


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Metro's Transit TV System Now Tracks Progress of Buses

- Global positioning map is first of its kind in the U.S.

By KIM UPTON

(Nov. 21, 2006) Metro Bus patrons who want to check the progress of their commute now only have to look at the global positioning map shown on the Transit TV monitors aboard their bus. The system is the first of its kind in the United States.

Located on the left side of the TV screen, the vertical map shows an animated bus icon moving through the streets as it makes its way along its prescribed route. The global positioning device tracks the progress and location of the bus.



The global positioning map displayed on the left side of the Transit TV screen shows a bus icon located at the real-time position of the Metro bus – in this case, Union Station.

"We've added this new feature to Transit TV to give customers a map pinpointing the real-time location of their buses," says Warren Morse, deputy executive officer of Communications. "Riders can see the vehicle's movement, along with the street names and the surrounding area to help them identify their stops as they approach."

Transit TV debuted on Metro buses in 2005. The video monitors offer riders current news, weather and sports headlines, word games, trivia questions and snippets of vintage television shows.

The displays also include rider information, spots about upcoming events in the Los Angeles area and advertisements. Transit TV has been applauded by riders in Metro customer satisfaction surveys. Metro incurs no cost for the system or the new mapping feature.

"Transit TV continues to evolve and improve and over time the program is revised," says Morse. "This is a brand new feature that we think will be helpful to our customers. We also hope it will make their rides more pleasurable."



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Vazgen Vartanian, a Metro software engineer, plans to run the Las Vegas Marathon in early December. He replaces his running shoes several times a year. Photo by Ned Racine.



The Older He Gets, the Faster He Goes: Metro's Vazgen Vartanian

- After completing 60 events, he now targets the Boston Marathon

By NED RACINE

(Nov. 21, 2006) Vazgen Vartanian runs. Running, particularly running marathons, remains his passion, his exercise, his pleasure. It's also good news for his children.

Vartanian feels so good after a run, he tells his three children, "Ask me for whatever you want after I run. The answer will always be 'yes.' "

Remarkably, Vartanian, 57, runs faster as he grows older. He recently finished first in his age group at the Long Beach International Marathon, with a time of three hours and 24 minutes (4:24).

Since he first ran the Los Angeles Marathon in 1994, Vartanian has completed 60 marathons, running the Los Angeles Marathon 13 times. He completes an average of five marathons each year, not counting the half-marathons he enters. No wonder he replaces his running shoes several times each year.

Vartanian, a Metro software engineer, displayed an early aptitude for distance running. He finished the 1994 Los Angeles Marathon, his first marathon, with a time of 4:33. "The second year, when I ran the same

marathon...I dropped one hour," Vartanian recalls. "It was amazing."



No Sweat: Runner Vartanian clinches the medal for Los Angeles Marathon XVIII in 2003.

Wasn't a distance runner

Playing soccer as a child in his native Iran, Vartanian never ran long distances. When he emigrated to the United States in 1986, the year he began working for the SRTD, he continued playing soccer. But as more players missed their soccer matches, Vartanian began looking for recreation he could pursue by himself.

When he first started, Vartanian could only run two or three minutes. He worked to increase the distance he ran, not the speed. "Probably in less than a year, I was able to run my first LA Marathon," he said.

What runs through Vartanian's mind while he runs a marathon? Scenery, perhaps? "I'm thinking about managing my pace and time," he insists "Believe me, I'm not thinking of anything else." He also carefully monitors his body's condition.

The Las Vegas Marathon remains Vartanian's favorite race, in part because he likes to run uphill. On his horizon awaits the United States' most famous marathon, the Boston Marathon, run in mid-April.

"I am very well qualified to run the Boston Marathon," Vartanian explains. "Once in my lifetime, I want to do it." Vartanian can qualify for the field of the Boston Marathon because his time is so low within his age group, 50 to 59.

Devoted to running

One reason Vartanian's finish times are dropping may be his devotion to his running.

"I try to run six miles every single day," he says. "But on the weekend, that is my long distance run. For instance, on Saturday I start at the regular hours, 5:30 or 6 a.m., and I run close to 20 miles, 18 miles. It depends on the time I have. Never less than 15 miles. Sundays, I run 13 or 14 miles."

Vartanian runs approximately 60 miles each week. He runs early in the morning, so he does not miss time with his family. If you live in the San Gabriel Valley, you might see him running in the mountains above Burbank, Glendale and La Canada/Flintridge.

Vartanian said he will run marathons until his body stops him. "Thank God, I have no problem with my knees or hips."



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Funeral Services Set for Metro’s Rudy Martinez



Rudy Martinez

(Nov. 22, 2006) Funeral services are scheduled Monday, Nov. 27, for Rudy Martinez, a payroll clerk in Accounting, who died Nov. 19 in a motorcycle accident in Upland.

A viewing will be held beginning at 5 p.m. at the Stone Funeral Home, 355 East 9th St. in Upland (909-982-1369), to be followed by a funeral service at 6:30 p.m.

Burial is scheduled for 11 a.m., Tuesday, Nov. 28, at Forest Lawn Memorial Park, 1712 South Glendale Ave. in Glendale (800-204-3131).

Martinez, 52, joined the SCRTD in 1978 and had reached his 28th year with Metro. For the past seven years, he had worked as a payroll clerk in the Accounting Department.

A resident of Upland, he is survived by six children and his mother.





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Former Southland Transit Official Guilty in Illegal Sale of Passes

(Nov. 22, 2006) A former Southland Transit operations manager pleaded guilty to grand theft in Compton Superior Court, earlier this month. She had been charged with selling Metro \$3 day passes to illegal street vendors.

Bertha Island, 49, of Compton, was sentenced, Nov. 14, to three years' felony probation and jail time served.

She was arrested, Jan. 31, 2006 after Sheriff's Detective Keith Schumaker observed her selling three books of 50 day passes with a total value of \$450 to a street vendor.

A search of Island's home turned up books of day passes dated for use Feb. 2, 2006, and \$150 in cash she allegedly received from the street vendor.

Her former employer, Southland Transit, is under contract to provide service on six Metro lines in the San Gabriel Valley from a bus yard in Baldwin Park.



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Judge Denies BRU Motion to Extend Portions of Consent Decree

(Nov. 28, 2006) U.S. District Judge Terry Hatter has denied the Bus Riders Union's latest – and perhaps final – motion to amend a court order and extend portions of the federal Consent Decree.

In an order dated Nov. 21, Hatter refused to reconsider his Oct. 24 order allowing the 10-year-old Consent Decree to expire on schedule, but giving him jurisdiction until Nov. 30, 2010 over Metro's New Service Plan. That plan involves implementation of additional Metro Rapid lines.

The BRU's motion claimed that it would be necessary to extend sections of the Consent Decree pertaining to new bus service, the Joint Working Group, the Special Master and attorney's fees.

Attorneys for Metro argued that the BRU had presented no new evidence to the court, that the original order was correct, and that there had been no changes in the law that would require the judge to reconsider his order.

"Looking at the totality of the circumstances, there was no basis for reconsideration," said Assistant County Counsel Charles Safer. "We'll proceed with implementing the New Service Plan as Metro had intended to (and will) carry out the spirit of the Consent Decree."



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Rail Grads>Class of 11-06: Arthur Fontanez, Darrell Wuest, Tonisha Moore, Ernest Matthews, Armando Medina, Jeanne Henderson, Richard Lira, Hector Garcia (not pictured)Middle row: Norma Martinez, Edward de Hoyos, Andrea Watkins, Bonita Geyen. Foreground: Instructors Arnold Johnson, Cristobal Medina and Gerald Harper.



One by One: Rail GM Gerald Francis presents certificate to each graduate. Pictured here, from left, are Hector Garcia, Armando Medina and Arthur Fontanez.



Year's End Graduating Class of Rail Operators Adds 12 to Metro Rail Ranks

- Class Valedictorian: West African woman is the first woman from her native Camaroon to become a train operator

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(Nov. 28, 2006) Jeanne Henderson always wanted to be a train operator, even though the West African country of Camaroon where she was born doesn't even have a rail transportation system that could comfortably compare to Metro Rail.

After wending her way from her native Camaroon to France and then the United States, Henderson signed

on with Metro as a bus operator in 2004 but the chance of becoming a train operator meant a long wait for the coveted position.

But on Nov.20, Henderson was among 12 proud newly certified operators at a graduation ceremony at Metro Headquarters, where she was singled out for honors by her peers. Henderson was named Class Valedictorian of the grueling, seven-week intensive training course that UTU Local 1565 Chairman Tim Del Cambre likens to “studying for the Bar.”



Rail GM Gerald Francis and UTU Local 1565 Chairman Tim Del Cambre came to celebrate.

Henderson, obviously moved and surprised by the action of her peers, said: “I appreciate my teachers and my classmates. You helped me with the language and interpreted the ‘railroad language’ for me. I learned it with your help. I love you guys!”



Rail GM Gerald Francis congratulates graduates and Class Valedictorian Jeanne Henderson.

With Henderson at the helm, the November graduating class of Metro Rail train operators added 12 more to the ranks of some 200 rail operators who pilot several tons of steel and technology through the countywide maze of tracks and tunnels to transport more than 18 percent of the total Metro System ridership.

“The expertise acquired and achieved by operators ensures quality service,” Rail General Manager Gerald Francis told the group of graduates.

One by one, Francis presented each graduate with an official certificate and a new employee badge made distinctive by its rail identification.

“It takes lots of sacrifice and teamwork,” said Francis, with a nod to family members who attended the ceremony. “Everybody here bonded together to make it possible for these graduates to achieve this goal.”



Among the family members and friends invited to the luncheon was Henderson's brother, Joe, who traveled from France to videotape and photograph his sister's graduation for the family in Camaroon, where his pictures are likely to be displayed with great fanfare. "She is the first woman in Camaroon to become a train operator," he said through a translator.

Photos by Gayle Anderson

Training consists of an overview of the rail system and concentrated instruction on rules and procedures followed by hands-on yard operation, mainline operation and procedures specific to operation of each Rail Line. All 12 trained as Metro Red Line train operators at Division 20, said Linda Leone, Rail Instruction manager.

The class, officially certified Nov. 17, was directed by rail training instructors Karl Williams and Arnold Johnson, who were assisted in the task by rail instructors Cristobal Medina and Esther Pippins.

The new operators will continue in their current assignments in bus divisions until they rotate into operations. The new operators are Arthur Fontanez, Darrell Wuest, Edward de Hoyos, Richard Lira, Tonisha Moore, Ernest Matthews, Armando Medina, Hector Garcia, Norma Martinez, Andrea Watkins, Bonita Geyen and Jeanne Henderson.



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Deputies Arrest Man Suspected of \$80,000 in Graffiti Damages

- Joseph Flores is a suspect in 44 vandalism cases

(Nov. 29, 2006) A Los Angeles man accused of causing some \$80,000 in graffiti damages to Metro buses is now in jail awaiting a Superior Court date in mid-December.

Sheriff's deputies arrested Joseph V. Flores, 21, at his home Nov. 16 and charged him with felony vandalism. He is suspected in 44 cases of vandalism over a three-year period.

Most of the damage was to buses assigned to Metro Lines 76, 256, 376 and 267 out of San Gabriel Valley Division 9.

A search of the residence turned up examples of graffiti "monikers," graffiti tools, bus maps and day passes, and a photo that appears to show the suspect scrawling his moniker on a bus windshield, according to an investigation report.

Sheriff's Dep. Leo Castro of the Transit Services Bureau's Special Problems Unit led the investigation.



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Metro Volunteers honored during the luncheon were Fe Alcid-Little, Juan Augspurger, Sandra Barillas, Dixie Dorsett, Bobby Fung, Jessica Gil, Charles Jackson, Anthony Lawson, Andre Molett, William Moore, Lynn Ong, Geraldine Payne, Marco Pedemonte, Casell Scott, Wally Shidler, Mary Talbert, Linda Tam, Andrew Trujillo, Robert Vasquez and Renee Willis. Joining them in the photo are Deputy Executive Officer Warren Morse of Marketing and Rich Morallo, Metro Volunteer coordinator.



Photos by Bill Heard

Metro Honors Volunteers Who Staff Community Events

(Nov. 29, 2006) The volunteers who help promote Metro in local communities, key staff, and the community partners who work with them, were honored, Tuesday, during an awards luncheon at Metro Headquarters.

The Metro Volunteers – about 200 in all – give Metro “a face in the community,” said Communications Chief Matt Raymond in his welcoming remarks. He thanked them for the personal time they spend providing transit safety information and promotional literature at community events.

Volunteers, who are a mix of headquarters and operating division employees, are called on to staff Metro information and safety booths at a wide variety of events that can range from a local block party to a school safety or career day to a home show at a major convention center.

“The volunteers do this on their personal time,” said Rich Morallo, Metro Volunteer coordinator. “About 95 percent of community requests are on Saturdays.”

Personal awards

Each of the volunteers who attended the luncheon received a gift bag with



Among those receiving awards at the luncheon were San Gabriel Valley Division 9 Operator Juan Augspurger, shown here with Deputy Executive Officer Warren Morse. In the mid-1980s, Augspurger was a founding member of the Division Advisory Committee, which evolved into the Metro Volunteer program.

an appropriate award – a Metro pin for staffing three events, a Metro T-shirt for five events and a tote bag for working at seven or more events.



Community Partners who attended Tuesday's luncheon are shown here with Metro staff. From left are Volunteer Coordinator Rich Morallo, Regina Howard, Jennifer Victoria, Deputy Executive Officer Linda Bybee of Community Relations, Johanna Gin, Wajeha Bilal, Wanda Wallace and Wally Shidler, a member of the Gateway Cities Sector Governance Council.

Representatives of Metro's Community Partners also attended the awards luncheon. More than 100 partners from all parts of LA County keep the agency informed about local activities and extend invitations to the events.

In addition, 10 "key staff" members who help coordinate the Metro Volunteer activities and provide resources and materials received awards.

To become a Metro Volunteer, contact Morallo at 922-2338 or at volunteers@metro.net. Volunteers should be interested in devoting personal time on the weekends and like talking with people about transit safety, Metro services and job opportunities.

Key Metro staff members receiving awards at the luncheon are, from left, Anna Mercaldi, Sarah Winfrey, Victoria Woods, and Helen Ortiz-Gilstrap. With them, from left are Deputy Executive Officer Lynda Bybee, Deputy Executive Officer Warren Morse and Metro Volunteer Coordinator Rich Morallo.



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Sector Governance Council Meetings Scheduled for December

- No meeting set for San Gabriel Valley Council

By RICK JAGER

(Nov. 30, 2006) Four of Metro's five service sector governance councils will hold their regular monthly public meetings in December to discuss various transportation issues in their service sectors.

- The San Gabriel Valley Service Sector will not hold a December meeting. The following is a list of the governance councils' December meetings.
- San Fernando Valley Service Sector, 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 6, Marvin Braude Constituent Service Center, 6262 Van Nuys Blvd., Van Nuys.
- Westside/Central Service Sector, 5 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 13, La Cienega Tennis Center, Sunset Room, 325 S. La Cienega Blvd., Beverly Hills.
- Gateway Service Sector, 2 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 14, The Gas Company, 9240 Firestone Blvd., Downey.
- South Bay Service Sector, 9:30 a.m., Friday, Dec. 8, Carson Community Center, Room 206, 801 E. Carson, Carson.



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Employees Have Submitted 75-Plus Bus Operator Referrals

- Program pays employees \$300 for each successful applicant
- HR has developed an information card for use in recruiting

(Nov. 30, 2006) Metro employees have submitted more than 75 job candidate leads in Metro's Bus Operator Referral Program – and stand a good chance at receiving \$300 each for their effort.

Human Resources launched the program in September as a means to help fill almost 300 bus operator vacancies. The agency offers \$300 to any full- or part-time employee who recruits a successful external bus operator candidate.

HR is now screening the bus operator applicants recruited by employees, scheduling written testing and interview dates.

To assist employees in the recruiting effort, HR has designed a new wallet-size card that includes all the information needed to help a job prospect determine whether he or she meets the minimum bus operator requirements.

The card is available to employees at the HR Employment Office on the Plaza level and also will be available by Dec. 4 from transportation and maintenance managers at the bus and rail divisions and at the Regional Rebuild Center.

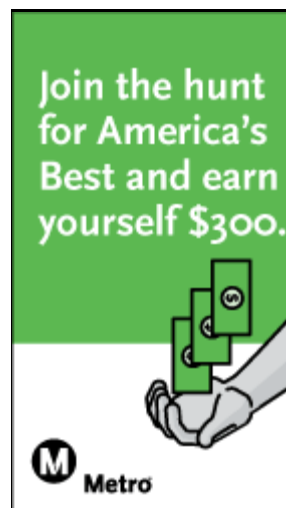
Requirements for operators

Metro is looking for candidates who are at least 21 years old, have had a valid driver's license for a minimum of two years and have a satisfactory driving record. Candidates also should be able to speak, read and write English and have at least six months of experience working with the public.

HR also is developing a postcard-sized "interest card" prospective candidates can fill out and mail to receive a Metro job application packet, according to Jeannette Bell, senior HR analyst.

The MTA Job Application Form also can be found by going to the Human Resources web page on the Intranet at myMetro.net or on the Internet at Metro.net and clicking on Forms, Etc., then finding the form in the alphabetical listing.

For more information about the Bus Operator Referral Program, contact



Flip the card with your mouse to see the qualification check list.

Jeannette Bell at 922-7134. The Metro Employment Office also has copies of a bus operator recruiting pamphlet, entitled "America's best offers you the best. Drive a Metro Bus," that describes the pay and benefits available to bus operators.

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Photos by April McKay



Careening vehicles collide and crash into Wilshire Customer Center

The day started off with a bang, Tuesday, Nov. 28, for the newly renovated Wilshire Customer Center when two cars collided at the major intersection of Wilshire Blvd. and La Brea Ave., and crashed into the Wilshire Center. The collision, involving a van and another vehicle, reportedly occurred at 5:45 a.m. before any staff had arrived for work. "Two bollards were knocked down and two windows were broken and the framing is bent," reported April McKay, Director, Customer Programs and Services. The accident occurred almost four years after a similar incident on Dec. 8, 2002, when an out-of-control car smashed into another and sent it spinning into the center's front door. Following that accident, bollards were installed to minimize potential damages. It was a fortuitous action. "The car would have ended up in the lobby if those bollards hadn't stopped it," said Vanessa Smith,



Customer Programs and Services manager. The center recently underwent a \$60,000 improvement project and a grand re-opening is a mere five weeks away. "I don't anticipate that this will affect our grand re-opening," said McKay. Metro's Wilshire Customer Center serves 170,000 patrons a year and houses Metro's Lost and Found operation.
– from Gayle Anderson

