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Services Scheduled for James W. Cragin, Former Metro Board Member

- James Cragin was instrumental in setting Metro's clean-air policy



James Cragin
1924-2007

By NED RACINE

(Jan. 18, 2007) A Saturday mass is scheduled for James W. Cragin, a former member of the Metro Board, who died Jan. 13 after a long battle with Parkinson's disease and cancer. Cragin was 82.

A rosary will be said for the former Gardena councilman at 7 p.m., Friday, at St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church in Gardena. At 11 a.m. the next day, a mass will be celebrated at St. Anthony's, located at 1050 West 163rd Street, Gardena, CA 90247.

Cragin will be buried at Holy Cross Cemetery, 5835 West Slauson Ave., Culver City.

Born in Los Angeles in 1924, Cragin joined the U. S. Navy after high school and served three years on the USS Idaho during World War II.

He served as president of the Gardena Citizens Advisory committee before being appointed to the Gardena City Council. He later served 17 years as an elected Gardena councilman and was voted into the Gardena Wall of Fame. He also served on the board of the Sybil Brand Institute.



James Cragin, one of the original members of the Metro Board of Directors, receives resolution of commendation from Board Chair Yvonne Burke at board meeting held April 26, 2001, also attended by wife Mary, pictured at right. Cragin, a former mayor of Gardena and a member of the City Council for almost 20 years, represented communities in the South Bay Region of the League of Cities. He had served on the Board since Feb. 1, 1993.

Nominated by the City Selection Committee to serve on the Metro Board in 1993, Cragin remained on the Board through 2001, frequently serving on the Executive Management and Operations committees.

Clean Air Initiative

In a memo to the Board of Directors, CEO Roger Snoble said Cragin was instrumental in adopting Metro's Clean Air Initiative and Policy. Today, Metro operates more than 2,300 alternative fueled Metro buses.

"During his tenure, he spent tireless hours working to improve transportation for Los Angeles County," Snoble wrote. "Metro is a better agency for having known and worked with Director Cragin – a dedicated transit leader. He will be sorely missed."

Cragin is survived by his wife, Mary, and his children Carol, John, Gary, and Larry. His brother, Harold, 25 grandchildren and seven great grandchildren also survive him.

He is also survived by his wife's children Nancy Lye, Kathy Scherer, John Scherer, Bill Scherer, Robert Scherer, Tim Scherer, Paul Scherer and Dave Scherer.

The family asks that any contributions in Cragin's memory be made to the National Parkinson Foundation.