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Metro Choir Wraps Black History Month Celebrations

- "Legends" wows employees and friends in standing-room-only plaza lobby with tributes, awards, and all that jazz.
- Photos by Ned Racine

Click on images below to view>



The Band: Larry Kimpel on electric guitar, Mark Penn on the drums, DonCosta Seawell on the congos.



The Band: Tirrell Dillard on keyboard, Larry Kimpel on electric guitar.



The Band: from left, Tirrell Dillard, Larry Kimpel, Mark Penn, DonCosta Seawell, Tony Martin, Frank Foster, Dave Thomasson and Robert Vasquez.



Metro Choir fills the Plaza level of Metro Headquarters with song and standing-room-only audience.



Guest soloist Alex Isley wowed the crowd with an Ella Fitzgerald favorite "Mr. Paganini."



Rail General Manager Gerald Francis: "My heros, my legends, are my parents."



AAEA officer Keith Hanson, in traditional garb, multitasks: running the AV equipment and sings in the choir, though not necessarily at the same time.



Mistress of Ceremonies Victoria Woods.



With a montage of Arthur Winston on the screen, Mistress of Ceremonies Victoria



Tahir Davis sings Luther Vandross.



The Band - Frank Foster, Robert Vasquez, Dave Thomasson.



Pauline Lee and Choir Director Renee Willis do the honors.

Woods narrates tribute to Legends past



Special Award: Chief Operating Officer Carolyn Flowers is honored as present-day Legend in our own time.



Special Award: On the basketball court and in the courthouse, County Counsel George Parks is a Living Legend.



Guest soloist Priscilla Stroud honors Billie Holiday with her rendition of "Good Morning Heartache."



Following a special tribute to Metro custodian Kim Hearn who lost her son in the Iraq war, singer Priscilla Stroud adds words of comfort.



Tahir Davis leads the choir in "I've Been Looking for You"



Keynote speaker Rev. Eric Lee: 30-minute message in five minutes flat.



AAEA honors Choir Director Renee Willis.



Thanks for the sharing, the talent, and, oh, those many practice sessions.


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## Board Calls for Study of Wi-Fi Internet Service for Riders

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- [Item 29. Pavement Engineering Services](#)
- [Item 11. Vermont/Santa Monica Development](#)
- [Item 34. Design/Build Capital Projects](#)
- [Item 37. Rail Car Window Vandalism](#)
- [Item 7. Congestion Mitigation Fee Study](#)

(March 1, 2007) The Metro Board voted at its February meeting for a study of how to provide Wi-Fi Internet service to riders on Metro Rail and the Orange Line.

In other action, the Board approved more Metro Rapid Express lines, continued testing of the Orange Line paving, a Joint Development Agreement for a Vermont/Santa Monica Development, among other motions.

**Item 21, Wi-Fi Service Study.** The Board directed the Metro staff to conduct a "preliminary feasibility assessment" of Wi-Fi Internet service on all four Metro Rail lines and the Metro Orange Line. The staff was directed to work with cellular carriers and other wireless service providers to determine "if there is a no-cost alternative" to provide Wi-Fi Internet service with "open access" to customers, regardless of their Internet service provider.

A report with recommendations on how to proceed is due back to the Board in April.

**Item 33, Metro Rapid Express.** The Board approved three additional Metro Rapid Express routes, following its earlier approval of a Wilshire Metro Rapid Express.

The staff will now implement three additional Metro Rapid Express corridors: the Hawthorne Metro Rapid, the Van Nuys Metro Rapid and the Crenshaw Metro Rapid. The staff recommended implementing the Hawthorne and Wilshire Metro Rapid Express routes in June 2007 as a pilot program.

The Hawthorne Metro Rapid Express route would make only six stops between downtown LA and Redondo Beach. The Wilshire Metro Rapid Express would make only five stops between Wilshire/Vermont and 4th Street in Santa Monica.

**Item 29, Pavement Engineering Services.** Acting on committee

authority, the Construction Committee voted to authorize the CEO to extend a contract for pavement engineering services, in order to continue testing Metro Orange Line pavement construction.

Approval of the motion adds an amount not-to-exceed \$130,000 to a contract held by LaBelle-Marvin Inc., raising the total contract value from \$150,400 to \$280,400.

**Item 11, Vermont/Santa Monica Development.** The Board authorized the CEO to enter into a Joint Development Agreement with a developer interested in leasing approximately 1.1 acres of Metro property adjoining the Vermont/Santa Monica Red Line station.

The developer, who owns adjacent property to the Red Line station, hopes to develop a mixed-use residential and retail project. The parcel, located on the southwest corner of Vermont Avenue and Santa Monica Boulevard, serves as a plaza and portal to the Metro Red Line station.

**Item 34, Design/Build Capital Projects.** The Board authorized the CEO to solicit and award design/build contracts for renovation, repair and construction at Metro facilities.

Affected by the design/build contracts would be \$25 million in Capital Program projects previously approved by the Board. These include:

A Division 18 solar generation project, including the installation of photovoltaic panels at the division.

Yard security upgrades and closed circuit television installations at Metro bus operating facilities and passenger terminals.

**Item 37, Rail Car Window Vandalism.** The Board authorized the CEO to award a 24-month \$298,036 contract to Alvarez Graffiti Guards for rail car window vandal protection sheets.

The sheets protect the appearance of 225 Metro rail vehicles. They protect the 16 to 32 windows on each rail vehicle from graffiti and vandalism, avoiding permanent damage to the windows.

**Item 7, Congestion Mitigation Fee Study.** The Board approved an amended motion to provide guiding principles for the Countywide Congestion Mitigation Fee Study. Work is currently underway to explore the feasibility of a mitigation fee on new development and to provide recommendations to the Metro Board this fall. As amended by the Board, transit-oriented developments would be exempted.

If implemented, a mitigation fee program could generate revenue for cities to use in building local projects with regional benefit, and which would address the impact of new development. In addition, the program would help cities meet their local responsibilities under the state-mandated Congestion Management Program.


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## Sector Governance Council Meetings Scheduled for March

By RICK JAGER

(March 1, 2007) Metro's five service sector governance councils will hold their regular monthly public meetings in March to discuss various transportation issues in their service sectors, including proposed service modifications and improvements slated to be implemented in June.

Service sector staff recommendations on Metro Bus service modifications before the governance councils follow last month's public hearings on proposed service changes in the five service sectors.

The March governance council meetings are scheduled at:

- San Fernando Valley Service Sector, 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, March 7, Marvin Braude Constituent Service Center, 6262 Van Nuys Blvd., Van Nuys.
- Gateway Service Sector, 2 p.m., Thursday, March 8, The Gas Company, 9240 Firestone Blvd., Downey.
- South Bay Service Sector, 9:30 a.m., Friday, March 9, Carson Division 18, 450 West Griffith St., Carson.
- San Gabriel Valley Service Sector, 5 p.m., Monday, March 12, at the sector offices, 3369 Santa Anita Ave., El Monte.
- Westside/Central Service Sector, 5 p.m., Wednesday, March 14, La Cienega Tennis Center, Sunset Room, 325 S. La Cienega Blvd., Beverly Hills.





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## Photo Op Wednesday: Calling all Marathoners - Runners and Bikers!

(more photo options below)



Sangeeta Patel credits her mentor and Legacy runner Everett Wilson for her first Marathon medal in 2006. **How did she do *this* year?** Legacy runners are the elite group of original marathoners who have stayed the course and collected medals for all 22 L.A. marathons. **How did he do *this* year?** Stay tuned for the myMetro.net rundown on Metro runners and bikers.

## We want the bragging rights!

Congratulations on running or biking L.A. Marathon XXII. We'd like to celebrate your great achievement. Choose one or more of the photo options listed below.

- Group photo opportunity in the Gateway plaza lobby, **Wednesday, at 10 a.m.** and at **4 p.m.** - **please bring your medal** and **your smile**, OR
- 2) e-mail photo taken at the Marathon, if you have one, OR
- 3) make special arrangements with us for a photo on Wednesday or Thursday morning - bring your medal and we'll take your picture whenever it works, whatever it takes, OR
- 4) get your group together and have someone take a great photo of you with your medal (medals) and send it to us in an e-mail.
- e-mail (this week) to [andersonga@metro.net](mailto:andersonga@metro.net)



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**Bound for Glory:** Rail General Manager Gerald Francis and CEO Roger Snoble take the United States Olympic Committee on a tour of ready-made infrastructure for the 2016 games.



### LA's Bid for the 2016 Olympics: Metro Hosts Committee Members

By JODY LITVAK

(March 6, 2007) Remember the 1984 Olympic Games? The festive atmosphere? Free-flowing traffic? Well, Los Angeles – and Metro – might get the chance again.

The United States Olympic Committee (USOC) was in town last week to evaluate LA's bid to host the 2016 Olympic Games. The bid is being prepared by the Southern California Committee for the Olympic Games (SCCOG), which also hosted and organized the visit.

On Thursday, CEO Roger Snoble was introduced to USOC members by swimmer Janet Evans, a two-time Olympian and multiple medal winner. He highlighted Metro's ability to move the many spectators, athletes and officials during the Olympic Games. Unlike 1984 when LA last hosted the Olympics, the region now has an extensive passenger rail network that would play a critical role.

Photos by Jody Litvak

"Metro Rail will serve 22 of the proposed venues," he told Committee officials. With Metrolink included, 29 of 33 venues will be served by rail. The local bid committee has calculated that 94 percent of all the projected tickets available are for events that will be served by rail.

Local Olympic planners have in fact chosen many venues because of their proximity to rail with the Metro Blue Line playing a key role. Event "clusters" are planned for Long Beach, the Home Depot Center in Carson, and the USC/Exposition Park area. The Exposition Line, currently under construction, will also serve many of the same USC/Exposition Park venues.

**Easy access to key venues**

Coming into downtown, both lines would provide easy access to key event venues, the Main Media Center, and the Headquarters Hotel, all located at or near the Staples Center, the Los Angeles Convention Center, and the new LA Live complex.

The Metro Gold Line would provide access for football (soccer) at the Rose Bowl. The Gold Line Eastside Extension would provide access for hockey at East LA College. The Metro Green Line would provide access to indoor volleyball at The Forum.

Beyond rail, Snoble described Metro's bus fleet, LA's extensive network of freeways and major arterials, and how all those resources help to move large crowds.

"We also have vast experience in moving large numbers of people for special events that often occur at multiple locations at the same time," he told the group.

He pointed to Metro's track record with the annual Rose Parade and Rose Bowl, Long Beach Grand Prix, USC and UCLA football games, sporting and entertainment events at the Staples Center, the Los Angeles Marathon, 2000 Democratic Convention, and more.

**A first-hand experience**

Metro stepped up again Friday morning to give USOC members a first-hand experience on the Blue Line. Following visits to the Home Depot Center in Carson and the Long Beach Convention Center, the delegation boarded the Blue Line at the First Street station in Long Beach.



On board the Metro Blue Line, CEO Snoble tells the delegation: "Metro Rail will serve 22 of the proposed venues."

While they were being whisked to the Pico station and Staples Center, Snoble – accompanied by Metro Rail General Manager Gerald Francis – gave an overview of the Metro system and answered questions from committee officials and the media.

“We would like to thank Roger Snoble and everyone at Metro,” said Barry Sanders, SCCOG Chairman. “You were critical to demonstrating Los Angeles’ ability to put on a successful Olympic Games. I am sure our visitors were enormously impressed – I know I was.”

The USOC also will visit Chicago, the other American city hoping to host the Olympic Games, on March 5 and 6. On April 14, the USOC will announce which city will be the American bidder to compete internationally for the 2016 Olympic Games.

The International Olympic Committee is expected to announce its decision in 2009. Other cities expected to compete include Madrid, New Delhi, Rio de Janeiro, Rome and Tokyo.



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Rail Transportation Manager Davide Puglisi tallies operator Tu Phan's performance in the 2005 competition.

Photo by Luis Inzunza

## Metro Rail Rodeo Set for Saturday – Families Invited

- Competition begins at 8 a.m.; family event at 10 a.m. features fun for kids and BBQ lunch

(March 6, 2007) Train operators and rail maintenance technicians have been sharpening their skills for one of the year's most important events – the 2007 Metro Rail Rodeo, scheduled Saturday at Red Line Division 20.

The competition will begin at 8 a.m. for the train operators and maintenance specialists. The winners of this year's Rail Rodeo – two train operators and a three-member maintenance team – will represent Metro at the APTA International Rail Rodeo in Toronto, June 2.

Employees, their families and guests, are invited to attend the family portion of the event, beginning at 10 a.m. in the division parking lot, located at 320 South Santa Fe Ave., Los Angeles.

The family event will feature music and a kid's jumper, the Metro Experience mobile theater, displays by the Sheriff's Transit Services Bureau and LA County Fire Department, booths sponsored by Metro Safety, a vintage Metro bus, door prizes, a tour of Division 20 and a barbecue lunch.

In preliminary rounds, this year, some 20 train operators completed the customer service exam, pre-departure inspection and safety quiz portions of the event. In the local finals, Saturday, nine operators will participate

in the final two segments of the competition – uniform inspection and rail operations course.

The dozen competing maintenance technicians will have nine events – an electronics quiz, rail mechanics and safety, electronic circuit troubleshooting, air conditioning troubleshooting, rail wheel fault diagnosis, “mystery box,” parts identification, missing circuit component identification and safety equipment usage.

Top prizes for Rail Rodeo competitors are a \$500 U.S. Savings Bond for first place, second-place prize of a \$300 Savings Bond and a third-place prize of a \$200 Savings Bond. Other prizes include T-shirts, caps, commemorative pins, back packs and note pads.

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**Bring it on!** Runners pack Metro Rail trains en route to Universal City starting line. To carry those participants, 15 six-car trains operated on six-minute headways between 5:45 a.m. and 7:30 a.m.



Photos by Carolyn Flowers

## Metro Planners Succeed in Adapting Service to New Marathon Route

- 80 bus lines detoured; Red Line carries thousands

By NED RACINE

(March 6, 2007) Metro scored a victory at Sunday's 2007 Los Angeles Marathon, without having to carry a sports bottle.

Because of the Marathon's snaking route from Universal City to Flower and Fifth streets, the 2007 marathon affected Metro's bus routes more than any marathon before. Eighty bus lines were detoured and the Metro Red Line carried thousands of racers and spectators.

"Operationally, from the rail side, everything went probably better than we could have expected, not fully knowing what we were really getting into," said Bruce Shelburne, Rail Division Transportation manager, who noted the Red Line suffered no major delays during the morning or mid-day periods.

Of the 80 detoured bus routes, only two turnaround routes had to be changed Sunday morning. "I'll take that . . . out of 80 detours," laughed Steve Rank, Assistant Operations Control manager, Bus Operations Control.



"People were very appreciative of services and our presence," added Shelburne, who currently estimates that the Red Line carried 60 to 65 percent of Marathon participants, between 15,000 and 16,000 riders.



**On the mark:** Marathoners arrive at Universal City Station.

**15 six-car trains**

To carry those participants, 15 six-car trains operated on six-minute headways between 5:45 a.m. and 7:30 a.m. The trains ran with 10-minute headways between 9:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. It was the largest deployment of Metro Red Line train cars – 90 of 104 – in the line’s history.

The Metro Blue Line operated three-car trains with 12-minute headways between the Long Beach and 7th and Metro stations and six-minute headways between the Imperial/Wilmington and 7th and Metro stations. The Metro Gold Line also ran more trains during the morning hours.



**On the job:** Rail Division Transportation Manager Duane Martin and crew prepare for early

morning rush of runners.

"I can't say enough good things about [the Customer Information staff] helping people," Shelburne said. "It was a lot of one-on-one contact for the day." Employees providing customer information services included representatives from Customer Information, various bus and rail operations departments, Planning and Safety.

"What sticks in my mind—traveling around the system and looking at some of the locations—was the customer service agents . . . latching onto a person, helping them out, making sure they knew where to go. If there was any confusion, that customer service agent would physically take them where they needed to go to board a bus or train," he said.

Rank echoes Shelburne's praise. "I think the most important thing was having the Customer Information staff out there, answering the questions one at a time, face to face. That was absolutely critical."



**Metro Fit:** Ride to the starting line; run back.

### **A challenge for the RRC**

Customer information agents, revenue collection staff, Division Ambassadors, Metro Security officers and Metro volunteers staffed an information table at the Los Angeles Convention Center on Friday and Saturday and helped marathon participants register for the race. Besides selling day passes, the Metro staff and volunteers passed out transit maps, answered questions and provided guidance on riding Metro to the starting line on Sunday.

Rank noted that a particular challenge for the Regional Rebuild Center (RCC), mechanics, was a request from Marathon organizers 48 hours before the event began.

They asked Metro to pick up wheelchair racers at their downtown hotel, transport them and their daily wheelchairs, their racing wheelchairs and their attendants to the starting line.

Beginning Friday morning, RRC mechanics removed all the seats from eight buses and installed wheelchair fasteners. The buses were ready by 4 a.m. Sunday, in time to be driven by transportation operations supervisors and bus operators assigned to Operations Central Instruction.

As for lessons learned, Rank would like to see better coordination among the bus divisions, Bus Operations Control and field supervisors to ensure better bus operator relief during next year's event. He echoes Shelburne's thoughts that more Customer Information staff – approximately 40 worked on Sunday – would be required if the Marathon used the same route again.

"They like hauling people," Shelburne said of the train operators' enthusiasm for their Marathon tasks and for carrying 800 or 900 riders per train. "They know everyone is counting on them."

"All the planning paid off," Rank said.

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## Metro Rail GM Gerald Francis Headed to Washington Metro

- Resignation effective March 30; no successor named yet



Metro Rail General Manager Gerald Francis.

(March 7, 2007) Metro Rail General Manager Gerald Francis said Tuesday he will resign from the agency, effective March 30, to take a position as deputy general manager of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA).

Francis will join his former boss, John Catoe, who resigned as Metro's deputy CEO in January to become general manager of WMATA. Francis will begin his new job, April 2; a successor has not yet been named at Metro.

"Gerald has been an integral part of Metro's team for the past five years and I have truly enjoyed working with him for the past 13 years (in Dallas and Los Angeles)," said CEO Roger Snoble. "While he will absolutely be missed, I wish him nothing but the best in his new position in Washington, D.C."

Francis joined Metro in January, 2002 after serving as vice president of Rail Operations for Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART).

During his tenure as Metro Rail chief, Francis, 53, oversaw the startup of the Metro Gold Line, a track reconstruction project on the Metro Green Line, and multi-million dollar upgrades of radio communications, surveillance and security equipment on the rail system and at the Rail Operations Center.

### Readied new rail cars

The AnsaldoBreda 2550 rail car prototype was received and tested and the first 2550 production cars were received and began testing for revenue service while he led Metro Rail.

He also instituted express service on the Metro Gold Line and increased late-night service hours on all rail lines. During his time at the agency, Metro Rail experienced a substantial increase in ridership.

Reflecting back on a rail staff retreat shortly after he arrived at Metro in 2002, Francis said, "We all sat down and decided the path we would take in rail operations. From that point on, we've accomplished everything we set out to do."

He thanked the rail staff "for allowing me to be a part of their team. We have an excellent team, everyone in rail operations."

### 'Five years a blessing'

He also thanked members of the Board “for their support and commitment to stand behind me in revitalizing the rail system. These last five years have been a blessing for me to work at Metro.”

And as for what he considers his “last hoorah” – Metro’s effort during Sunday’s LA Marathon – Francis said, “I want to thank everyone in Rail Operations and elsewhere in the agency who participated in making that operation a success. It was a good show; I couldn’t have asked for a better sendoff!”

Noting that WMATA’s rail system has some 750,000 boardings a day, a number that increases to 800,000 or more during tourist season, Francis expects to face a number of challenges as the new deputy general manager.

Prior to joining Metro, Francis worked for six years at DART as manager of Central Rail Operations and then as senior manager and vice president for Rail Operations. He was involved in start-ups on the agency’s light-rail line.

Prior to DART, Francis was transportation supervisor and controller of the light-rail start-up program in St. Louis. He began his transportation career in 1979 with the Union Pacific Railroad, where he held positions as manager of Safety, manager of Terminal Operations and manager of Yard and Industry Operations.

Francis is a business administration graduate of Creighton University in Omaha. He and his wife, Michelle, have three grown children, Shawna, Gerald, Jr., and Nicole.



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## New Service Bay Protects Division 4 Mechanics, Vehicles From Elements

By ELIZABETH LEIDER

(March 7, 2007) A repair building handed over to Metro's Non-Revenue Division 4 in Downey, last month, will protect mechanics and heavy-duty machinery from the elements.

Working on vehicles in rain, fog or other damp conditions creates "slip and fall dangers and can short out electronic systems in the heavy duty equipment," said Michael Stange, supervisor of Equipment Maintenance. "Working on hot engines in the sun also creates an intolerable environment for the workers."

After almost a year of construction, the \$1.2-million covered service bay is fully operational.

At 80 feet long by 48 feet deep, with a peak height of 28 feet, 11 inches, the service bay can house diesel trucks, large equipment tow trucks, bucket trucks, tractor trailers and even the Metro Experience mobile theater, which calls Division 4 home.

The covered service area has two bays for working on larger vehicles, including Metro's 11 giant tow trucks which weigh 31,500 pounds each, but the repair building can also house four smaller vehicles simultaneously.

According to Harold Torres, assistant manager of Equipment Maintenance, the new covered service bay was built for Division 4 because of the pending closure of Metro's South Park repair facility, where heavy repair and maintenance is currently done.

The new bay will compensate for the "displacement of South Park workers and vehicles," Stange explained.

In addition to the covered service bay, a car wash was built, and a Metro-owned lot adjacent to Division 4 was paved for the parking and



Harold Torres, assistant manager of Equipment Maintenance at Division 4, shows off his new baby, a \$1.2 million covered service bay. Torres stands in the bay the day before his staff began moving equipment into the building. Photo by Ned Racine.

storage of additional non-revenue vehicles.

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## UTU, ATU, TCU Employees May Now Carry Over Vacation Hours

- Request form due to Payroll Department by April 1
- [Click here](#) to download form for faxing or mail. (pdf)

(March 7, 2007) Some members of Metro's three major unions – UTU, ATU and TCU – have a decision to make by April 1 concerning their vacation hours.

Under the most recently negotiated contracts, members of the three unions now may elect to “carry over” a limited number of vacation hours from one year to another.

The contract provision affects vacation hours earned between June 1, 2005 and May 31, 2006.

The provision allows ATU and TCU members to carry over into the next contract year any amount of vacation up to 40 hours. UTU members who plan to take advantage of the new provision are required to carry over an exact total of 40 hours.

Any hours that remain in an employee's vacation bank as of May 31 and have not been designated for carryover will be paid in full.

The “Request for Vacation Carryover” form union members must complete is available at the operating divisions and must be turned in by April 1 to the Payroll Department, Gateway Building, Mail Stop 99-20-1 or by FAX to 922-6821. For further information, employees may call Arif Motiwala at 922-6843.





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When he's not leading a team of service attendants at Division 10, Senior Service Attendant Caesar Murillo coaches baseball at San Dimas High School. Photo by Elizabeth Leider.



## Metro's Caesar Murillo Knows All About the Rewards of Coaching

- For more than 20 years, he's helped shape kids lives

By ELIZABETH LEIDER

(March. 8, 2007) When kids talk to Caesar Murillo they get lively stories and seasoned advice. "My kids have always done well. That's one of the things I'm really proud of," says Murillo, a senior Metro service attendant and charismatic high school coach.

Murillo has been coaching football and baseball for more than 20 years. It began as a way to spend time with his children and grew into his passion. "In a sense it's like not growing up because I'm doing it through my kids."

Murillo's in his 18th year with Metro, currently at Gateway Division 10. He spent his first 13 years working the graveyard shift so he could coach during the day.

His debut stint in youth sports was as a gym teacher for the Alhambra School District, grades 4 through 8. Since 1985, Murillo has coached at San Gabriel High School, Sierra Vista High School, La Puente High School and, from 2001 until now, at San Dimas High School.

Within five minutes you can tell why many of the youngsters Murillo has coached have turned out so well.

**A pivotal role**

“From the ninth grade on, those are the most important years of your life,” says Murillo. As a coach, he plays a pivotal role in helping the kids find their way.

Some of his former athletes have played professional baseball with teams such as the Texas Rangers, Pittsburgh Pirates and Los Angeles Dodgers. A few have played college football at schools like Boise State University.

Over the years, Murillo has tried to quit coaching. His wife of 38 years, Yolanda, wants him to take a break, but Murillo just can’t seem to give up this “very rewarding” lifestyle. “The biggest reward is when the players remember and acknowledge you. Those are the things that make a difference.”

It’s always a pleasant surprise when Murillo runs into former students. “The fun thing is when you go to a game and they’ll see you and say, ‘Hey coach come here, I want to introduce you to my friends.’ And you’ll get to go down to the bull pen.”

Former students seem to have the same comment when they see their old coach, they thank him for making such a difference in their lives.

And as Murillo knows, “those are the things that make coaching special.”

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Mineta Transportation Institute director Rod Diridon addresses COMTO meeting Feb. 21 in the lobby of Metro Headquarters.



Photos by Gayle Anderson

## COMTO Meeting Keeps On Track with Noted Transportation Officials

- Mineta Transportation Institute director [Rod Diridon](#) was featured speaker
- U.S. Transportation Secretary Mary Peters, Caltrans Director Will Kempton also spoke

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(March 8, 2007) The general membership meeting of the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO) - held recently at Metro Headquarters - left no doubt that the organization, which supports and encourages the involvement of minority professionals in transportation programs, is a vigorous and vital component of the transportation agenda both in the region and nationally.

Attended by professionals in transportation ranging from administrators on all levels to transit officials, members gathered to meet featured speaker Rod Diridon, Sr, who provided top-level insight on transportation programs. Diridon is the executive director of the Mineta Transportation Institute and a ranking member of the California High Speed Rail Authority.

Just before the program was about to start, the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission completed its



U.S. Transportation Secretary Mary Peters was introduced by LADOT General Manager Gloria

two-day “field hearing” meeting underway in the Metro Board Room. Following the hearing, LADOT General Manager and COMTO member Gloria Jeff invited U.S. Transportation Secretary Mary E. Peters and Caltrans Director Will Kempton to address the COMTO membership.

“Having Secretary Peters and Will Kempton stop at the podium to acknowledge COMTO was a real kudo for members,” said COMTO steering committee member Helen Ortiz-Gilstrap.

Diridon spoke about the history of transportation in California and the role General Motors, Goodyear and automakers played in transforming major transit rail corridors into highways and freeways. Ironically, heavy congestion on those freeways is now the reason the public is returning to the use of public transportation, he said.

A major proponent of high-speed rail, Diridon said mass transit is the commute of choice in most industrialized countries. Here, in the U.S., the average daily commute is by car, usually occupied by only the driver.

If that is just one of the reasons the U.S. is responsible for nearly 30 percent of the world’s greenhouse gas emissions, transportation systems are the most obvious means to reducing the U.S. contribution, said Diridon.

The California high-speed rail system, for example, would create a comprehensive network of mass transit throughout the state, reducing traffic and increasing mobility in a way that is fast, safe, convenient, economical and environmentally friendly, he said.

He ended his remarks by reminding COMTO members of the educational and career opportunities offered by the nation’s premier transportation center, the Mineta Institute.

Jeff.



CEO Roger Snoble joins COMTO President Marion Colston and featured speaker Rod Diridon, director of the Mineta Transportation Institute, at right.



Members include Fred Minagar, president of Minagar & Associates, Inc., a national authority in the areas of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS); COMTO Southern California Regional Chapter President Marion Colston; Don Ott, executive officer, administration; Communications Manager Helen Ortiz-Gilstrap, and Central City Division Maintenance Manager Hector Rojas.





COMTO officials present commendation to featured speaker, Rod Diridon. From left, Steering Committee Member Milo Victoria, Secretary Kathy Brabson, President Marion Colston, Diridon, and Vice-president Linda Somilleda.

“Education is vital in the growing and continuing need to refine transportation systems throughout the world. It’s the first and most necessary step if we are to come up with solutions to global problems,” said Diridon, who looks to COMTO to provide the leadership in transportation fields.

“COMTO is stronger now than it has ever been and it will continue to grow as minorities become the majority,” he said.

Metro’s Marion Jane Colston serves as president of COMTO’s Southern California Regional Chapter. “COMTO offers many opportunities for transportation professionals in the Southern California region, who come from diverse backgrounds to blend their individual talents to address transportation issues,” she said.

The organization is most widely recognized for its program nationally and locally through networking, training, MBE/WBE/DBE opportunity programs, education, scholarships and research. Through legislative efforts and educational components, COMTO hopes to raise the consciousness of minority communities regarding policies, programs, and opportunities ranging from professionals to general managers of transit properties.

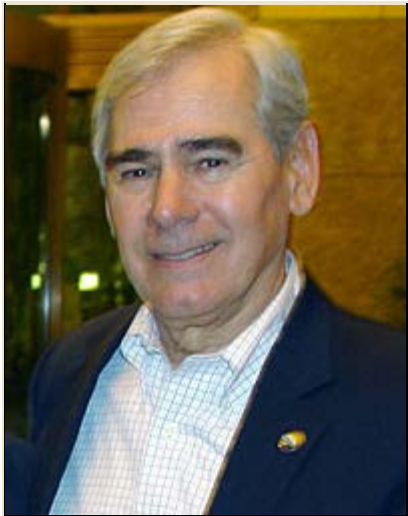
Founded in 1971 on the campus of Howard University in Washington, D.C. COMTO was created to provide a forum for senior minority professionals in the transportation industry. Members have served in every sector of the transportation industry to include aviation, highways, ports, rail and trucking.

Today COMTO has chapters in 35 major cities throughout the United States with a membership of over 2000.

Information: [www.comto.org](http://www.comto.org)

**Who’s Who at the COMTO Podium**

The son of an immigrant Italian railroad brakeman, Rod Diridon is called the “father” of modern transit service in



**ROD DIRIDON**

- Executive Director, Mineta Transportation Institute
- Chairman Emeritus and Member of the California High Speed Rail Authority Board

California's Silicon Valley (Santa Clara County).

His political career began in 1972 as the youngest person ever elected to the Saratoga City Council.

He recently retired because of term limits, after completing 20 years and six terms as chairman of both the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors and Transit Board.

Diridon has chaired more than 100 international, national, state and local community service programs and projects, most related to transit and the environment.

In 1993, he served as the chairman of the American Public Transit Association in Washington, D. C. and more recently as the North American vice president of the International Transit Association in Brussels.

Diridon currently chairs the National Research Council's Transportation Research Board study panel on "Combating Global Warming through Sustainable Transportation Policy." He is frequently asked to provide testimony to Congressional Committees.

Diridon is committed to promoting international understanding in commerce. He founded, and has been the principal liaison for the Santa Clara County Sister County Commissions with the Province of Florence, Italy and the Region of Moscow in Russia.


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## Metro Asking Public to Help ID Artifacts Unearthed During Eastside Construction

- June 2005 discoveries date from late 1800s and early 1900s

By DAVE SOTERO

(March 8, 2007) Metro is seeking the public's help to identify possible next-of-kin for deceased identified through grave markers and headstones unearthed in Boyle Heights during construction of the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension.

Human skeletal remains and artifacts dating from the late 1800s to early 1900s were discovered in June 2005 as construction crews began work to widen 1st Street adjacent to the LA County Crematorium and near the Evergreen Cemetery.

Construction was halted immediately and the area was declared an archeological zone. Metro consulted with the project's archeologist to ensure the proper removal and handling of the discoveries.

While most of the discoveries could not be identified, several grave markers and headstones have been unearthed that made identification of some of the deceased possible.

### Formed a sub-committee

Working with the Review Advisory Committee, a citizen's group that advises Metro on the light rail project, Metro formed an Ad-Hoc Sub Committee whose goals are to make recommendations for re-interment, ceremony and memorial.

Part of the committee's efforts have also been to help identify possible next-of-kin. A list of names found on headstones and grave markers, along with photos of the markers and stones, is available at [www.metro.net/lacemetery](http://www.metro.net/lacemetery).

Metro is asking members of the public to come forward if they are next-of-kin, and to submit information online that they think would help determine the ancestral history of the historic Los Angeles Cemetery.



Partial grave marker, 24 inches tall by 10 inches wide, is one of 70 shown on the [metro.net/lacemetery](http://metro.net/lacemetery) web site. Its Chinese characters read: Hoi Yup Wu Tse Grave; Yu Leung Lung Hoa Li.



Marker for T.E. Buzbee, born Aug. 12, 1865 and died Feb. 1, 1883.



Metro plans to re-inter all of the remains during an appropriate ceremony and present the community with a fitting memorial. The re-interment site and date are to be announced later.

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**A First for Metro: Exterior Ads on Metro Green Line Cars**

(March 8, 2007) Next week, Metro Green Line riders and motorists on the I-105 freeway will see something new – advertising on the sides of the light-rail cars.

The king ads, which will promote McDonald’s new Angus Third-Pounder sandwich, are a first for Metro. The agency previously has restricted exterior ads to buses.

Posting revenue-generating advertising on Metro Rail car exteriors was approved by the Board last summer. In October, the agency reached an agreement with CBS Outdoor, the agency that sells ad space on Metro vehicles.

The McDonald’s ads will begin posting this weekend on the exteriors of 28 Green Line cars, four ads to a side. The ads are scheduled to run through April.

The agreement with CBS Outdoor also covers exterior ads on Metro Gold Line cars, but ads have not yet been sold for that line, according to Warren Morse, deputy executive officer for Communications.




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## Bus Overhaul Funds, Rt. 710 Tunnel Study, Red Line Electronic Signs on Committees' March Agendas

### IN THIS REPORT:

[Item 6, Preliminary Studies for Route 710 Tunnel](#)  
[Item 28, Purchase of 400 Natural Gas Engines](#)  
[Item 29, Establish Bus Midlife Overhaul Budget](#)  
[Item 30, Fund Engine Replacement Program](#)  
[Item 32, Enhancement of Red Line Electronic Signage](#)

(March 9, 2007) Approval of three programs to replace and maintain bus engines, fund the next steps of the Rt. 710 Tunnel environmental process and enhance Metro Red Line electronic signage are some of the topics coming before Board committees in March.

**Item 6, Preliminary Studies for Rt. 710 Tunnel.** The Planning and Programming Committee will consider authorizing the CEO to commit \$5 million in 2006 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Augmentation funds for preliminary engineering and technical studies for the Rt. 710 Tunnel, contingent upon Caltrans providing \$5 million in the state's own funding for these studies.

At its December 2006 meeting, the Board directed Metro staff to work with Caltrans in initiating the next phase of the Rt. 710 Tunnel. Caltrans is drafting a scope of work for engineering and technical studies that will be utilized in the environmental clearance process.

In consultation with Metro, Caltrans is also in the process of retaining a community outreach facilitator to assist with forming one or more committees consisting of representatives from affected local jurisdictions and agencies to develop a framework for participation by all interested stakeholders.

**Item 28, Purchase of 400 Natural Gas Engines.** The Operations Committee will consider authorizing the CEO to award a contract to Cummins Cal Pacific for 400 Cummins CNG engines.

The contract, not to exceed \$14.6 million, would replace 400 Detroit Diesel Series 50 engines which are no longer available nor supported by their manufacturer. The new CNG-fueled, heavy-duty engines would be installed during FY 2008.

The new engines would be installed in 40-foot Neoplan 6700 series buses and in New Flyer high-floor 5000 series and low-floor 5300 series buses.

Of the 400 engines requested, 150 will be used for the FY 2008 Regional Rebuild Center Bus Engine Replacement Program and 250 will be used for the FY 2008 Bus Midlife Program.

**Item 29, Establish Bus Midlife Overhaul Budget.** Continuing its focus on bus maintenance, the Operations Committee will be asked to establish a \$29.5 million budget for FY 2008 for a Bus Midlife Overhaul Program and approve the addition of 20 full-time Central Maintenance employees and one Logistics employee to support that program.

Initiated in FY 2004 in an effort to improve the performance and reliability of Metro buses, the Bus Midlife Program targets a series of buses each year for preventive, midlife maintenance. This maintenance includes engine and fuel cylinder replacements, suspension work, body repair, painting, and interior refurbishment (including graffiti abatement) and wheelchair lift maintenance.

One bus midlife overhaul takes approximately 514 hours to complete. The overall improvements and condition of the program's vehicles contribute to reduced maintenance costs at Metro's bus operating divisions.

**Item 30, Fund Engine Replacement Program.** The Operations Committee will consider authorizing an FY 2008 budget totaling \$11 million for a Regional Rebuild Center (RRC) Engine Replacement Program. The budget includes funds for hiring 16 employees to work in Central Maintenance and two in Logistics.

The staff analysis indicates that in FY 2008, bus engines will begin failing at a rate considerably higher than Metro's current ability to replace them. The staff reports that 1,249 buses were purchased between 1999 – 2001 and estimates that the bus engines, in addition to 69 other buses purchased before 1999 or after 2001, will begin to fail in the next three years.

**Item 32, Enhancement of Red Line Electronic Signage.** The Operations Committee will consider authorizing the CEO to award a contract to replace the Metro Red Line's existing Transit Passenger Information System with high-resolution technology.

The Red Line Variable Message Sign (VMS) Upgrade project would replace the existing VMS, installed in 1995, with a new integrated public address/VMS passenger information system. The existing single-line VMS signs would be replaced with high resolution LCD displays.

The new information signage would have 46-inch LCD monitors that are easier to read than the current four-foot long, six-inch high LED signs.

The staff reports that the aging VMS faces an increasing component failure rate, and its vendor no longer supports the system. Parts are not readily available from any known source, exposing Metro to heightened maintenance and operation risks due to the safety-critical nature of the VMS.

The Operations Committee will consider whether to increase the upgrade project's budget by \$1.2 million, raising the not-to-exceed budget to \$2.45 million.



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**Man in Mercury Incident Gets 90 Days in Jail, 3-Years' Probation**

(March 9, 2007) The man arrested for spilling mercury on the Pershing Square station platform pleaded no contest, earlier this month, to a misdemeanor and was sentenced to 90 days in jail.

Armando Bustamante Miranda, 27, also was ordered to serve three years' probation and to keep away from Metro facilities after pleading no contest to releasing an offensive or harmful substance in a public area.

Miranda was caught by a video surveillance camera, Dec. 22, as he crouched on the subway platform. He appeared to spin a small bottle, which broke and spilled the liquid metal on the platform.



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Four trainees of the emergency operator training program stand with their instructors in the North Hollywood Red Line Station. Trainees were Tom Eng, Metro Safety Certification and Operations Manager; Battalion Chief John Quintanar, Los Angeles Fire Department; Sheriff's Lt. Nancy Iwata and Capt. Frank Espinoza, Los Angeles Fire Department. Behind the trainers are their instructors: Chris Medina, Linda Leone and Arnold Johnson.



## Fire, Law Enforcement Personnel Train as Emergency Red Line Operators

- Metro is first in the U.S. to provide such training on heavy rail

By NED RACINE

(March 9, 2007) Preparing for grim possibilities, Metro trained four firefighting and law enforcement personnel in February to operate Red Line trains in case of a major emergency.

The four, including Battalion Chief John Quintanar of the Los Angeles Fire Department, attended eight hours of classroom training and eight hours training on the Red Line.

Metro is the first transit agency in the United States to train fire and law enforcement personnel to operate heavy rail, according to Quintanar, who coordinates Metro activities with the LAFD.

"[Riders] should care about [this training] because they are going to have first responders who can go in there and rescue them from the train," said



Quintanar. He noted that the fastest way of extracting people from a subway tunnel is by using a rail car.

Joining Quintanar for training were Tom Eng, Metro Safety Certification and Operations manager; Sheriff's Lt. Nancy Iwata and Capt. Frank Espinoza of the LAFD.

The two-day training class was provided by Linda Leone, Rail Integration and Instruction manager, and rail transportation operations supervisors Arnold Johnson and Chris Medina.

**'We would handle the situation'**

Quintanar stressed that fire and law enforcement personnel would only operate the rail cars to free Metro's rail operators from working in a dangerous situation. "[If] we had to go in there and rescue people, we would not put the operator in harm's way...we would handle the situation. That's what they are teaching us to do."

Trainers showed Eng, Iwata, Espinoza and Quintanar how to operate a Red Line train, couple and uncouple the trains and manually switch trains from one track to another.

Metro will train an additional 25 Los Angeles Fire Department personnel and 25 Sheriff's deputies later this year, Quintanar said. The fire fighters will train in mid-May and the Sheriff's deputies in June.

The additional fire personnel will be selected from eight stations in close proximity to the Metro Red Line route from Downtown Los Angeles to North Hollywood. The firefighters are members of hazardous material and urban search and rescue teams.

That would ensure eight emergency operators for each of three shifts at each fire station along the Red Line. Quintanar anticipates the training will be reoffered in two or three years with a refresher class given three times a year.

Quintanar, who spent five years driving a fire engine, found the training "a lot of fun." He enjoyed operating a train running at 55 to 70 miles an hour below Los Angeles.

"Hopefully, we'll never have to do this," Quintanar said.



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A wheelchair competitor whizzes by Metro bus Stop in a burst of speed, as a cameraman films the action during the 2007 LA Marathon.



RRC's Bus Conversion Team

The Regional Rebuild Center team worked 'round the clock to convert the eight buses assigned to LA Marathon wheelchair transport. Team members were:

Body Repairers:		
Duc Banh	Christopher Haile	Jose Hernandez
Paul Giraldo	Thomas Widdison	Daniel Copp
Victor Wada	James Lopez	Fermin Amezcuita
Jack Genchi	Alfredo Garcia	Ralph Griego
Sheetmetal Worker:	Ray Bozyk	

Working 'Round the Clock for Marathon Wheelchair Racers

- RRC employees converted 8 buses for wheelchair use

By ELIZABETH LEIDER

(March 13, 2007) Forty-eight hours before the starter gun signaled the launch of the 2007 Los Angeles Marathon, Metro's Steve Rank got a phone call.

The Los Angeles Marathon had a problem. They needed buses to move as many as 120 to 150 wheelchair racers from their hotel in downtown Los Angeles, at the Figueroa and 7th Street intersection, to the start of the race at Universal City. The people from the Los Angeles Marathon wanted to know if Metro could help.

Metro immediately sprang into action. Starting Friday at 8 a.m., body shop employees at the Regional Rebuild Center (RRC) took eight NABI buses, including a 45-foot composite bus, normally used to train operators and worked around the clock to transform them from rolling classrooms into

wheelchair-accessible transportation.

Employees “stripped the seats out of the buses, put in custom-made wheelchair securements along the insides of the buses, and Metro used those shells to transport wheelchair passengers,” said Rank, assistant operations control manager in the Bus Operator Center.

**Made special tie-down brackets**

The job also included removing handrails and modesty panels and manufacturing special brackets and installing tie-down straps for the wheelchairs.

The buses carried not only those participating in the marathon but also their daily wheelchairs, race wheelchairs and their personal attendants.

After the wheelchair racers had been dropped off at the starting line, the buses drove wheelchair attendants and day chairs back to the racers’ hotel.

Once the marathon was over, the conversion team had to return the buses to their original state by removing the extra wheelchair securements and reinstalling the seats, handrails and modesty panels.

“At the 11th hour, the MTA rescued us from a desperate situation,” rejoiced Nan Harman, coordinator for the Wheelchair Division of the Los Angeles Marathon. “We are grateful beyond words.”

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## City of Seoul Delegation Tours Metro Rail Operations



Photo by Gayle Anderson

Melvin Clark, deputy executive officer of Metro Rail Operations, and Davide Puglisi, Rail Division Transportation manager, brief delegates from the City of Seoul, Korea, during a stopover last Friday at Metro Headquarters. The 10-member group later boarded the Metro Red and Blue Lines en route to a tour of the Rail Operations Center. The delegates represent the facilities, operations management, communications, safety and health and other departments within Seoul's Mass Rapid Transportation Authority. (3/13/07)





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2007 Rail Rodeo Winners' Circle

Rail operator event winners:	Maintenance event winners:
1st place – Tu Phan (Red Line) 2nd place – Robert Rodriguez (Red Line) 3rd place – Ramon Reilly (Blue Line)	1st place – Eric Czintos (Blue Line) 2nd place – Ronnie Burt (Blue Line) 3rd place – Rafaele Mastrangelo, Jr. (Red Line) 4th place – Toshi Manaka (Red Line)
Other competitors, in alphabetical order: Ramon Alvarez (Red Line) Michael Barnes (Blue Line) Aaron Cain (Red Line) William Dover (Red Line) Vicky Maes-Melendez (Red Line) Herman Mijangos (Red Line) Glenda Murrell (Gold Line) Alfredo Ramirez (Blue Line) Ruben Ramirez (Gold Line) Jorge Solano (Gold Line) David Wilson (Gold Line) Jorge Zavaleta (Red Line)	Other competitors, in alphabetical order: Nicholas Alexander (Blue Line) Robert Dimerin (Gold Line) Marcos Martinez (Blue Line) Stan Nacon (Blue Line) Jose Padilla (Green Line) Joselito Suarez (Blue Line) Frank Takacs (Blue Line)

Experienced Team to Represent Metro at International Rail Rodeo

- Operators Phan and Rodriguez are multiple past winners
- Maintainers Czintos, Burt and Mastrangelo are top finishers

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(March 13, 2007) A well-seasoned team of competitors emerged as victors from the 2007 Metro Rail Rodeo and will represent the agency, June 2, at the APTA International Rail Rodeo in Toronto.

For the third year in a row, rail maintenance specialists Eric Czintos, who placed first in last Saturday's event; second place Ronnie Burt; and third place Rafaele Mastrangelo, Jr., will carry Metro's flag in the maintenance competition at the Internationals.

Photos by Ned Racine





Rail maintenance specialists Eric Czintos placed first in the maintenance competition. Ronnie Burt, right, took second place.

The team took second place at the APTA International finals in 2005 and 2006.

Leading the rail operator team will be Metro Red Line Operator Tu Phan, who won Saturday's competition as he has so many times in the past. His teammate will be Red Line Operator Robert Rodriguez, who also has been a frequent local winner. The men have competed together and separately at the Internationals, scoring wins for Metro in 2000, 2001 and 2002.

Metro Red Line Maintenance Specialist Toshi Manaka, who placed fourth, will be the maintenance team alternate. Metro Blue Line Operator Ramon Reilly, who placed third in the operator's event, will be the operator alternate.



Mike Moore tells his son, Justin, that he drove this very bus – now restored for historical display – when he was an operator at Division 3 back in 1978-79. “It wasn’t a real fast bus, but it was dependable, our work horse,” says Moore, now assistant transportation manager at the Metro Gold Line. The bus had no air conditioning and operators had to wrestle it through

turns without power steering.

**Bright sunlight and good weather**

Some 300 employees and their guests basked in bright sunlight and temperate weather during Saturday's Rail Rodeo, held in the parking lot at Division 20. The event featured a barbecue lunch and fun for the kids – with the Metro Experience mobile theater, a fire truck and musical performers, along with the always popular jumper house.

"We had a good turnout today, with people from many divisions and from Gateway," said Deputy Executive Officer Melvin Clark of Rail Operations.



Wayside Systems Property Maintainer Enrique Emery, with son Jonathan.



Kids love the jumper house, a favorite feature of the Rail Rodeo event.

This year's event for the operators was different from previous contests. Instead of being conducted in the Division 20 rail yard, event trains were scheduled to run on the main line between Union Station and the Westlake/MacArthur Park station.

Although operating skills remained important factors in the judging, safety and awareness of possible terrorist activity were emphasized during the 2007 contest. Competitors had to be alert for unattended packages and suitcases placed on the platforms they passed, for open doors and electrical boxes, and for trespassers in the tunnels.

"We're the first line of defense for anything that's happening out there, whether it's an abandoned package, a spill or a suspicious person," said Metro Blue Line Operator Ramon Reilly, who placed third in the event. "The operator can be the first responder in a situation like that. It's serious; it's the real deal."

**'Be on the lookout'**

"Transportation agencies are soft targets," agreed Rail Transportation Operations Supervisor Esther Pippins, event coordinator and the instructor who will accompany the operator team to the Internationals. "We encourage our operators to be on the lookout and be aware of their surroundings."



Maintenance Specialist Jose Padilla of the Metro Green Line sorts through a cluster of electronic gadgets during the parts identification event.

Maintenance specialists also had to cope with new events in their portion of the Rail Rodeo, including filling in the missing elements of an electrical circuit, and a “fun event” called Know That Logo, which required participants to identify logos from U.S. and some foreign transit properties.

Also new to the event was a plastic replica of a train wheel that featured many of the defects those parts can experience during use.

“We’re trying to make our events as much as possible like the Internationals,” said Russell Homan, senior Equipment Maintenance instructor, who coordinated the event. “The goal is to get a team that can win at the Internationals.”



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Construction on the One Santa Fe residential and commercial complex, located along Santa Fe Avenue north of the Metro Red Line transportation and maintenance building, is expected to begin in March 2008. Illustration courtesy of Michael Maltzan Architecture, Los Angeles.



## Residential, Commercial Development Set for Division 20

- Construction of 450 apartments, retail space to begin in March 2008
- Metro to earn \$500,000 or more annually during 55-year lease

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(March 14, 2007) A 450-unit residential and commercial development will be built on a portion of the Metro Red Line Division 20 rail yard under an agreement signed earlier today by agency representatives and a local real estate firm.



Metro Real Estate Chief Roger Moliere, seated left, and Chuck Cowley, senior vice president of The McGregor Company, sign lease documents for the One Santa Fe project. Joining them for the ceremony were, standing from left, Atty. Paul Rohrer of the Munger, Tolles & Olson law firm; Principal Deputy County Counsel Joyce Chang; and Transportation Planning Manager Robin Blair of Metro's Central Area Team. Photo by Bill Heard.

Construction at the Santa Fe Avenue facility is expected to begin in March 2008. The project will occupy about 2.7 acres of the 50-acre rail yard and will require narrowing a stretch of Santa Fe Avenue, a portion of which is built over an old rail right-of-way owned by Metro.

The development, called One Santa Fe, will be sited directly to the north of the Division 20 transportation and maintenance building. It will occupy what now is the employee and agency vehicle parking lot and will reach almost to the 1st Street bridge.

The complex will feature about 450 apartment units above some 10,000 to 15,000 square feet of ground-floor retail space, which will include a public plaza. Students from the architectural school across the street will be given preference in renting the apartments.

Some 700 parking spaces will be provided, of which about 200 will be for use by Metro employees – an increase of some 60 spaces over those currently available.

Metro will lease the property to the developer, Polis/McGregor Santa Fe Yards, LLC, for a term of 55 years, with a 10-year lease extension option. The agency will earn \$500,000 or more annually from the lease.

Metro Real Estate Chief Roger Moliere represented the agency at the lease-signing ceremony. Chuck Cowley, senior vice president of The McGregor Company, signed for developer.

The One Santa Fe development is consistent with Metro's joint development policy, which calls for promoting and enhancing transit ridership, enhancing transportation corridors and land use in surrounding communities, and generating value for Metro, according to a November 2005 report to the Board.





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## Transit Ridership Up Nationwide and in Los Angeles

- More than population growth or growth in vehicle miles

By DAVE SOTERO

(March 14, 2007) Americans took 10.1 billion trips public transportation nationwide in 2006 – the most in 49 years.

Over the last decade nationwide, public transit ridership use grew 30 percent. That is more than double the growth rate of the population (12 percent) and higher than the growth rate for the vehicle miles traveled on our roads (24 percent) during that same period.

To put the 10.1 billion public transportation trips in perspective, transit trips outnumber domestic airline trips by 15 to one.

Metro system ridership increased 5.74 percent from 2005 to 2006, nearly twice the national average of 2.9 percent. Specifically, Metro bus ridership grew 5.28 percent and rail grew 8.07 percent in that time period.

"Reaching this milestone is a result of the quality of service we provide in helping people get to destinations important to them," said Board Chair Gloria Molina. "In addition, many riders realize the benefits of saving money from rising fuel costs and avoiding congestion. They also like knowing that their transportation choice is contributing to help reduce America's dependence on foreign oil and global warming."

Metro has introduced a host of new rail and bus services that make public transit use in Los Angeles a better alternative than solo driving for a growing number of Angelenos.

"Public transportation is a proven way to meet our national, regional and local transportation goals," said CEO Roger Snoble. "As Congress and our elected officials look to find ways to reduce America's dependence on foreign oil, we call on them to increase investment and include incentives to encourage further increases in transit ridership."



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## Metro Rapid Toy Buses Join Mattel's Matchbox Fleet

- The red and silver buses on sale now in the Metro Store

(March 16, 2007) The red and silver Metro Rapid bus has now joined the Mattel's Matchbox fleet of replica buses under a new licensing agreement between Metro and the El Segundo-based toymaker.

Mattel released a three-inch version of the poppy orange Metro Local bus in February and plans to complete the three-bus set this spring with introduction of toy blue Metro Express buses, according to Danielle Boutier, director of communication services.

A limited supply of the die-cast, 1:64-scale Metro Rapid bus will go on sale Friday in the Metro Store. The miniatures will sell for an employee discounted price of \$2.40. They also can be purchased online at [www.metro.net/metrostore](http://www.metro.net/metrostore).

"Metro is proud to partner with Matchbox and so happy that Metro Buses have joined the line-up of these popular die-cast vehicles," said Boutier.

In addition to the Matchbox line, Mattel also markets Barbie fashion dolls, American Girl dolls, Hot Wheels and Fisher-Price toys.



Mattel's replica of the just-introduced Metro Rapid bus is now on sale in the Metro Store, joining the poppy orange Metro Local miniature.





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## Metro Marathoners: They ran, they conquered L.A. XXII; Bikers navigated the 22-mile route of the Acura L.A. Bike Tour

- [MORE:](#) [Photo op I](#) | [Photo op II](#)



Sailing through the heat and maze of the 22nd L.A. Marathon, **Vazgen Vartanian** shaved off two minutes from last year's triumph for an astounding finish line time of 3:21. The daily runner, who's completed close to 60 marathons, runs six miles a day and pounds out long-distance runs on the weekend - he'll go for 20 hours on Saturday and cool his heels on Sundays with a mere 13 or 14 miles.



Legacy runner **Everett Wilson** has run all 22 L.A. Marathons, and that's not all. The 61-year-old Wilson averages four or five marathons a year and has collected medals from nearly 75 marathons, including hilly San Francisco, the much cooler Long Beach, and the upcoming Palos Verdes.



On the road: Mario Mendoza keeps the pace at Figueroa.



(Photo courtesy of Mario Mendoza)



**Double resolve:** Runner Carlos Roque, and biker Sal Martinez are intent on raising the bar at RRC, challenging other ECTs to join in a training program for next year's marathon.



**Trained during split time:** Operator Filiberto Lopez, a Metro employee for seven years, works the extra board at West Hollywood Division. Lopez, who began running during his split time at work to pass the time, has completed three L.A. Marathons. He is married with 3 children.



**Trooper:** Carl Velasquez, Stops & Zones. It's the sixth long run for this marathon trooper, who trains with the Roadrunners of Walnut. He took the heat okay, but the swelter knocked him back from his best time of 4:38 in the cooler 2005 to a still-respectable 5:47. "It's not hard you fall," he says, "it's how fast you get up."



**Legacy Runner:** West Hollywood Division Operator Manuel Duarte has worked for Metro for 18 years. He is a Los Angeles Marathon Legacy Runner, meaning he has completed all 22 L.A. Marathons. His best time is 4 hours and 8 minutes. He is married with three children.





**The Prize:** Acura L.A. Bike Tour Silver for bike riders; the Honda Gold for marathoners.

**These Metro marathoners made it to the finish line *and* the photo op:**



**PHOTO OP I:** Click on image above for the close-ups and vital statistics.

Hail, hail, the gang is NOT all here. No one *really* knows for sure just how many Metro employees took the 26.2 mile trek around town in the Los Angeles Marathon XXII, but these winners made it to the finish line *and* the photo op in fine shape. Runners have red ribbons, bikers have blue.

**PHOTO OP II:** Click on image below for the close-ups and vital statistics.



*Photos and text by Gayle Anderson*

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- [FlyAway Bus Exceeded 250,000 Passengers in 1st Year](#)

### Track Work, March 23-24, to Affect 4 Blue Line Stations

(March 20, 2007) Metro Blue Line trains will single-track between the Florence and Washington stations from 9 p.m., Friday, March 23 through Saturday, March 24 to accommodate track work at the 48th Place grade crossing, south of the Vernon station.

The southbound track will be out of service during this time. North- and southbound trains will share the northbound track between the Florence, Slauson, Vernon and Washington stations.

Metro Blue Line trains will operate every 20 minutes instead of the regular 12- to 15-minute schedule. Regular service will be restored as soon as work is completed on Saturday.

### Blue Line Track Work to Affect 3 Stations Starting March 30

(March 20, 2007) Track work scheduled on the Metro Blue Line for Friday, March 30 through Sunday, April 1 will affect service between the Vernon, Washington and San Pedro stations in Los Angeles.

During the three-day period, Metro's Wayside Track Department will remove the former Union Pacific railroad crossing between East 25th Street and East Adams Boulevard. Speed restrictions have been in effect at that location, but trains will be able to reach a 55 mph operating speed when the work is completed.

Both north- and southbound tracks will be out of service between the three stations from 9 p.m., Friday, March 30 through 9 p.m., Saturday, March 31. A bus bridge will be in effect between the Vernon, Washington and San Pedro stations during this period.

Blue Line trains will single-track through the intersection the remainder of Saturday night and continue through Sunday until approximately 1 a.m., Monday, April 2.

The Metro Blue Line will resume full service on Monday, April 2.

### FlyAway Bus Exceeded 250,000 Passengers in 1st Year

(March 20, 2007) FlyAway bus service between LAX and Union Station exceeded 250,000 passengers in its first year of service.

Officials marked the anniversary, March 15, by announcing that riders who present public transit tickets or passes, including taxi receipts, will be allowed to ride the Union Station FlyAway free through March 31.

"The FlyAway is a critical regional link to LAX for passengers traveling to Union Station via Metro Red and Gold Lines, Metrolink and Amtrak trains, DASH, Metro and various municipal operators," said Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa.

The Union Station FlyAway averages 685 passengers daily and makes the trip to LAX in 30-40 minutes. Located at Berth 9 on Patsaouras Plaza, the buses depart every half-hour for LAX. Fares are \$3 for adults and \$2 for children ages 2-12. Remote airline check-in service is \$5 per passenger.

Los Angeles World Airports plans to add seven more FlyAway locations around Southern California by 2015.

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Metro's Risk Management Department uses an iceberg on its Intranet home page to symbolize the unknown risks that may face any government agency or business. [Check it out](#) at myMetro.net.



### MyMetro.net Now Offers Risk Management Web Pages

- Pages include forms, FAQs, contact numbers, white papers

(March 20, 2007) MyMetro.net has added a new group of web pages provided by Metro Risk Management to the employee Intranet's family of 26 department web sites.

The Risk Management pages include descriptive information, forms, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), contacts and phone numbers for Workers' Compensation, the Special Investigations Unit, insurance and administration, and public liability and property damage.

"We want to give employees a site where they can get basic risk management information," said Greg Kildare, Risk Management executive officer. "A lot of this information will be especially useful to those who work in procurement and those who deal with contracts and vendors."

In a series of "white papers" offered under the Insurance and Administrative heading, users will find information about development projects on Metro property, professional liability and six other topics.

FAQs under the Public Liability/Property Damage heading include discussions of how to file a vehicle accident report, how to respond to a subpoena, and insurance coverage while on agency business in personal vehicles, among 11 other topics.

The eight Workers' Compensation FAQs include information on injuries at work, choosing a physician and receiving a disability check.

The Risk Management web pages can be accessed from the Intranet

home page by clicking on the alphabetized "Select a Department" dropdown menu at the upper right corner and clicking on "Risk Management."

Senior Risk Analyst Bill Douglas designed the web pages, working with Assistant Webmaster Kevin Woo.

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## CEO UpDate

### Reorganizing at the Top; A Successful Marathon Operation

By CEO ROGER SNOBLE



CEO Roger Snoble

**Safety Contact:** Employees who use a cell phone while driving a Metro vehicle violate policy and may be breaking the law

By ROGER SNOBLE

We've had some very high-profile people leave our agency recently for other opportunities – John Catoe, Rod Goldman, Paul Lennon and, at the end of this month, Gerald Francis. It's really disappointing to see them go, but we're moving ahead and I wanted you to understand our plans.

When John's departure was announced, I named Carolyn Flowers interim chief operating officer with overall responsibility for bus operations, security, labor relations and other tasks not specific to the daily operation of the service sectors. Along with Carolyn, I also had Gerald reporting directly to me because I wanted to give rail a higher profile on my management team. That arrangement worked extraordinarily well and I plan to continue it.

Now, we have to recruit to fill the position of Metro Rail general manager and there are some strong internal candidates. But, we'll also launch an external search with the intention of hiring someone as quickly as possible.

In addition, we're recruiting to fill the role of chief operations planner. We have some strong internal candidates and a few external candidates to consider.

We're also in the process of hiring a new deputy executive officer for Safety and Security, who will report to Carolyn. He'll be responsible for managing our contract with the Sheriff's Transit Services Bureau and coordinating with local law enforcement agencies, along with managing our Metro Security force and interfacing with the Department of Homeland Security.

We're just concluding a recruitment for a new deputy executive officer for Labor Relations, who also will report to Carolyn. That person will be responsible for working with the sector general managers to handle grievances and other sector labor matters. He also will play a key role during negotiations with our labor unions.

As you can see, we've reorganized somewhat at the top, but I think the organization is better and will be more efficient. And I look forward to working with the new members of our staff.



## **Success with the LA Marathon**

The LA Marathon with its new route from the Valley to downtown was a great success this year – and much of that was due to the hard work by a number of Metro employees.

I especially want to thank Richard Hunt, Bruce Shelburne and Steve Rank for the many hours they put into developing an extensive plan of action that involved close coordination of our Metro Rail and Metro Bus operations to handle the thousands of marathon participants and spectators.

A special thanks also to the many other staff members and volunteers who worked during the marathon to make sure people were able to buy tickets and find their way to the various viewing points along the marathon route. It was a magnificent performance by everyone involved.

## **Safety Contact: Cell phones and driving**

I don't know about you, but many times when I've had a close call on the road it was because the person in the other car was on a cell phone. It's truly dangerous, especially if you're holding the phone in your hand or have it wedged into your shoulder.

A recent study shows that cell phone users are even more dangerous than intoxicated drivers, taking three times as long to apply their brakes. The study said cell phone users are four times more likely than non-cell phone users to get into an accident.

I'm especially concerned when our bus or rail operators talk on the cell phone while driving. It's unsafe, a risk to yourself and your passengers, and it's a violation of the California Vehicle Code for transit vehicles. It's also a major violation of our own Operator's Rule 1.25, which prohibits use of any electronic device, including cell phones, while operating a Metro vehicle.

I also want to caution all employees that using a cell phone while operating a non-revenue vehicle and personal vehicles while on Metro business violates Corporate Safety Policy #8. And as of July 1, 2008, it will be against the law in California to drive while using a hand-held cell phone.

It's important for all of us to drive safely. If you need to receive or make a cell phone call, pull over to the side of the road or wait until you reach a safe area to use the phone.

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March 20, 2007

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Foothill Transit's new Silver Streak articulated bus on its Montclair-to-downtown Los Angeles loop.



Photo by Gayle Anderson

## Foothill's Articulated Buses Bring Commuters to Downtown LA

•

Foothill Transit offers free rides until April 1

(March 21, 2007) Using 60-foot articulated buses found on the Metro Orange Line and the busiest Metro Rapid lines, Foothill Transit's new Silver Streak bus line now carries riders from the San Gabriel and Pomona valleys into Downtown LA.

To celebrate Silver Streak's March 18 debut, Foothill Transit is offering free trips aboard the express bus during its first two weeks on the road, until April 1. The Silver Streak's route includes stops in Montclair, Pomona, West Covina, El Monte, and stops along Spring and 1st streets, Olive Street and Grand Avenue in Downtown LA.

The 60-foot buses use the carpool lane of the San Bernardino Freeway and El Monte Busway and feature free WiFi service.

After April 1, the Silver Streak fare will be \$2. A 31-day pass will be \$80. Senior citizens, the disabled and Medicare cardholders are eligible for 50-percent fare discounts.

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## Metro Bus Operator Recruitment Reaches Out to Veterans

By NED RACINE

(March 21, 2007) Continuing its campaign to recruit bus operators, Metro joins with Los Angeles Valley College to offer three prescreening recruiting events for military veterans on March 22, 28 and 29 at 1 p.m. at Los Angeles Valley College.

A variation of Metro's successful Bridge Program training designed to increase the retention rate of those applying to be Metro bus operators, the March prescreening events offer veterans free training that could result in a fast-track to supervisory positions in bus operations.

The prescreening events include an overview of Metro, math and reading tests, distribution of Metro's bus operator applications and an introduction to the support services offered by Work Source California, which is funded by the U.S. Department of Labor.

The March events grew from Metro's idea to tap into the skills that veterans acquire during military service.

"We felt if we included the veterans along with our normal recruitments, we wouldn't be able to adjust our course to their needs," said Lennie Ciufu, Director of Job Training for Valley College.

"Veterans return with a lot of skills [Metro] supervisors use," Ciufu said. The training program for veterans who advance beyond the prescreening, will include more skill training for supervisors than the usual Bridge Program training, which began in August 2006. The training takes two weeks or approximately 45 hours.

Veterans attending the three prescreening events should bring a California driver's license, documents proving their right-to-work, and a Department of Motor Vehicles H-6 printout – in essence a driver's record. Veterans are encouraged to arrive promptly.

Prescreening events will be held at the college's Professional Media Resource Center, 5800 Fulton Avenue in Valley Glen. For information, call 818-947-2941.





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- **List of 'Bazaar' Vendors Now Posted on MyMetro.Net**
- [Check it out!](#)

(March 22, 2007) Fans of the commercial vendors who rent Metro space to sell everything from watches and jewelry, to books and even African art will welcome the latest addition to the myMetro.net employee Intranet web site.

Beginning today, a schedule of vendors – titled “Bazaar” – will be linked from the Intranet Classified Ads page. The schedule will include the vendors’ names and products for sale, along with the month and day they will sell their wares in the cafeteria lobby.

On March 27, for example, Books R Fun will set up a display. That will be followed on March 29 by Michael Phelps with ladies purses and African art. In April, vendors selling perfumes, crystals, watches, purses and costume jewelry, along with Costco memberships are scheduled.

The current vendor schedule runs through December. Donna Deverell, the Real Estate Administration senior secretary who maintains the vendor list, says the list may be updated from time to time as vendors are added or cancel their dates.

“With the introduction of Bazaar as part of the Classified Ads page – along with the Metro Store and its logo items and other products – the Intranet now offers employees a variety of shopping opportunities,” says myMetro.net Editor Bill Heard.






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## Safety/Security and Labor Relations Executives Joining Metro

- Both men will report to the interim chief operating officer

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(March 22, 2007) Metro has moved to fill two key staff positions – deputy executive officer for Safety and Security, and deputy executive officer for Labor Relations – announcing the new employees at today's Board meeting.

CEO Roger Snoble named Jack L. Eckles, who has served as security services manager for the LA County Office of Education since 1999, to head Metro's Safety and Security Department. He will join Metro on March 28 and will report to Interim Chief Operating Officer Carolyn Flowers.

The Board confirmed Snoble's nomination of Edward D. Del Genio to serve as deputy executive officer for Labor Relations. Del Genio, an attorney, previously worked in labor relations at United Airlines and, in 2003, was appointed by the U.S. Bankruptcy Court to represent United Airlines employees in the airline's bankruptcy case.

Del Genio, a resident of Henderson, Nev., is scheduled to join Metro March 26 and also will report to Flowers.

While employed at county Office of Education, Eckles was responsible for managing a contract security staff of 60 officers who provided security for some 6,000 employees in more than 20 locations.

Eckles, a resident of Anaheim, also was a field supervisor and field operations manager for Universal Protection Service in Orange, and a private investigator and instructor for Encinas Investigations and California Security Academy in Garden Grove.

## Served in Baghdad

A member of the U.S. Army Reserve, he was called to active duty in April 2005, serving for about a year in Baghdad, Iraq, as commander of a civil affairs unit involved in reconstruction and humanitarian relief efforts.

Eckles earned a bachelor's degree in justice administration at Cal State LA, and law degrees at the Pacific West College of Law in Orange. He began his career in law enforcement as an LA County deputy sheriff.

During his 33 years with United Airlines, Del Genio served as director of labor relations for flight operations and director of labor relations for arbitration, among other positions.

While at United Airlines, he represented management in more than 800 arbitration cases and worked with nine different unions. He also learned interest-based bargaining – the style of negotiations adopted by Metro for the most recent round of union bargaining talks.

Del Genio earned a bachelor’s degree in accounting at St. Thomas College in St. Paul, Minn., and a law degree at Chicago Kent College of Law. He began his career as an assistant state’s attorney and prosecutor in Cook County, Ill.

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Global Organization for Leadership and Diversity (GOLD) members and guests gather for a symposium at Metro Headquarters. Photo by Luis Inzunza.



## Global Leadership Organization Holds Symposium at Metro

- Japanese, U.S. women discuss business opportunities, challenges



Hiroko Tatebe, GOLD executive director, led the delegation from Japan and made opening remarks at the symposium. (Luis Inzunza photo)

(March 23, 2007) More than three dozen women representing companies and organizations in Japan and the U.S. attended an international symposium, Friday morning, at Metro Headquarters.

The meeting, sponsored by the Global Organization for Leadership and Diversity (GOLD), was one of a series of programs designed "to strengthen the training and presence of women leaders in the 21st Century global workforce."

Metro Interim Chief Operating Officer Carolyn Flowers welcomed the group to the event, which offered attendees, who came from corporate, business, academic and government backgrounds, the chance to learn about global business models and economic opportunities.

Most of the panelists represented organizations or companies based in Japan, but the meeting included insights provided by attendees from Los Angeles, including nine Metro employees.

Tisa Jackson, diversity services manager for Countrywide Financial, makes a point during discussions on opportunities for women in business.

(Bill Heard photo)



The group, led by GOLD Executive Director Hiroko Tatebe, discussed opportunities and challenges for doing business in both countries and the Japanese and American perspectives on diversity. They also discussed what it takes to be an effective leader to boost an organization's bottom line and achieve organizational goals.

The GOLD web site notes that women own 47 percent of all firms in the U.S. and have a significant impact on business, employment and the American economy. In Japan, according to the web site, women make 70 to 80 percent of purchasing decisions.

MORE about GOLD: [www.goldleaders.org/Symposium.htm](http://www.goldleaders.org/Symposium.htm)



GOLD attendees discuss the opportunities and challenges of doing business in the U.S. and Japan during a symposium at Metro Headquarters.

(Bill Heard photo)


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## Board OKs Study Contract for 710 Tunnel, New Bus Engines

- Red Line information system upgrade and Orange Line extension work also receive approval

### IN THIS REPORT:

- < [Item 6, Studies for Rt. 710 Tunnel](#)
- < [Item 28, New CNG Bus Engines](#)
- < [Item 29, Bus Midlife Overhauls](#)
- < [Item 30, Engine Replacement Program](#)
- < [Item 32, Electronic Signage Upgrades](#)
- < [Item 35, Metro Orange Line Extension](#)

(March 23, 2007) Among the 16 action items on its March agenda, the Board of Directors approved motions calling for studies of the proposed Rt. 710 tunnel, new engines for Metro buses, upgrading the Metro Red Line information system and preliminary work on the Metro Orange Line extension along Canoga Avenue.

**Item 6, Preliminary Studies for Rt. 710 Tunnel.** The Board authorized the CEO to commit \$5 million in 2006 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Augmentation funds for preliminary engineering and technical studies for the Rt. 710 Tunnel, contingent upon Caltrans providing \$5 million in the state's own funding for these studies.

In consultation with Metro, Caltrans is also in the process of retaining a community outreach firm to assist with forming one or more committees consisting of representatives from affected local jurisdictions and agencies to develop a framework for participation by all interested stakeholders.

**Item 28, Purchase of 400 Natural Gas Engines.** This consent calendar item, which was approved by the Board, authorizes the CEO to award a contract to Cummins Cal Pacific for 400 Cummins CNG engines.

The \$14.6 million contract allows replacement of 400 Detroit Diesel Series 50 engines which are no longer available nor supported by their manufacturer. The new CNG-fueled, heavy-duty engines are to be installed during FY 2008 in 40-foot Neoplan 6700 series buses and in New Flyer high-floor 5000 series and low-floor 5300 series buses.

**Item 29, Establish Bus Midlife Overhaul Budget.** The Board also approved a motion to establish a \$29.5 million budget for FY 2008 for a Bus Midlife Overhaul Program and add 20 full-time Central Maintenance employees and one Logistics employee to support the program.

The Bus Midlife Program targets a series of buses each year for



preventive, midlife maintenance. This maintenance includes engine and fuel cylinder replacements, suspension work, body repair, painting, and interior refurbishment (including graffiti abatement) and wheelchair lift maintenance.

**Item 30, Fund Engine Replacement Program.** The Board voted to authorize an \$11 million budget in FY 2008 for a Regional Rebuild Center (RRC) Engine Replacement Program. The budget includes funds for hiring 16 employees to work in Central Maintenance and two in Logistics.

In FY 2008, bus engines will begin failing at a rate considerably higher than Metro's current ability to replace them. A staff report notes that 1,249 buses were purchased between 1999 – 2001 and estimates that the bus engines, in addition to 69 other buses purchased before 1999 or after 2001, will begin to fail in the next three years.

**Item 32, Upgrades for Red Line Electronic Signage.** The Board authorized the CEO to award a \$2.2 million contract to replace the Metro Red Line's existing Transit Passenger Information System with high-resolution technology.

The approved motion also increases the budget for upgrading the Red Line Variable Message Sign (VMS) from \$1.25 million to \$2.45 million. The project calls for replacing the existing VMS, installed in 1995, with a new integrated public address/VMS passenger information system. The existing single-line VMS signs would be replaced with high resolution LCD displays.

**Item 35, Metro Orange Line Extension.** The Board voted to authorize the CEO to negotiate and execute a \$5.95 million contract for environmental clearance and preliminary engineering for the Metro Orange Line's Northern/Canoga extension.

The motion includes authorization for a \$337,152 contract with a firm to handle public outreach and community participation, and a \$628,749 contract to cover the cost of unforeseen issues that may arise during the environmental clearance and preliminary engineering phases.

Also included is authorization for the CEO to make \$250,000 available to the City of Los Angeles for an analysis of ways to increase bus speeds on Van Nuys Boulevard and other eastern San Fernando Valley streets identified in the North/South Transit Corridor Study. In addition, \$650,000 would be available for any preliminary engineering work resulting from the analysis.


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## 'Mystery Rider' Program is Gauging Metro Customer Service; Rewarding Good Operators

- 'We're trying to improve the quality of customer service.'

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(March 23, 2007) How does Metro's bus and rail service stack up from the customer's perspective? That's what Transit Operations' "Mystery Rider" program is trying to find out – and it's rewarding operators who do a good job for their customers.

Started last December, the year-long pilot program sends "mystery riders" from a product research firm out to ride buses and trains to evaluate operator performance. The firm covers all five service sectors and Metro Rail.

Each month, the firm provides Metro some 100 surveys grading operators on such factors as safe driving, courtesy, passups, giving fare information, correct exterior headsigns, use of a cell phone or personal radio. The survey also grades bus stops and rail stations.

"We're trying to improve the quality of customer service," says Ed Clifford, director of Service Planning and Development. "This survey is absolutely not for disciplinary purposes."

From the survey results received, six operators already have been recognized for providing excellent customer service. Their names were drawn at random from those who qualified in each sector.

The program's first quarterly winners, each of whom received a \$100 Best Buy gift certificate, are operators Betty McClerkin, Division 10, Westside/Central; Victor Aguilar, Division 9, San Gabriel Valley; Marco Gonzales, Division 1, Gateway; Timoteo Aceves, Division 5, South Bay; Martin Nunez, Division 8, San Fernando Valley; and Rosendo Reyes, Metro Blue Line.

"Mystery Rider is an attempt to put light on a very important part of getting people to use Metro service," Clifford says of the \$21,000 program. "Good customer service can make a huge difference."

"And when you're giving good customer service," he continued, "it helps to know that you're being recognized and appreciated. We're trying with this program to give that more emphasis."





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With the Gateway Plaza in the background, the light rail transit bridge curves over the 101 Freeway. Rail and an overhead electrical power system will soon be installed on the bridge's barren concrete surface.



Photos by Ned Racine

101 Bridge Previews Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension

By NED RACINE

(March 27, 2007) Curving 1,100 feet from Union Station to Alameda Street, the 101 Freeway Overcrossing light-rail transit bridge changes the Downtown Los Angeles skyline and previews another addition to Metro Rail.



Workers remove bolts which supported temporary signage during construction of the light rail transit bridge.

Built with 1,100 tons of reinforcing steel, the 101 Freeway Overcrossing bridge will carry the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension light-rail vehicles between Union Station and the Little Tokyo/Arts District station at 1st and Alameda streets.

Metro took possession of the bridge from Caltrans on March 15. Caltrans managed the project with oversight by Metro and the Los Angeles Bureau of Engineering.

Metro, Caltrans, and the Bureau of Engineering worked closely together to complete the bridge. The bridge cost approximately \$7 million to construct.

To create this mammoth structure, approximately 350 truck loads of concrete – 3,300 cubic yards – were needed.

The next phase of construction includes installation of trackwork and overhead power systems for the electrically-driven trains.

The six-mile, light-rail Eastside Extension is scheduled to open in late in late 2009.



Crossing the 101 Freeway, the light rail transit bridge will carry the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension light rail vehicles.

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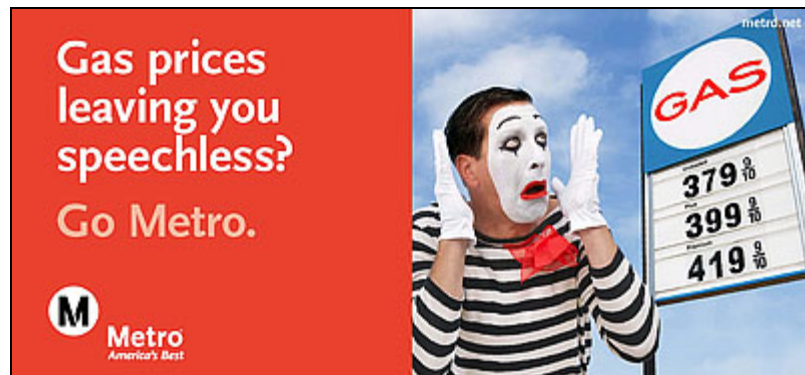
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## Metro Ads Offer Options to Drivers 'Speechless' from Gas Prices

By DAVE SOTERO

(March 27, 2007) Metro is launching a new ridership campaign to attract LA commuters rendered 'speechless' by the chronic rise of gasoline prices.

Ads asking, "Gas Prices Leaving You Speechless? Go Metro," began appearing on Metro buses, local billboards and in more than 100 newspapers last week.

Noting that ridership usually increases during periods of rising gasoline prices – which often have exceeded \$3 per gallon during the past several years – the agency believes \$3 is the threshold that makes the Metro Day Pass a more logical choice for cost-conscious commuters.

Ridership increased 5.74 percent from 2005 to 2006, representing an annual addition of more than 26.6 million boardings. The agency's total ridership increase was twice as large as the national average.

Measured separately, Metro Bus system ridership grew 5.28 percent, and Metro Rail system ridership grew 8.07 percent.

However, Metro's ridership gains can be attributed to more than fluctuations in auto fuel prices. The agency has recently made strong service improvements, including the addition of new Metro Rapid Lines and the popular Metro Express Lines, which posted a 9 percent increase between 2005 and 2006. Express Lines serving the Harbor Transitway showed a 7 percent year over year growth.

## Real-time alerts

New customer service improvements on the way include a "NexTrip" service for web-enabled cell phone users. Slated for introduction later this spring, the service will provide real-time notices to alert riders when Metro buses are coming.

A similar service is currently being tested for several Metro Rapid lines



and will be available at [www.rapidbus.net](http://www.rapidbus.net).

Metro’s marketing efforts also have helped drive increased public awareness of its services and resulting ridership gains. In 2006, for example, 73 percent of people surveyed by Metro said they were aware of Metro bus routes in their area, up from 55 percent in 2004.

Additionally, when asked if Metro’s image was better than the previous year, 84 percent of respondents said yes, up from 74 percent in 2004.

Survey respondents who saw Metro advertising were twice as likely to try going Metro in the next six months than those who had not.



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**Transit Services Bureau Charity Golf Tournament Tees Off July 20**

By NED RACINE



(March 28, 2007) The Transit Services Bureau (TSB) holds its second annual Charity Golf Tournament on Friday, July 20. This year's tournament will benefit the children of Sheriff's Department employee Lupe Castaneda, who was killed in December.

The TSB/Metro tournament begins at 8:00 a.m. It will be held at Montebello Golf Course (Quiet Cannon), 901 Via San Clemente in Montebello. The cost is \$90 per person and includes a prime rib luncheon following the tournament.

Up to 144 golfers can participate in the tournament, which includes a Scramble Foursome, closest-to-the-pin contests and a hole-in-one contest with a pickup truck as the prize. Raffle prizes include golf clubs and bags.

Castaneda, who worked in the Rail Operations Center, is survived by children 3, 5 and 7 years old.

Sheriff's Lt. John Baylis hopes to make the tournament an annual event, with the focus changing next year to fundraising for student scholarships.

For further information, contact Baylis at 922-3772 or (cell) 310-386-5132 or by e-mail at [jcbaylis@lasd.org](mailto:jcbaylis@lasd.org) or [baylisj@metro.net](mailto:baylisj@metro.net). The Montebello Golf Course can be reached at 323-887-4565.



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A strict schedule of daily safety inspections has improved working conditions in the Division 10 maintenance shop. Pictured are, from left, Jeremy Schmidt, equipment maintenance supervisor, and Safety Captains John Rodriguez and David Klinkenborg.



Photo by Elizabeth Leider

## Safety Captains Cut Hazards in Division 10 Maintenance Shop

- Daily inspections ensure employees work in a clean, safe area

By ELIZABETH LEIDER

(March 28, 2007) Since November of last year things have been different around the maintenance shop at Gateway Division 10. And that is exactly what the new 'Safety Captain' program was aiming to accomplish.

"There has been a Metro-wide push to increase the awareness of shop safety," explained Daniel Ramirez, an assistant maintenance manager. "What better way to do this than to have our own guys walk around the shop and identify safety issues on the floor?"

### Here's How It Works

Each of the shifts has its own safety captain. "The safety captain comes in a half an hour before the end of the previous shift and inspects the condition of the shop using a shop inspection form," said Ramirez. "During the inspection, they identify any safety concerns, including the condition of the shop equipment and the overall cleanliness of the shop."

The safety captains then report any issues to the outgoing supervisor who makes sure everything is taken care of before the beginning of the next shift.

Because safety inspections are completed every eight hours, each shift has the benefit of working in a clean shop without having to avoid or to fix safety hazards.

Equipment problems found during safety inspections are referred to the sector Facilities Maintenance crew. Since the inception of the Safety Captain program, several pieces of dated equipment and tools have been replaced, including grinders, work benches, vices and ladders.

In addition to a primary safety captain, each shift also has an alternate safety captain. On the days when the primary captain doesn't work, the alternate captain takes over.

The three primary safety captains are David Klinkenborg, John Rodriguez and Bob Mitchell. Eddie Cardiel, Betty Williams and Rick Mason are the alternate captains.

**Here's How It Helps**

Safety Captain John Rodriguez paints a vivid picture. "Before the program began, the shop was pretty much a mess – trash on the floor, lots of hazards, tripping and falling hazards. Since the start of the program, I've seen an improvement in the shops as far as cleanliness and safety."

"We don't have nearly as much clutter as we did," agreed Safety Captain David Klinkenborg. "Now a lot of people will actually come up to us and let us know about problems they see that we might not catch."

Two areas in which Division 10 maintenance has seen definite improvement are in monthly facility safety audits and monthly environmental compliance reviews.

"Before the program, we had a long list of things we needed to correct and now we have maybe five or six things to address, and they're process-related instead of core safety issues," said Ramirez.

"At this point, I believe the employees here are beginning to take personal responsibility for safety in the shop," he added. "I'm confident we will change the safety culture here at Division 10 one employee at a time."



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## Citizen's Advisory Committee Sets Hearing on Prop A and C Audit

By RICK JAGER

(March 28, 2007) The Independent Citizen's Advisory and Oversight Committee (ICAOC) will hold a public hearing at 10 a.m. Monday, April 9 to receive comment on the results of an independent audit conducted to determine Metro's accountability for sales tax revenues and expenditures.

The audit looked at the agency's management of Proposition A and Proposition C funding from July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2006. The public hearing will take place in the Board Room at Metro Headquarters.

Prop A and C are voter-approved ordinances that each provide for a one-half percent sales tax in LA County. The proceeds are to be used for transportation purposes as specified in the two ordinances.

LA County voters in 1998 approved the Metropolitan Transportation Authority Reform and Accountability Act. The act ensures accountability in the expenditure of Prop A and C sales tax revenues through annual independent audits.

The act also created an Independent Citizen's Advisory and Oversight Committee charged with conducting public hearings on the independent audit reports.

Copies of the audit are available from the Records Management Center at 922-2342.






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## Sector Governance Council Meetings Scheduled for April

By RICK JAGER

(March 29, 2007) Metro's five service sector governance councils will hold their regular monthly public meetings in April to discuss various transportation issues in their service sectors.

The April governance council meetings are scheduled at:

- San Fernando Valley Service Sector, 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, April 4, Marvin Braude Constituent Service Center, 6262 Van Nuys Blvd., Van Nuys.
- San Gabriel Valley Service Sector, 5 p.m., Monday, April 9, at the sector offices, 3369 Santa Anita Ave., El Monte.
- Westside/Central Service Sector, 5 p.m., Wednesday, April 11, La Cienega Tennis Center, Sunset Room, 325 S. La Cienega Blvd., Beverly Hills.
- Gateway Service Sector, 2 p.m., Thursday, April 12, Downey Public Library, Cormack Room, 11121 Brookshire Ave., Downey.
- South Bay Service Sector, 9:30 a.m., Friday, April 13, Carson Community Center, 801 East Carson St., Carson.





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### Student March May Impact Traffic Near Metro HQ on Friday

(March 29, 2007) A student walkout planned Friday, March 30, by high school students who want to make Cesar Chavez Day – March 31 – a school holiday may impact traffic on Cesar Chavez Boulevard past Metro Headquarters.

The march, from East Los Angeles College to City Hall, is expected to begin sometime after a 9 a.m. rally at the college. Students also are expected to converge on City Hall from other area schools.

LAUSD is arranging to have buses available at City Hall to transport students back to their schools.

Cesar Chavez Day, which honors the birthday of the labor leader, was established as a holiday in 2000 by the State of California.

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Operator Armen Davtian's suggestion led to installation of reflective markers in the vault house lanes at Division 15.



### Operator's Request Improves Division 15 Vault House Safety

By Lorene Kelley

(March 29, 2007) When it comes to safety, East Valley Division 15 takes it seriously.

When Armen Davtian, a part-time operator, requested more lighting at night around the division vault houses, the Maintenance Department came up with the idea of using reflective devices.

The devices, of a type used to mark lanes on freeways, are intended to illuminate the driveway between the vault houses to reduce the hazard of hitting the curbs. Buses returning from their routes must stop at the vault houses so Revenue employees can service the fare boxes.



Raised reflective markers like this are often seen on California freeways to define traffic lanes.

The white side of the device, which is embedded in the driveway, reflects headlights from a bus entering the division to guide the operator into the vault house lane. The red side of the reflective marker warns drivers exiting the division yard not to enter the lane between the vault houses.

Division 15 management and staff have found other ways to improve safety. The division is now equipped with four security cameras to observe the employee parking lots and the maintenance yard.

Employees who have ideas to improve safety in the workplace should

submit them to Metro Headquarters managers or operating division managers, division Instruction staff or to the Corporate Safety Department.

**Editor’s Note:** Lorene Kelley is assistant transportation manager at East Valley Division 15. A version of this article originally appeared in the Division 15 Safety Newsletter for March.

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## ‘Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work’ Scheduled April 26

By ELIZABETH LEIDER

(March 30, 2007) Tell your kids to get ready to Go Metro! Thursday, April 26 is Metro’s annual “Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day.”

This year’s theme is “Revolutionizing the Workplace.” Children in grades three to eight, who are between the ages of 8 and 12, are eligible to attend a day full of Metro activities.

Breakfast will be held from 6:30 – 9 a.m. Youngsters can begin to tour the Design Studio and Print Shop, the Metro Red Line, Bus Operations Control and many other Metro departments at 9:30 a.m.

After a two-hour lunch break, beginning at 11:30 a.m., the tours of Metro facilities will resume.

At 3:30 p.m. the kids will attend the wrap-up where they will meet CEO Roger Snoble, participate in a question and answer session and possibly win one of the prizes being given away.

Employees who plan on participating in this event should notify the child’s school so they can receive any homework in advance. Metro has a permission slip prepared which will be received upon registration.

The last day to register is April 20. For more information about enrolling in this event, contact your division coordinator. If further information is needed, contact Elizabeth Porras at 922-2635.



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# Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension

UPDATE

**On the Scene with Ned Racine**  
(March 30, 2007) Construction is underway at the Mariachi Plaza, Soto, Little Tokyo/Arts District stations. Text and photos by Ned Racine.

**Gold Line Eastside Extension Stations Under Construction:** Work continues along the six miles of the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension as the project advances toward its scheduled opening date of late 2009. While the two underground stations—Mariachi Plaza and Soto—are being built, extensive construction continues on the line. The East Portal and West Portal, where the light-rail vehicles will enter and exit the 1.7-mile-long, 21-foot diameter tunnels, are being formed. Construction of the Little Tokyo/Arts District street-level station proceeds, as does the widening of intersections and building of sidewalks along 1st and 3rd Streets. The photographs were taken March 20, 2007.



3/20/2007 >  
A worker cuts reinforcing steel for later use. He stands above the roof of the East Portal.



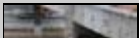
3/20/2007 >  
With the future train control room in the foreground, this view of the Atlantic Station looks west along 3rd Street.



3/20/2007 >  
Workers measure the retaining wall along 3rd Street to ascertain where the wall will be backfilled.



3/20/2007 >  
Just west of the East Portal, a crane removes lumber used to make concrete forms.



3/20/2007 >  
A worker checks the forms which will later be