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City Expands Historic Bridge to Accommodate Future Eastside Trains

- 1st Street Viaduct will once again carry mass transit

By NED RACINE

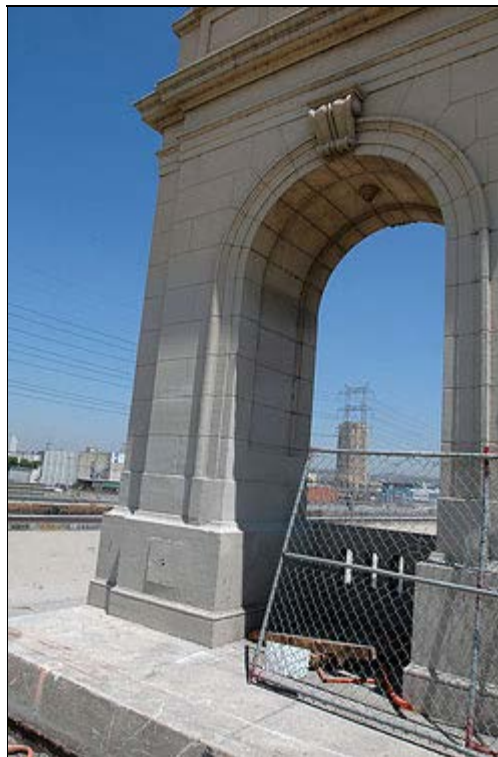
(July 3, 2007) The 1st Street Viaduct, which has carried Angelinos across the Los Angeles River since 1929, is being widened to carry Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension railcars.

The expansion of the 71-foot-wide viaduct—a bridge composed of several short spans—began in March. Scott McConnell, Metro's construction manager for the city's widening project, said the project is scheduled to be complete in October 2007.

The viaduct's north side will be widened 26 feet to accommodate tracks down its center, while still providing two traffic lanes on each side. The six-foot-wide sidewalks on each side of the viaduct will remain.

In addition to widening the roadway, the viaduct's support structure is being bolstered to hold the weight of the Gold Line rail cars. To do this, beams are being added to existing girders just below the roadway.

Photos by Ned Racine



One of the viaduct's pylons frames the Union Station Gateway Center.



Workers reinforce the girders supporting the 1st Street Viaduct.

One of 12 historic bridges that cross the once fickle Los Angeles River, the viaduct opened for traffic on January 1, 1929. No stranger to transit, the viaduct carried the Pacific Electric Railway's Red Cars until 1961, when the tracks were paved over.



To prepare for arrival of the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension, the 1st Street Viaduct across the Los Angeles River is being widened and reinforced. One of the viaduct's historical light standards lies on the sidewalk.

Today, the City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works estimates the viaduct carries 21,500 vehicular trips daily.

Efforts are underway to preserve the distinctive masonry light standards and 10 pylons along the quarter-mile span. An oil pipeline and water line have already been removed from the viaduct.

The Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension, which will feature eight stations (two underground), will span six miles from Union Station in downtown Los Angeles via the Arts District/Little Tokyo and Boyle Heights to Atlantic/Pomona Boulevards in East Los Angeles. It is scheduled to open in 2009.

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'The Best is Yet to Come,' says Metro's Oldest Employee

- 'Just thank God and hang in,' he advises

By JIMMY STROUP

(July 3, 2007) Ivan McCargo has fond memories of birthdays past, but none more so than his birthday in 1944 when, as a soldier, he witnessed the Allied victory over Germany and received a special gift.

"[My] most memorable birthday was during WWII, when I was in Europe. It was the fact that the war was over. After the invasion of Normandy, I had a birthday about a month later," he said. "It was the best birthday present I ever had."

McCargo is Metro's oldest employee. He turns 91 on July 5.

"No special plans, other than my birthday party. My wife will probably throw me a party," McCargo said. "It'll be my wife and kids and grandkids probably, just like last year. It's going to be a good time."

But for a man born in 1916, a long lifetime of children and grandchildren makes for what most would consider a large party of as many as 40 "close relatives."

McCargo, who works as a Transportation Operations Supervisor at Arthur Winston Division 5, didn't really give being older than most of his peers much thought until recently.

Official oldest employee

"It didn't even cross my mind until about seven or eight years ago when I met Mr. Winston and I found out his age and that we were pretty close together," he said. Arthur Winston's retirement in 2006 made McCargo (10 years his junior) the agency's official oldest employee.

McCargo doesn't have any monumental advice to offer those of us who might wish to see as many birthdays as he's seen, but does have some simple words that seem to have worked for him.

"Just thank God and hang in," he said. "My expression to all is, 'The best is yet to come.'"



Ivan McCargo is Metro's oldest employee. On July 5 he will be 91 years old. Photo by Jimmy Stroup.

This coming year McCargo is looking forward to watching the Metro Rapid system come into full use as part of Metro Connections. He said he's anxious to see the system working and thinks it will serve people better as far as making transit something that can work for them.

Though McCargo is oldest employee at Metro, South Bay Division 18 Operator Donald Dube is most senior with 48 years' service.

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Pam O'Connor Will Lead Metro Board in FY 2008

- Civic leader wants to encourage people to rideshare, take public transit



Board Chair Pam O'Connor took up her new duties, July 1.

By RICK JAGER

(July 3, 2007) Santa Monica City Council Member Pam O'Connor will chair the Board of Directors during FY 2008. She succeeds Supervisor Gloria Molina who completed her term as chair on June 30.

Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa will be first vice-chair and Supervisor Don Knabe was elected second vice-chair during the Board's June meeting.

"In the coming year, Los Angeles County faces many challenges as we strive to improve mobility for the region through implementation of various transportation improvement programs," said O'Connor. "I look forward to leading Metro on a course that encourages people to rideshare with carpools and vanpools or take public transit whenever possible."

O'Connor said she will continue the Board's work of "improving our vast network of buses and trains and encouraging transit-oriented developments around transit hubs to bring people closer to their place of employment."

She said her special focus will be on Metro's environmental sustainability initiatives to address climate change.

Santa Monica Council Member

O'Connor, a member of the Santa Monica City Council since 1994, has led efforts to develop policies and partnerships that create and enhance community livability, economic vitality and environmental sustainability.

She has served on Metro's Board of Directors since 2001, representing the Westside and South Bay cities whose combined population approaches 1 million. She also represents the City of Santa Monica on the Exposition Metro Line Construction Authority board.

O'Connor works on policy issues with the League of California Cities, the National League of Cities, the Local Government Commission and the American Public Transportation Association. Since 1997, she has been a member of the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) and is Chair of its Regional Comprehensive Plan Task Force.

As a professional planning consultant, O'Connor specializes in historic

preservation and has worked on significant historic building projects throughout Southern California. She has served as the Director of the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Northridge earthquake recovery partnership program, as a planner for the City of Pasadena and as a research associate for the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan.

She earned a Bachelor of Science degree in communications from Southern Illinois University and holds masters' degrees in planning and in technology management from Eastern Michigan University. She is an enthusiastic urban explorer, a strong advocate for public transit and a regular user of public transportation.

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The lobby of the San Gabriel Valley Sector and Division 9 office building is enclosed in glass, which allows sunlight to illuminate the terrazzo flooring. Natural lighting was taken into account when the building was designed to allow as much daylight into the building as possible. Project Manager Tim Lindholm said the use of natural light will help reduce energy use, but at the same time won't have overheat the building or make the occupants uncomfortable. Once the contractor completes the project punch list, furniture, phones and computers will be moved into the building.



New Building for Division 9 and SGV Sector Offices Nears Completion

• **Photos by Deniz Durmus**

By Jimmy Stroup

(July 5, 2007) The new three-story office building that will house the San Gabriel Valley Sector offices and the Division 9 transportation offices is nearing completion in El Monte and is expected to be occupied by September.

The "ecologically green" building has been constructed to achieve a "silver" rating by Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), said Tim Lindholm, director of Capital Projects for Facilities Operations.

The division offices, bus operator break room, dispatch and Sheriff's Transit Services Bureau field office will be located on the first and second floors of the 45,515-square foot building. The sector administrative offices will occupy the third floor.

The \$13-million building will permit a 50 percent growth in Division 9 operations.

Major construction has ended and the site was recently inspected by Metro. The building contractor is completing a “punch list” of such items as painting touch-ups and electrical.



Division 9’s current transportation building will be demolished soon after the new building is operational. The current building’s site will be repaved to allow for additional bus parking, making life easier for the operators and mechanics who navigate the buses in the presently crowded parking area and allowing for expansion of the fleet. Plans call for having the new yard paved and working by summer 2008.





The building surpasses California standards for building energy use by 25 percent and water consumption standards by 50 percent. It also incorporates drought-resistant landscaping. Additionally, the building is crafted of recycled and low-volatile organic compound materials. The design also incorporates covered lockers (seen above) which are located near a patio where employees can relax outside during breaks or while waiting for their shift to start.

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Renee Willis directs the Metro Choir in a Fourth of July tribute. Photos by Jennie Harris.



Metro Choir 'Star Spangles' the Gateway Building

By JENNIE HARRIS

(July 5, 2007) Members of Metro Choir sang their hearts out in honor of America's birthday on Tuesday.

"America the Beautiful," "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," and "The Star Spangled Banner" filled the plaza at Gateway.

The Choir consists of 31 employees from all over the agency. When an event is scheduled, they get together during their lunch hour once a week for four weeks in a row.

"It's a labor of love," said Choir Director Renee Willis.

"It's a wonderful opportunity to get together with a great group of people who are passionate about



Metro Choir begins patriotic concert with a musical descent to the Gateway lobby, where the group performed in celebration of the Fourth of July.

their jobs, and also have the passion of singing, too,” she said.

“We like to give back to the community in song, and it makes for a better spirit here at MTA,” said Willis. “Everyone is uplifted when they hear us sing, and we’re being uplifted as we sing, so it’s a double blessing.”

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TSB Deputies Escort Swedish Parliament Representatives

- Group is touring LA's mental health facilities

By JIMMY STROUP

(July 5, 2007) Eight representatives of the Swedish Parliament came to Metro headquarters, Monday, as part of a Transit Services Bureau-hosted tour of the mental health facilities and programs in the Los Angeles area.

The delegation came to the U.S. to evaluate the differences between the treatment of mental health issues in Sweden and the comparable institutions, public and private, set up for the same function in the U.S..

"We're showing the Mental Health Unit to them," said Sheriff's Deputy Britta Kjellstrand, who helped guide the visit. "They want to know what we have in place so they can compare it to what they have."

The unit she spoke of is a Sheriff's Department program that deals with mental health-related problems for the county, including incidents that occur on Metro lines, stations and vehicles. TSB has two two-member units – each made up of one deputy and one nurse – that respond to problem situations where issues of mental health might be in play.

Deputy Craig McClelland heads up the Mental Health Unit and said the Swedish visitors were interested in the processes Los Angeles authorities employ assisting in cases of mental health, and also in the types of treatment and custody LASD uses.

"We have a really good overview of the entire system, so they asked us



Transit Services Bureau deputies hosted eight representatives of the Swedish Parliament on a tour of mental health facilities and programs in the Los Angeles area. From left are Sgt. Ron Marquez, Sgt. Bruce Thomas, Deputy Craig McClelland, Deputy Dirk Blansfield, Sgt. Augie Pando and Lt. John Baylis. Photo by Ned Racine

to help coordinate with the delegation because our experience is so broad,” McClelland said.

Earlier in the day, TSB deputies showed the Swedes the mental health ward at the Twin Towers jail. The tour was set to take the delegates down Skid Row to see what McClelland called the “street scene” of mental health in Los Angeles, then to Harbor-UCLA Medical Center in Torrance, Presbyterian Intercommunity Hospital in Whittier and the College Hospitals in Cerritos.


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"How You Doin'?" Honors Go to Divisions 3 and 5 for May

By JIMMY STROUP

(July 6, 2007) North Los Angeles Division 3 took the award on the transportation side and Arthur Winston Division 5 took the prize for maintenance in May's contested "How You Doin'?" race.

Largely on the strength of a greatly reduced accident rate, Division 3 was able to beat out the other divisions by a large margin to capture the honor.

"I'm especially pleased with the fact that we finished second overall in the accident reduction category," said Dan Frawley, transportation manager. "We've never finished that high before so the operators have really been working hard to improve their performance in that area."

Their winning score also benefited from a month without any workers compensation injuries, Frawley said.

"It's always nice to be the top performing division," he said. "I'm really proud of these operators."

The Division 5 maintenance team also prevailed, scoring winning points principally out of a stellar attendance record of 98.6 percent.

The Arthur Winston Division has to be getting used to winning the "How You Doin'?"— they've taken first place six times in the last year among the 11 competing divisions, May 2006 to this May.

But it was by no means an assured victory for Division 5 in May; West Valley Division 8 came in second just a tenth of a point behind. San Gabriel Valley Division 9 scored third place, below the top spot by only a third of one percent.



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Metro Board Approves Key Motions on Lengthy June Agenda

- FY 2008 budget among many motions approved

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(July 6, 2007) Working through a lengthy agenda at its June meeting, the Metro Board approved motions that – in addition to the amended FY 2008 budget – included funding for local transit operators and studies of a subway extension and a light rail regional connector.

Other motions approved included \$174.5 million to purchase 50 light rail cars for the Metro Blue Line and Expo Line, improvements at five operating divisions and an upgrade for the ATMS "smart bus" system.

The Board considered the following items, among others on its June agenda:

Item 5, FY 2008 'Mini Call'. The Board approved a motion to program \$14 million in Proposition A Incentive Reserve funds for an FY 2008 "Mini Call" that will provide funding for local transit operators to buy bus and dial-a-ride vehicles. The funds will allow 11 local operators to buy a total of 65 buses and 24 local operators to buy a total of 154 dial-a-ride

vehicles.

Item 7, SCRRA Funding. The Board approved a proposal to provide \$48.1 million in Proposition C 10% local sales tax funding to the Southern California Regional Rail Authority for Metrolink operations and to reprogram \$4.9 million in Prop C 10% funds for Metrolink capital projects.

Item 8, Bus Speed and Street Design. The Board approved a plan under which Metro will partner with LADOT and the LA Department of Public Works to improve bus travel times and schedule reliability in congested corridors. This might include adding bus-only lanes, the addition of bus-only right-turn lanes and restricting left-turn movement at some intersections, increased parking restrictions and other measures.

A report to the Board noted that Metro Local bus speeds have declined 12 percent, "leading to significant increases in Metro operating expenses and the addition of nearly 300 peak buses to compensate...for...lower bus speeds."

Item 11, Westside Subway Extension. The Board approved a motion awarding a \$3.7 million contract to study a proposal to extend the Metro Red Line by tunneling through the Westside. The study will include various alternatives, assessment of tunnel feasibility and conceptual engineering, along with funds for other professional services and contingencies.

Item 12, Light Rail Regional Connector. The Board approved a motion to award some \$2.5 million in contracts to study the feasibility of a Regional Connector, which might be built as a subway, at-grade or aerial connection to link Union Station and the 7th and Metro station.

Metro patrons who want to make the connection between the Blue Line and the Gold Line now must take the subway to bridge the 1.85-mile gap between Union Station and the 7th and Metro station.

Item 20, FY 2008 Budget. The Board approved the proposed \$3.121 billion budget for FY 2008. The budget includes funding for new capital projects, salary increases and benefits for union and non-contract employees, an annual inflationary increase to the non-contract employee salary ranges, the safety and security budget, and funding for eight employees and \$1 million for implementation of TAP operations.

The Board amended the budget to direct the staff to work with Caltrans and other agencies to develop a detailed operating plan with at least three options for implementing "congestion pricing" in LA County by 2010. Congestion pricing, such as that implemented in London, Stockholm, Singapore and other cities, the amendment says, can "serve as an incentive to form carpools, speed up commutes by improving system performance, and finance transit and transportation infrastructure.

A second amendment provides \$975,000 for implementation of "incident based recording technology" on all Metro buses, including those under contract to the agency. The staff was directed to establish "key performance indicators" report to the board within 120 days of implementation.

The staff also was directed to report to the Board in 60 days on "steps necessary to establish a specialized bus accident investigation unit" to be

staffed by Metro employees who would be certified accident investigators.

Item 26, Sheriff's Contract. The Board approved a motion to fund the Sheriff's Transit Services Bureau (TSB) at a cost of \$62.5 million for the final year of a five-year agreement. Metro has contracted exclusively with the LA County Sheriff's Department for security services since 2003.

Item 42, 50 Light Rail Cars. The Board approved a motion to budget \$174.5 million to purchase 50 light rail cars for operation on the Exposition Line and the Metro Blue Line.

Sixteen of the cars will be earmarked for the Expo Line. The remaining 34, which will be operated on the Blue Line, will replace part of the P865 Nippon Sharyo cars which have exceeded 20 years' service.

Item 48, Orange Line Cameras. The Board approved a motion to award a \$200,293 contract for 140 new pan/tilt/zoom surveillance cameras for placement at Metro Orange Line stations. The new cameras will replace less capable cameras now installed at the stations.

Item 54, Lane Restrictions for Buses. The Board approved a motion directing the CEO to develop for the Board within 60 days a new policy or policy amendment that would restrict buses to the outermost lane on all freeways; and make the second outermost lane available only for passing, providing the freeway has three or more lanes.

The policy would create exceptions for buses using express bus or transitway routes and for instances in which left lanes are used to exit or enter a freeway or highway.

The motion also directed the CEO to send a letter to the state on behalf of the Board requesting within 90 days "an assessment of how current laws prohibiting trucks and other large vehicles from using the Number One and HOV lanes can be enforced to the greatest extent possible and be expanded in future legislation" to improve highway safety.

Item 61, Bauchet Street Warehouse. The Board approved a motion to establish a \$12.9 million life-of-project budget for construction of an approximately 60,000-square foot warehouse and Facilities Maintenance building on a site of slightly less than 3 acres on Bauchet Street adjacent to the Metro Support Services Center (formerly the RRC).

Construction of the building will allow Metro to centralize bulk warehousing and such Facilities Maintenance functions as Stops & Zones, property maintenance and the sign shop currently located at the South Park facility. Sale of that property to the City of Los Angeles is pending.

Item 62, Division Improvements. The Board approved a motion to establish a \$13.7 million life-of-project budget to improve, modernize and expand transportation and maintenance facilities at operating divisions 1, 3, 8, 9 and 15.

All are from 23 to 33 years old and currently operate and maintain more buses than they were originally designed to accommodate. The improvements will extend the service life of the divisions by at least 25 years.

Item 63, Upgrade the ATMS System. The Board approved a motion to establish a \$12.1 million life-of-project budget to upgrade the Advanced Transportation Management System. ATMS provides voice and data radio

dispatching, as well as automatic passenger counting, automated vehicle annunciation, video surveillance, real-time automated vehicle location information and daily operator schedules.

The upgrade will allow Metro to take advantage of new technology applications, hardware and software development and normal life-cycle system improvements.

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William Dorsey has been a mechanic for 38 of his 61 years. He likes how easy the mule he's driving makes moving a "dead" bus. Photo by Jennie Harris.



After 38 Years, Mechanic William Dorsey Isn't Ready to Leave Metro

- South Bay Division 18 Mechanic "A" William Dorsey has seen Metro change in the past 38 years.

By JENNIE HARRIS

(July 6, 2007) William Dorsey was a little disappointed when he first came to Los Angeles, until an old classmate told him about a utility job opening with SCRTD.

On Sept. 8, 1969, Dorsey was hired as Utility "A," known today as a service attendant. He earned \$3.45 an hour. "Believe it or not, I was getting my bills paid and still saving money," he says.

Dorsey has the second highest seniority within Metro's maintenance group. Mechanic "A" Mack Evans of Division 1 is ahead of him by two years and three months, and Mechanic "A" Leader Jessie Ramsey of the support shops is behind Dorsey by 22 days.

Dorsey, 61, hails from Rosedale, La., a small town about 20 miles west of Baton Rouge. He keeps a copy of the 1987 Rosedale phone book, all 24 yellow



In this 1990 photo, Dorsey, at age 44, is dressed in his Army Reserve fatigues.

and white pages of it.

After serving two years in the Army during Vietnam, Dorsey moved to Los Angeles and worked in the phone company's warehouse. He said to a fellow classmate who was processed out of the Navy at Long Beach, "Man, if I don't find a job making at least \$3.10 an hour, I'm going to move back home."

His friend had recently been hired by SCRTD, and told Dorsey about an opening. "I thought he was joking, paying \$3.45 an hour for that...next thing I knew I was going to take a physical."



Dorsey's 1986 SCRTD ID card

'Glad to be here'

"I'm glad to be here," says Dorsey. "The job kept me from moving back to Louisiana."

Soon SCRTD was offering mechanic classes, and Dorsey took them up on it. "I just wanted to have some type of skill, and I wanted to make a little more money."

Dorsey agreed that some things have gotten easier during the last 38 years. "When you had to push a dead bus, we used a forklift. Since then they got the mule, which looks like a tractor. It's good because it's got battery charger on it."

He was trained on a tow truck with a flat tow. It took two people to load the rear wheels on the lift: one person in the bus and one in the tow truck. The mule operates with only one person.

Easier, safer

Power tools make his job easier. It's "like somebody's standing there helping you," he says.

Computers, however, sometimes seem like a handicap to him. One time he needed diesel fuel, and he had to swipe his badge and type in a code. "I couldn't get it to work, so one of the service attendants had to do it for me," he says. "I was late going on the road call."

Dorsey's job also is safer today. "A long time ago you were responsible for your own safety equipment." The agency now provides mechanics with hard hats, respirators, back braces, and safety shoes.

"I used to daydream about getting my 23 years," he says, but when it came, "I just wasn't ready to go. This job is kind of hard to want to leave. I plan to be here at least for another five years, for sure, [so long as] my health stays good."

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Hosting FTA Administrator James Simpson, left, and Leslie Rogers, FTA Region 9 administrator, for a comprehensive tour of the Metro System were CEO Roger Snoble and Board Chair Pam O'Connor. After inspecting the new 2550 light-rail car, the group rode the subway, Metro Rapid buses and the Orange Line.



Photos by Ned Racine

FTA's James Simpson Tours Metro's High-Tech Transit System

- He 'admired the professionalism and level of service,' CEO says

(July 10, 2007) CEO Roger Snoble, joined by Board Chair Pam O'Connor, gave FTA Administrator James Simpson a whirlwind tour of Metro, July 5, hitting the high points that left him impressed with the agency's state-of-the art transit technology.

A visit to the Bus Operations Center illustrated how the surveillance camera system improves safety at Metro Orange Line stations. Transportation Planning Manager Peter Liu also briefed Simpson on RIITS, the program to integrate traffic management systems that enhance the flow of vehicles on freeways and roads throughout the region.

At Union Station, Simpson stepped aboard one of the new 2550 rail cars, which – with the flip of a switch – can be operated on any of Metro's three light-rail lines. He also made friends with the Transit Services Bureau's explosives detection dog, Bady, who was there with his handler, Deputy David Wessol.

Larry Kelsey, contract administration manager, briefed Simpson on the car, emphasizing its GPS unit that allows the car's position to be constantly tracked, its built-in diagnostic system and airplane-like "black box" event

recorder. The new car also is fully ADA compliant with wider doors, convenient hand rails and Braille signage.

Afterward, Simpson also toured the Exposition Line construction project, boarded a Metro Rapid bus for a ride along Wilshire Boulevard, and rode the subway to North Hollywood for a brief tour of the Orange Line.



Simpson also toured the Exposition Line construction project with CEO Rick Thorpe, center, and Joel Sandberg, director of Engineering and Construction.

'Important to spend time here'

"Part of our mission is to see what's going on all over the country," said Simpson, "and I haven't spent enough time on the West Coast. With LA being the second largest city in the country, it's really important to spend time here."

Simpson was accompanied on the tour by Leslie Rogers, FTA Region 9 administrator, and Ray Tellis, Region 9 transportation program specialist.

The FTA group was hosted by Snoble and O'Connor, along with Expo Line CEO Rick Thorpe, Metro Police Chief Cmdr. Dan Finkelstein and others.

The tour gave Snoble an opportunity to demonstrate to the FTA administrator the diversity and complexity of Metro's transit system. He said Simpson was "impressed with the vastness of our transportation challenges and awed by the many tools we have available to meet those challenges."

The CEO also said Simpson "praised Metro's many accomplishments and admired the professionalism and level of service employees delivered to our customers."

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San Gabriel Division 9 Mechanic John Hill repair buses and creates art, but not at the same time. The 25-year Metro employee started using his workspace as an art studio about 10 years ago. He comes in early each day to make time for his hobby.

- Photos by Jimmy Stroup

San Gabriel Division 9 Mechanic John Hill Makes Art at Work

- He comes early to create with pencil, ink, oil or acrylic

By JIMMY STROUP

(July 10, 2007) The industrial smells of grease, oil and solvent hang in the air of John Hill's art studio – because it's the maintenance bay at San Gabriel Valley Division 9.

Inside John Hill's toolbox studio



For the last 10 years or so, Hill – who's a mechanic "A" – has been coming in to work a half hour early each day to toil at his toolbox, creating pencil and ink drawings, and oil and acrylic paintings.

"I get here a few minutes early every day and instead of watching the news and scribbling up in the break room, I decided to go out there and paint," Hill said.

Not formally trained (the last art class he took was in the 12th grade), Hill's art is graceful enough that it's in demand among his fellow mechanics. He holds a raffle every now and



then, he said, to make it fair to give the art away.

"If it's a piece of art that someone wants and that I don't really want, I'll trade him," he said. "He gives me a couple of canvases and I give him the painting."



Work tools become art tools

Hill's art ranges in subject from classic pastoral scenes to the mildly gothic and the almost surreal, though Hill keeps the art strictly G-rated, careful not to offend any of his fellow mechanics.

"I mostly use pencil and ink, but recently I've been picking up my brushes and painting in oil and acrylic," he said.

Painted in the top section of the toolbox itself, each creation is lit with a work light normally used in shedding light on engine troubles or oil changes.

The 25-year Metro veteran paints without the aid of a model or photo of whatever his subject for that week may be. It normally takes him a week or two to complete a piece. Works in progress are either hung on the sides of the tool box or laid flat in its empty drawers.

"I draw from memory," Hill said. "Places I've been, places I make up. Whatever turns me on at the time."

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Senior Security Officer Henry Solis and his partner, Nakita, won four trophies in their first K-9 competition.



The Nose Knows: Bomb Dog Nakita Sniffs Out Trophies in K-9 Competition

- 'I hold the lead and follow her,' handler says of his four-footed partner

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(July 11, 2007) Metro Senior Security Officer Henry Solis can always tell when his explosives detection dog, Nakita, is excited about her work. Her ears prick up, her tail wags and she begins to breathe heavily through her nose.

So, Nakita – a 2 ½-year-old black Labrador – was showing all the telltale signs last weekend at the annual Ventura County Sheriff's K-9 Trials in Oxnard. In three timed events, she alerted Solis to every simulated bomb and explosives package hidden in a succession of rooms, open areas and vehicles.

In what was their first competition, Solis and Nakita placed fourth in area searches and building searches

Photos by Bill Heard

and fifth in vehicle searches. The Metro team also brought home the fifth-place trophy in the overall competition against 50 other area law enforcement K-9 units.

In the first event, the two had five minutes to find hidden explosives in an office building. They successfully completed the search in only 3 ½ minutes. In the next event, a search of some 30 pieces of luggage in a simulated airport setting, Solis and Nakita once again hit their targets well within the allotted time.

"I hold the lead and follow her," says Solis, a 20-year veteran of the Metro security force. "She goes to each bag and searches. When she finds a device, she sits."

A sensitive nose

Faced with finding simulated bombs in two of seven vehicles in the final event, Nakita scouted each one from end to end. With a nose sensitive enough to smell the faintest odors, she located one device in the rear wheel well of a Buick and another under the hood of a second car.

Nakita is trained to detect the odors of 12 different types of explosives, including dynamite, various explosive chemicals, a mixture of fertilizer and fuel like that used to destroy the federal building in Oklahoma City, and several types of gunpowder.

"You have to depend on your dog to be right on it," says the 44-year-old security officer. "You just trust your dog and your dog will lead you right to the explosives."

The handler/dog team have responded to bomb threats and to many untended bags and packages since they've worked together. Solis and Nakita, along with Metro's other K-9 teams, also have assisted the LAPD, including helping with the search following a bomb threat at the Kodak Theater.

"We get a good reaction from other agencies," says Solis. "They're glad to see us there."

General Grant's successor



At Solis' command, Nakita checks an untended backpack for explosives at the Metro Headquarters Plaza entrance. Below, Nakita checks for explosives in a parked golf cart.



Nakita is Solis' second bomb-sniffing dog. His first was General Grant, a chocolate lab, who retired on a medical disability in September 2006.

Despite suffering from arthritis and dysplasia, a painful and degerative disease in the elbows of both front legs, General Grant ended his career on a high note.

In August 2006, he became suspicious of a man carrying a large backpack. Recognizing the man as a suspect in the burglary of a Metro Green Line ticket vending machine, Solis and another officer apprehended the man.

Today, Nakita and General Grant – who's now a pet in the Solis home – are best friends. And, even though General Grant is retired, he still gets excited when his master is readying the younger dog for a day on patrol. He once jumped into Solis' patrol car, hoping to go along.

"People feel safe" when they see the K-9 teams, Solis says, "and that's what we want to do, project that sense of safety...that our dogs are taking care of business and that they're doing the job."

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Crowds cheer transit along the parade route in Pacific Palisades on July 4th.



Photos by Mark Samara

Independence Day Parade Celebrates Freedom from Automobiles

- Riders celebrate Commuter Express Line 430's 20th anniversary

(July 11, 2007) On a day marking the American Colonies' independence from Great Britain, Metro and the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) celebrated a bus line that offers its riders independence from the automobile.

At the annual Pacific Palisades 4th of July parade, many Line 430 riders, their friends and families helped decorate a Commuter Express bus to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the line. Metro contributed a banner proclaiming "Show your independence. Go Metro."



Promoting transit at the Pacific Palisades 4th of July parade are, from left, Metro employee Ben Nahid, Palisades community activist Haldis Toppel, Steve Lantz and his daughter Katie Lantz, Metro Director Zev Yaroslavsky, Assemblywoman Julia Brownley, Los Angeles City Councilman Bill Rosendahl, Audrey Litvak and her mother, Metro Communications Manager Jody Litvak.

Commuter Express Line 430 provides two trips each weekday morning to downtown Los Angeles from Pacific Palisades, Brentwood and Westwood. The line picked up many new riders two years ago when it was rerouted to serve Loyola High School, located on Venice Boulevard near Normandie.

"Line 430 is a perfect example of each transit operator concentrating on what it does best," said Jody Litvak, communications manager and a regular Line 430 rider. "Commuter Express lines provide a different service than Metro does."

Getting the bus in the parade was the idea of Steve Lantz, a regular Line 430 passenger and former Metro employee who is now Metrolink's Director of Communications and Development.

"It was really fun," said Ben Nahid, project engineering manager in Metro's Rail Capital Projects, and another regular rider of Line 430. "Everyone cheered and waved as we came by in the parade. I think it was a good way to promote the line and transit in general."

LADOT took over operation of the route from the SCRTD in 1987.

--from Jody Litvak


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Congressional Committees Boost Chance for 'Subway to the Sea'

- Also vote funding for Eastside Extension, but bills differ in amounts

(July 13, 2007) Congressional committees took action this week that brings Los Angeles another step closer to construction of the so-called "subway to the sea."

House and Senate appropriations committees passed FY 2008 transportation spending bills that include language lifting a 21-year-old prohibition against extending subway tunnels west of Wilshire/Western.

Although the Metro Board has not approved the proposed 13.2-mile extension project, at it's June meeting it did award a \$3.7 million contract to study various alternatives. The staff is currently updating the Long Range Transportation Plan and will present it to the Board later this summer.

In a statement released Wednesday, Board Chair Pam O'Connor said, "Repeal of this language represents a huge step for transit service in Los Angeles County as we begin planning for the future to improve the mobility of the region."

The action by the House and Senate appropriations committees also includes funding for the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension, although the measures differ in the amount of funding to be provided.

The bill adopted by the House Appropriations Committee includes \$80 million for the Eastside Extension and more than \$16 million in "small starts" funding to help expand the Metro Rapid system. The action by the Senate Appropriations Committee includes only \$70 million for the Eastside Extension and did not include the \$16 million earmark for "small starts" funding.

Metro's Government Relations staff will work to ensure the agency's projects receive the full funding when the House and Senate committees meet later this year to reconcile their spending bills.

The appropriations measure will require approval by the full House and Senate, as well as President Bush's signature, before becoming law.

Congressman Henry Waxman introduced the original language restricting federal funding for subway tunneling on the Westside in 1986 following a devastating March 1985 explosion and fire in a Ross Dress for Less store on Third Street in the Wilshire-Fairfax District.

In 2005, a panel of tunneling experts selected by APTA and approved by Waxman concluded that tunneling along Wilshire and operation of subway trains west of Western Avenue could be done safely using new

tunneling technology.

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Sailing the Transpac:

No Piña Coladas for Metro's John Drayton During Yacht Race to Hawaii

The Transpacific Yacht Race is an offshore yacht race starting off Point Fermin in San Pedro and ending off Diamond Head in Honolulu, a distance of around 2,225 nautical miles (4121 km). Started in 1906, it is one of yachting's premier offshore races and attracts entrants from all over the world.



John Drayton is one of nine who will crew "Ragtime," a 65-foot long, 11-foot wide yacht built in New Zealand. Owner Chris Welsh and Drayton have been friends since childhood in Newport Beach. Photo courtesy of John Drayton.

- Rigorous 12 to 13-day race will be constant deck watches, navigation and little sleep; 'It's been a dream of mine to go do this race,' he says.

By JIMMY STROUP

(July 13, 2007) Normally, John Drayton spends his weeks evaluating the bus fleet, planning and approving future purchases of new vehicles, and researching new technologies.

But, the Metro vehicle acquisition manager's next week or so will be spent directing another kind of operation. He'll be the navigator on a 65-foot sloop sailing toward Hawaii in the 2007 Transpacific Yacht Race.

"We don't call it yachting," Drayton said. "People think of

yachting they think of sitting on the deck and drinking piña coladas. That's the last thing we're doing for the next 10 days. We're going for a race. We call it sailing."

As navigator on "Ragtime," a New Zealand-built yacht that has won the Transpac twice in the past under previous ownership, Drayton has eight or nine days of total concentration to look forward to.

The race, against some 50 other boats, is 2,225 nautical miles from a point off San Pedro to Diamond Head, Oahu. For boats the size of Ragtime, which has a crew of nine men, the event begins Sunday morning. The staggered start dates for differing classes had smaller boats departing July 9, so the race is already underway for some.



Vehicle Acquisition Manager John Drayton will navigate a sail boat competing in the Transpacific Yacht Race from San Pedro to Oahu, Hawaii. The 2,225-mile race could take anywhere from eight to 12 days to complete. Photo by Jimmy Stroup.

"It's frankly been a dream of mine to go do this race. It's a big deal to me to get out and be able to do this," he said.

'Competitive from a young age'

Sailing seems to be in Drayton's blood; his family has avidly sailed for three generations. As a Newport Beach native, his backyard was literally a bay, so the sailing culture was something he never even tried to escape.

"I sailed growing up, I raced competitively as a kid. I sailed at Tufts University and we were national champions two of the four years I was there," he said. "I've been a very competitive sailor from a very young age. It's something I've been doing for the better part of 35 years."

Drayton has known the newest owner of "Ragtime," Chris Welsh, since childhood and jumped at the chance to participate in a race he's admired as a youngster.

"I'm kind of his lieutenant – I do all the navigation, I do a lot of the strategy," he said. "I'm coming at it from the point of view of weather forecasting, prediction... it's a pretty elaborate process."

Elaborate is almost too simple a word to describe what Drayton's going to be doing come Sunday. What used to be half figuring out where you were on the ocean and half pointing in the right direction has turned into a completely technical process of weather prediction - up to a week in advance – and minute course adjustments based on real-time conditions.



"Ragtime," a New Zealand-built yacht, that has won the Transpac twice in the past under previous ownership. Photo courtesy of John Drayton.

Looking for 'optimal conditions'

"We're running a computer the whole way that's giving us optimal conditions for what the wind is going to be doing and we're downloading updates a couple times a day," Drayton said.

"We use an Iridium Satellite phone to pull down weather updates, called GRB files," he said. "And then the computer takes that information and it computes an optimal course for us to hold – and this is changing constantly."

It's this search for optimal conditions that will have "Ragtime" pointed south, not west, for the first bit of the race, though this may seem counterintuitive.

Drayton explained that the shortest course between California and Hawaii would take the boat through an area typically devoid of wind, basically ending their chances to win.

"The course is 2,225 miles, but in reality, we'll sail between 2,300 and 2,400 miles, depending on how far south we go - kind of effectively going off course to catch better wind," he said.

The conditions during the race are not what might come to mind when imagining the luxury normally associated with a yacht.

'Keep our fingers crossed'

"It's not like there's any place to park the boat and take a nap. You have to run a watch rotation, you have all the logistics of feeding, housing, people sleeping – everything you can imagine needing to do and you have to be totally autonomous for eight or nine days," Drayton said. "Actually, you really have to plan for 12 to 13 days and keep our fingers crossed that those extra days aren't necessary."

The rigors of this kind of race don't really allow for anything but constant work. Drayton's description of what constitutes time off was simply "sleep."

"There are below-deck bunks on the boat. Not terribly glamorous, very utilitarian. We have seven berths on the boat for nine people, but they're never used all at once, are they?" Drayton joked. "It's funny, literally, as

you come off the watch on deck, you're waking someone up and taking their bunk from them."

Despite the trying conditions, the lack of space or privacy, the constant pitching and rolling, the utter isolation from the world and the possibility of danger, Drayton is visibly excited about the potential "fame and glory" of winning the bi-annual race.

"We're a pretty tight team. We're all friends, we all get together socially," he said. "On so many boats these days, especially with the big boats, the crews are paid professionals and it's a totally different game. They step on the boat at the beginning of the race and step off at the finish to grab their check."

"We're a bunch of guys who are out there competing – and we compete pretty well at that level. It's a different animal for us," he said. "We all go back to professional jobs at the end of the day."


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CEO UpDate

FY 2007: A Year of Great Achievement for the Metro Team

- Our long list of accomplishments gives us confidence to move forward



CEO Roger Snoble

By CEO ROGER SNOBLE

Earlier this month, I took FTA Administrator James Simpson on a tour. We saw our new 2550 light-rail car, rode the Metro Red Line, a couple of Rapid buses and the Orange Line. He was impressed with what he saw and I was reminded of how very professional our bus and rail operators are, how good our equipment looks and how well it operates – thanks to the dedication of our maintenance folks.

Mr. Simpson, who once served as a New York City Transit board member, also was struck by the immensity of Metro's responsibilities. And, he was impressed with our agency's many accomplishments.

Looking back over FY 2007, the list is much too lengthy to mention every achievement or to thank all those at the division level and here at Gateway who contributed to our success. But, let's do a quick survey.

Safety's always first and we've really made it a top priority in this agency. So, you have to be impressed with the safety record of the workers building the Eastside Extension. By June, they had achieved almost 2 million hours – 1,071 days – without a single lost-time accident!

Actually, the number of injuries has declined throughout Metro. In FY 2000, employees filed 3,264 Worker's Comp claims. By FY 2007, claims declined 65 percent to a low of 1,140 –10 percent below the number of claims filed in FY 2006.

'Outstanding Transportation System'

We can't forget, of course, that Metro was named APTA's 2006 "Outstanding Transportation System." We can take great pride in that achievement, as can all of Los Angeles.

In Transit Operations, we expanded bus service by 1,200 peak hour seats, launching three new Rapid Express lines and three new Metro Rapid lines, among other new service. The Orange Line topped 23,800 average daily boardings in June, a level we didn't expect to reach until 2020.

Thanks to your efforts to improve service, customer complaints dropped from 3.32 per 100,000 boardings to 3.15, well below our FY 2007 goal of 3.5.

The Board passed a comprehensive fare change that will resolve the operations structural deficit over the next eight years.

We broke ground for construction of the 8.5-mile Exposition Line and opened the Orange Line Canoga station and park/ride facility on time and on budget.

Through an aggressive recruiting program, we reduced the number of bus operator vacancies from more than 300 to about 20 as of June. Meanwhile, we graduated 10 bus operator training classes of almost 300 students.

Biggest ever Transit Summit

On a wider front, last fall's Mobility 21 Transit Summit was the biggest ever, drawing almost 500 participants. Senator Barbara Boxer, State Senate Pro Tem Don Perata and House Speaker Fabian Nunez attended, along with Board members and other elected officials.

Our efforts to encourage transit-oriented development also hit their stride with the start of construction of a \$160 million development at Wilshire/Western and a \$600 million luxury hotel at the Hollywood/Vine station.

We improved customer access to information with Metro Real Time Traffic, a comprehensive traffic information service available at Metro.net. We also installed on our buses the Transit TV network, which includes real-time route maps pinpointing bus movements.

For the first time in six years, we conducted a Call for Projects to provide \$450 million to assist cities, LA County, and transit operators.

There are many more achievements I could list, but the good thing about accomplishing a lot is that it gives us all confidence that we can do more. And we have a lot more to do in FY 2008. Let's continue to move forward!

July 13, 2007


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Funding, Joint Development Among Items on Committee Agendas for July

- [Items 9 and 14, Transit Fund Allocations](#)
- [Item 11, 2007 Call for Projects Funding](#)
- [Item 12, Wilshire Development](#)
- [Item 21, Homeland Security Grant](#)

(July 17, 2007) Metro Board committees meet this week to take up some 40 items prior to the monthly Board meeting scheduled July 26.

Among items on committee agendas are funding issues, a proposed joint development on Wilshire and a Homeland Security grant to improve bus and rail security.

Items 9 and 14, Transit Fund Allocations. The Planning and Programming and Finance and Budget committees will consider approval of \$1.26 billion in FY 2008 Transit Fund Allocations for use by a number of cities and transit operators in LA County, as well as for Metro operations.

The funding comes from the state's Transportation Development Act, Proposition A and C, and from the Federal Transit Act Urban Formula capital funds.

Item 11, 2007 Call for Projects Funding. The Planning and Programming Committee will consider a multi-part motion that ensures some \$619 million in funding for previous Call for Projects commitments for various locally sponsored arterial, signal, bikeway, pedestrian, transportation demand management and transportation enhancement projects throughout LA County. In addition, the committee will consider a \$13 million funding commitment for the I-405 northbound HOV lane to fill a funding gap in the project.

Item 12, Wilshire Development. Metro and the United Commercial Food Workers Union (UFCW) own side-by-side properties across from the Wilshire/Vermont Metro Rail station. The Planning and Programming Committee will consider a motion authorizing the CEO to negotiate with the UFCW to jointly develop the 2.11-acre site.

Located at the intersection of Wilshire Boulevard and Shatto Place, the two properties would be jointly offered to prospective developers. Metro's 1.09 acres currently are used for bus parking and as a layover zone. The UFCW's office building and another building, along with employee parking lots, currently occupy the union's 1.02 acres.

July Committee Meetings

Wednesday, July 18

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

Thursday, July 19

9 a.m. – Executive Management and Audit

10:30 a.m. – Construction

12 noon – Operations

Thursday, July 26

9:30 a.m. – Full Board Meeting

Item 21, Homeland Security Grant. The California Office of Homeland Security recently awarded a \$3.14 million grant to Metro for transit security. The Executive Management and Audit Committee will consider adding the grant funding to Metro's FY 2008 budget.

The grant will help upgrade bus and rail security by providing additional protection of subway tunnels and tracks from IEDs (improvised explosive devices); extra perimeter security at bus divisions and facilities; and development of enhanced training and awareness among area transit systems.



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Funeral Services This Week for Retired Mail Carrier Ed Edwards

(July 17, 2007) Services are set this week for retired Mail Carrier Ed Edwards, who died suddenly July 10, following an illness.

A viewing is scheduled from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Wednesday, July 18, at Simpson's Family Mortuary, 3443 West Manchester Blvd. at the intersection with Crenshaw Drive in Inglewood, 323-752-5524.

Funeral services will be held at 11 a.m., Thursday, July 19, at Bethel AME Church, 7900 South Western Ave. at the intersection with West 79th Street in Los Angeles, 323-750-3240.

"He was a good friend, not just a co-worker," said Jackie Taylor, a messenger clerk in the Mail Room.

Edwards, 66, joined Metro in March 1973. He retired in October, 2004 with 31 years' service. He is survived by his wife and children.

"Ed was a very dedicated employee," said Mail Services Supervisor Dan Colonello. "You knew he was going to be here every day; he was a really good worker."



Ed Edwards





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Funeral Services Saturday for Metro's Virgilio Malonzo

(July 17, 2007) Funeral services are set this weekend for Virgilio Malonzo, an assistant administrative analyst, who died after suffering a heart attack July 14. He was 60 years old.

Viewings are scheduled from 5 to 9 p.m., Thursday, July 19, and Friday, July 20, at Little Church of the Flowers, Forest Lawn Mortuary, 1712 S. Glendale Ave., Glendale, 800-204-3131.

A church service will be held beginning at 9 a.m. Saturday, July 21 at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, 4950 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles, followed directly by interment at the Forest Lawn Mortuary in Glendale.

An immigrant to the U.S. who received his citizenship in 1985, Malonzo was raised in Manila, Philippines and first came to the United States in 1977. He began working for Metro in 1979.

"Virgil was a valued co-worker," said Malonzo's supervisor James Woodson, director of Operations Support,. "[He] has played an important role on the administrative team and will be sorely missed."

He is survived by his brothers, Elpidio, Danilo and Victor, and his sisters, Marilu and Raquel, who will remember him best for his love of karaoke and casinos, and for his devotion to his nieces and nephews.



Virgilio Malonzo



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Interns pause in the lobby of the Rail Operations Center, anchored by assistant manager Bob Baker on the left.

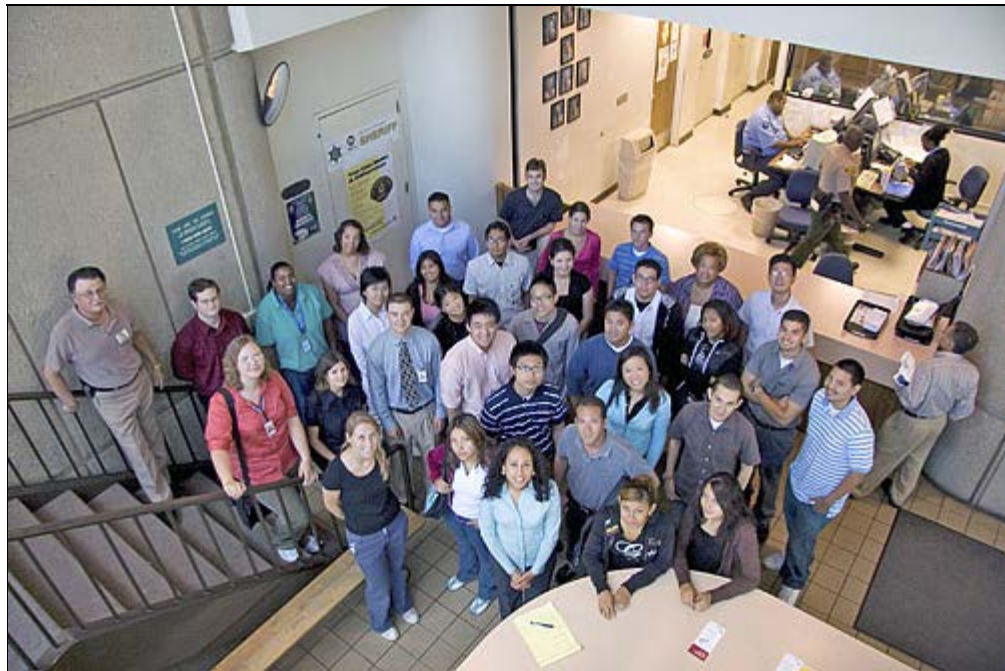


Photo by Jeremy Eichenbaum

Metro Interns Impressed with Visit to the Rail Operations Center

By JENNIE HARRIS

(July 17, 2007) Some 30 Metro interns toured the Rail Operations Center, July 11, where they were briefed on the train control and security surveillance systems.

The tour, led by Bob Baker, assistant manager of rail division transportation, was part of the agency's effort to familiarize interns with Metro's wide range of responsibilities.

Baker's briefing included an explanation of train control operations for the Metro Red, Purple, Blue, Green and Gold Lines. The group also observed security surveillance activities in the closed-circuit TV area.

To demonstrate the flexibility and power of the surveillance cameras, one CCTV observer zoomed in on a passenger close enough to see what magazine he was reading – drawing laughter from the interns.

Community relations intern Shawn Mitsky appreciated the complexity of running a rail system. "I feel more comfortable and confident in riding Metro now that I know Bob and others are actively concerned with my safety."

Organizational Development Intern Dianne Sirisut said, "The attendance

was great and I feel like the interns really enjoyed themselves. [They] had a great opportunity to meet other interns from different departments.”

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Material Inventory Analyst Greg Garza with his daughter, Kaitlyn, 11, a softball state champion. She hopes to receive a sports scholarship and attend college.

Metro's Greg Garza Guides the West Covina Girls Softball Team to Nationals

By JENNIE HARRIS

(July 18, 2007) Metro's Greg Garza believes the West Covina girls softball team will win the national competition in early August.

Garza, a material inventory analyst at Metro Support Services Center, helps run practices for the 10-year-old and under District "B" Champions. His daughter, Kaitlyn, 11, plays for the team.

The twelve-member West Covina girls team will be up against about 80 other teams at the nationals in New Mexico. The team is currently fundraising to help with travel

expenses.

Garza is amazed by the young girls' competitive nature. "They play with their hearts."

"It's more than I ever expected," he said. "We would just be happy to qualify. We never thought we would be number one in-state. It was very heartwarming for the girls to accomplish something they've worked very hard for all year."



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The scanner, above, on the right, reads and transmits index fingerprints to the PDA cellular phone, at left. The phone then sends the image out to be identified by the California Drivers License database, and by a federal criminal database, called JDIS. At right, TSB Deputy Antonio Quintanilla scans the index finger of a willing volunteer outside the Red Line at Gateway Plaza. The wireless device can capture and transmit fingerprints to be verified against state and federal databases. The system will identify the subject and provide a two-year criminal history, if any, within three minutes.

Photos by Jimmy Stroup



Sheriff's TSB Uses Technology, Database to Identify Those Without ID

By JIMMY STROUP

(July 18, 2007) Normally when you think of cop gear, you're thinking of a badge, a gun, maybe a nightstick, handcuffs. But as technology gets better, so does the armory of the law enforcement officer.

That's why the Metro Transit Services Bureau has turned to wireless fingerprint scanners and cellular telephone database access as part of their arsenal to fight crime on the rail system and transit centers.

Called "Hand Held Live Scan Devices," TSB's newest gadget allows deputies to take fingerprints of people in the field who they think aren't revealing their true identities.

Once the deputies detain someone for an offense, or just see someone who looks not quite right, they can use the scanner to verify identity through the California Drivers License database system. They can also check the criminal history of a person against the JDIC system, which is the Justice Department's criminal database system.

"This will help us catch people who are wanted, have a warrant out for them, violating parole, and so on," said TSB's Lt. John Baylis. "We'll be tied into Justice, so any kind of criminal background will be available to the deputies on the scene."

Provides a criminal history

The device scans the index fingers, and transmits that information wirelessly to a PDA cellular phone, which then sends the information to be verified by the databases. In less than three minutes, the deputy can scan the person in question and have their identity and criminal history over the last two years pop up on their phone.

And though the scanners will help catch the occasional "wanted man," so to speak, the devices will also help the TSB perform some of its more routine functions.

"It will help us a lot on the buses and trains with people who haven't purchased a ticket. We issue them a citation, but they might not have any ID on them," said Baylis. "We can use this device to see if they are who they say they are."

It's common for citations written by TSB to be thrown out by the court because, without an ID of some kind, it's difficult for the deputies to prove that the offender was the one who failed to pay the fare. Those caught without a fare will commonly use a false name and birth date, claiming they don't have an ID card or drivers license.

"This will increase the remuneration coming to Metro on all those deleted citations because now we'll be able to verify through fingerprints who people are," Baylis said.

Good things to report

Deputy Antonio Quintanilla has been using the scanner at the El Monte station for about a year, and has only good things to report about its usefulness in the field.

"I'm not scanning everybody I see," he said, estimating he uses it maybe 10 times in a shift. "But I do scan people who say they have no ID or people who I can tell are lying to me."

Quintanilla said the device doesn't store fingerprints, so there aren't any privacy concerns, and that the memory of who's been scanned is deleted after a couple of weeks. He said the department is currently coming up with a set of instructions to streamline the process.

"People are intimidated by the device, so they'll 'fess up to any questioning once I pull this out and ask for their fingerprints," he said. "They all say, 'Oh, well alright. I'm so-and-so. You don't need to fingerprint me.' Of course, then they've lied to me, so I run their prints anyway."

Baylis said the TSB has one working live scan unit at the moment, which is the test unit, but has eight on order that he plans to turn out into the field as soon as he receives them.

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Employees May Miss a Pay Day if E-Time Records Delayed

- Employees and managers responsible for prompt submission and approval of timesheets

(July 18, 2007) Almost every pay period, it seems that some Metro employees risk not getting paid. And not because they didn't work – it's because their E-Time pay records weren't approved and sent to the Payroll Department on time.

"We realize that everybody is busy," says Payroll Manager Dave Wakeling, "but we want to make sure every employee gets paid on time and that means that managers need to make sure the timesheets are turned in by their employees and are approved on time."

E-Time records must be approved and forwarded electronically to the Payroll Department by close of business on the Monday of each pay week. Too often, managers have not submitted their employees' E-Time records by the deadline.

To further strengthen internal controls and streamline processing, Controller Josie Nicasio warns that, as of the pay period ending July 28, the Payroll Department will not guarantee that late E-Time submissions will be processed in time for pay day.

"The vast majority of our managers have been conscientious in providing timely approval of staff E-Time submittals," she said, but there are exceptions.

The Payroll Department has tried to accommodate late submissions, but it sometimes required multiple, time-consuming followup efforts – something the department can no longer do.

Nicasio suggested that managers designate an alternate E-Time approver to handle the timesheet responsibilities in their absence.

For more information or assistance, managers can contact Dave Wakeling at 922-6842 or Accounting Supervisor Bill Hesser at 922-6844.



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Board Chair Pam O'Connor leads a coalition of local officials, business and community leaders in calling on the Governor and state legislature to assure Southern California will receive its fair share of transportation funding in the state's new budget. The group held a news conference, Thursday, on the Plaza.



Photo by Ned Racine

Local Leaders Rally Support for Regional Transportation Funding

- Protest 'bait and switch' by Governor, legislature in funding transfer

By RICK JAGER

(July 19, 2007) Alarmed by the threat of losing up to \$1.3 billion statewide to fund new highways and transit projects, local leaders rallied support Thursday for transportation funding and called on the public to protest the Governor's budget proposals.

Metro Board Chair Pam O'Connor and CEO Roger Snoble were joined by elected officials, transportation, business and community leaders from throughout Southern California at a news conference on the Plaza.

"The bottom line is that the Governor's budget will decimate our state's commitment to transportation funding, taking \$1.3 billion away from our efforts to improve our mobility, while cleaning our air," said O'Connor. "In LA County, alone, we stand to lose \$230 million jeopardizing new projects like the...Exposition light rail project...the I-10/605 interchange and numerous other worthwhile projects."

She said the Governor proposes shifting "spillover gas tax monies" from transportation to the state's general fund, then backfilling by taking some

money from the state transportation bonds voters approved in November 2007 for a variety of highway, public transit and goods movement projects.

As a result of the pending budget cuts, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) is poised to postpone funding upcoming transportation projects throughout the state, including \$43 million for the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension and \$314 million for construction of the Expo Line.

‘Do the right thing’

“This move...will take billions of dollars away from Los Angeles and Southern California that’s necessary to be able to continue the quality of life here,” said Snoble. “Today we are calling upon Sacramento to do the right thing, restore vital transportation dollars for the region, and give LA its fair share....”

Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky termed the state budget proposal “a classic bait and switch operation.” He urged the “legislature and the Governor to reconsider and to do the right thing.”

“This area is starving for public mass transit,” Yaroslavsky said. “We voted for and supported Proposition 1B because we wanted to accelerate the construction of mass public transit.”

Board Member John Fasana, a Duarte City Councilmember, said the Governor previously stood on the side of improving transportation throughout the state and backed Proposition 1A to protect transportation funding. “We’ve seen a total change in priorities,” he said.

For decades the state budget has contributed very little funding to public transit systems, allocating almost all state revenue from fuel-related taxes to roads and highways.

More money is at stake

This budget year, more money is at stake for public transit systems than usual because the law requires lawmakers to invest more money in public transit systems when gas prices skyrocket so that they are able to cover increased fuel costs and take on additional riders.

Los Angeles City Councilmember Wendy Greuel called the proposal to reallocate transportation funding a “zero sum game” that jeopardizes projects “that are definitely needed in our cities to relieve gridlock.”

She urged the region’s residents who “are sitting in gridlock” to call the Governor and members of the legislature and “let them know that this region says ‘No,’ to raiding the funds....”

Gary Toeppen, President & CEO of the LA Area Chamber of Commerce, said the Governor’s proposal “will negatively impact commuters, businesses and the economy by further reducing needed investments in transportation.”

“We can’t afford to put the brakes on needed public transit projects. We have gridlock on our roads, ambitious global warming commitments to meet, and a growing population that will require more public transit,” said David Wyman, Campaign Director with The California Public Interest Research Group (CALPIRG).



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Metro Moving Forward on Proposed Orange Line Extension

- Public meetings next week to discuss environmental impact report

By RICK JAGER

(July 19, 2007) Metro will take the next step toward construction of the proposed four-mile northern extension of the Orange Line, later this month, by seeking public comment at two meetings in the San Fernando Valley.

Meetings are scheduled July 26 and 30 to discuss the scope of the project's draft Environmental Impact Report. The EIR will examine several alternatives for the northern extension.

The proposed linkage between the Orange Line's Canoga station and the Chatsworth Metrolink station would expand transit options between the San Fernando Valley and Ventura County areas.

A two-mile on-street extension from the Metrolink station to the SR-118 Freeway, being considered as part of the environmental process, would include a park/ride lot that would provide additional transit connections for freeway vehicle commuters coming to and from Simi Valley and beyond.

In March, the Board approved a \$5.95 million contract for environmental clearance and preliminary engineering for the proposed northern extension that would connect the Canoga Station with the Metrolink Station and a possible on-street extension to the SR-118 Freeway.

Evaluate alternatives

Metro will evaluate various alternatives, including running the line along Canoga Avenue, the Canoga Rail Right-of-Way, De Soto Avenue, and Topanga Canyon Boulevard and other potential alternatives that may be recommended by the public through the scoping process.

The meetings will be held from 7-9 p.m., Thursday, July 26, at Chatsworth High School, 10027 Lurline Ave. in Chatsworth; and from 7-9 p.m., July 30, at the New Academy of Canoga Park, 21425 Cohasset St. in Canoga Park.

At the meetings, the Metro staff will present the proposed project goals and objectives, provide opportunities to speak with project representatives and display project maps and photographs. Written and verbal comments by the public will be included in the draft Environmental Impact Report.

Metro's draft EIR is scheduled to be finalized and presented to the Metro Board of Directors for consideration in 2008.

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Vanpool Media Event Seeks 30 Cars and Their Drivers

- Metro volunteers Eligible for Movie Ticket Drawing

By NED RACINE

(July 19, 2007) The Tuesday, Aug. 7, public launch of the Metro Vanpool program offers 30 Metro employees the chance to illustrate the value of vanpooling and win free movie tickets.

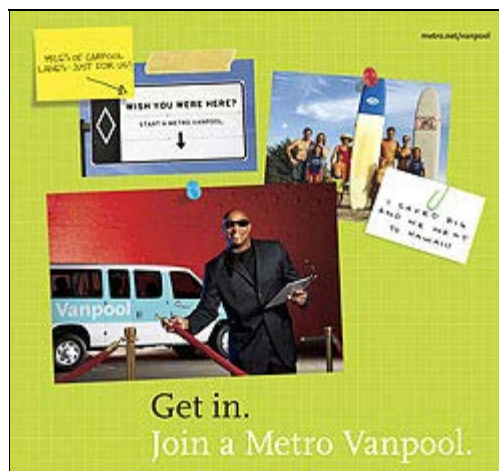
For the morning media event, Jami Carrington, Metro Vanpool project manager, needs 30 automobiles and their drivers parked in Terminal 31 of the Metro Support Services Center (MSSC) opposite the Gateway Tower.

Along with three, 10-person vanpool vans, the cars will demonstrate how 30-single-occupant vehicles are required to carry the same number of passengers as the three vans.

Volunteers must drive their cars to the MSSC by 8 a.m. and stay with their vehicles until the media event ends at 10 a.m. For their trouble, volunteers will be entered in a drawing for five pairs of movie passes. All cars are welcome, from the smallest roadster to the largest SUV.

Volunteers will enter the MSSC south of the Men's Central Jail on Vignes Street. They will need their supervisor's approval to participate in the event.

To volunteer, please call Carrington at 922-7364 or e-mail her at carringtonj@metro.net.





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Division 1 maintenance employees honored by the Board's Operations Committee for their quick action were, center left to right, Assistant Maintenance Manager Tim Williams, Mechanic Adam Barron and Mechanic Fred Hines. Joining them, from left, were General Manager Alex Clifford, Maintenance Manager Hector Rojas, Director Yvonne Burke and, center rear, Director John Fasana.



Photo by Ned Racine

Division 1 Maintenance Team Saves Man from 'Great Bodily Harm'

- Michelin employee Christopher Ball was pinned beneath a bus

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(July 20, 2007) It's not certain how long Christopher Ball lay with his arm pinned under a bus early in the morning of May 7, but the four Central City Division 1 employees who came to his rescue probably saved his arm and may have saved his life.

The Metro employees – Equipment Maintenance Supervisor Tim Williams and mechanics Adam Barron, Fred Hines and Ed Bautista-Gonzalez – were commended for their actions during the Board's Operations Committee meeting on Thursday.

Individual plaques presented to each of the men said their actions on May 7 "...ultimately saved a Michelin employee from great bodily harm."

Ball, the Michelin tire company employee, was changing the two left rear tires of Metro Bus 5465 sometime around 3 a.m. that Monday morning. Somehow, the bus slipped off its jacks and fell on him.

Michelin co-worker Alejandro Ceja discovered the injured Ball at 3:30 a.m. and ran to the Division 1 maintenance office for help. The four Metro employees sprang into action.

Barron ran for a forklift. Williams, Hines and Bautista-Gonzalez grabbed jacks and pry bars and attempted to lift the bus off of Ball. The three also talked to Ball, keeping him calm while they worked around the pinned man.

Lifted the sagging coach

The pry bars lifted the sagging coach just enough to relieve some of the pressure on Ball's arm. Arriving on the forklift, Barron was able to wedge the forks under the rear bumper and raise the bus enough to pull Ball free.

Fire Department paramedics soon arrived and transported Ball to USC Medical Center where he was treated for minor injuries.

"He was really lucky that his co-worker found him, reported it right away and that our guys reacted immediately and got him out of there," says Division Maintenance Manager Hector Rojas.

An investigation by Metro's Quality Assurance Department concluded that the Michelin employees had not properly chocked the front tires of the bus.

Williams, 44, joined Metro in 1999; Hines, 48, joined the agency in 1981; Bautista-Gonzalez, 30, has been with Metro since 2004; and Barron, 26, has been with Metro since 2003. All four men work the third shift at Division 1.

"They do an excellent job," says Rojas. "It goes to show you what kind of employees we have here."

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Ringling Bros. clowns Brandon Foster and "Granpaw" Alan Ware entertain kids from the Big Brother/Big Sister organization as clown Olex Kartukov compares noses with a dubious admirer.



Photo by Bill Heard

For 'Kids of All Ages' – The Circus Comes to Metro

- Employees eligible for discounts on selected performances

(July 20, 2007) With painted faces, bulbous noses and baggy pants, the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus came to Metro, Friday, with a mini-appearance in the East Portal.

Five clowns – including Boss Clown Kelly Ballaugh – delighted kids from Alta Med in East LA, the American Heart Assn., LA's Best, Big Brothers/Big Sisters and San Jose Elementary School in Pomona, along with morning commuters and Metro employees with a demonstration of hijinks usually seen only under the Big Top.

Juggling, hat tossing, and balancing acts – not to overlook the occasional clown whose pants fell down – kept the crowd laughing for more than a half-hour.

The event, which promoted using Metro, Metrolink or AMTRAK for transportation to the circus, was co-sponsored by the three agencies, who also arranged for the children's groups to attend.

The circus currently is playing at Staples Center through Sunday, before moving to the Honda Center of Anaheim for shows on Wednesday, July 25

through Sunday, Aug. 5.

Metro employees, along with patrons of Metro, Metrolink and Amtrak, are eligible for \$5 ticket discounts to selected performances by showing a Metro ID card or pass at the box office. Tickets prices range from \$15 to \$90. The discounts apply to \$15, \$19 and \$25 tickets.

The discounted performances at Staples Center are today at 7:30 p.m. and July 21 at 11:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Discounted performances at the Honda Center are July 26 at 1 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.; July 27 at 10:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m.; July 28 at 11:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.; July 31 at 7:30 p.m.; Aug. 1 at 1 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.; Aug. 2 at 10:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m.; and Aug. 4 at 11:30 a.m.

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Metro Security Officers Marlon Valdez, Andrea Hess and James Pochick received commendations from the Operations Committee, Thursday, for their actions at an accident scene on the I-105 Freeway on June 7.



Photos by Ned Racine

Traction Power Workers, Security Officers Rush to Aid Freeway Accident Victims



Christopher Lee, a traction power relief leader, and Floyd Paton, a traction power leader, used fire extinguishers from their Metro trucks to knock down a vehicle fire on June 7, 2007. Two who aided accident victims that morning are not shown: Donnie Davison, a traction power inspector, and Sergio Valle, a traction power inspector

- Seven-car crash kills one, throws quarter-mile of debris near Green Line Station

- Board's Operations Committee honors employees for their work at accident site

By NED RACINE

(July 20, 2007) Just before 4 a.m. on June, 7, fresh from working on the Metro Green Line, Floyd Paton and three of his Traction Power team members drove their work trucks east on the I-105 Freeway. More than half way through their shift, they were eager for lunch.

They never ate. Instead they discovered a hellish seven-car accident before them, just east of the 405 Freeway interchange, within a-quarter mile of the Green Line's Hawthorne station.

Car parts and glass were spread over a quarter mile of the I-105, covering five lanes of traffic, from the right shoulder to the HOV lane. One of the cars burned. One of the cars was T-boned.

Dazed vehicle occupants stood on the right shoulder. Other injured passengers needed to be moved to avoid further injury.

Spotting no emergency vehicle or personnel, Paton, a traction power leader, turned on his emergency light bar and directional flashers.

Using their trucks as barriers, Paton; Donnie Davison, a traction power inspector; Christopher Lee, a traction power relief leader, and Sergio Valle, another traction power inspector, rushed to assist.

Because of the early morning chaos they discovered, the Metro rescuers now find it difficult to construct a precise chronology of their efforts, but they began by pulling fire extinguishers from their trucks.

A 'no-brainer' to rescue injured

"It was a no-brainer to approach the vehicle whose engine compartment was in flames and help the driver who was unable to free himself," explained Paton, who found multiple dazed passengers in the accident zone.

"After [we] removed the mangled driver's-side door, Chris returned with the fire extinguisher and proceeded to extinguish the burning engine," Paton said. Then they extracted the male driver of the car, whose engine continued to smolder.

"Because of the driver's size, it took Sergio Valle, me and three others to remove the driver from his vehicle," Paton said. They laid the man on the freeway. A wall of stopped traffic now blocked the I-105.

Arriving minutes later, Metro Security Officer James Pochick took charge of the rescue and radioed for help. Pochick had been using the I-105 to travel between Green Line stations.

Officers Marlon Valdez and Andrea Hess responded quickly to Pochick's radio call and joined him in rescuing trapped passengers.

"Air was heavy with a beige/white smoke from the air bag explosives," Pochick recalled. "Several air bags were deployed." He described the accident area as a "post-battle war zone."

California Highway Patrol officers arrived at approximately 4:20 a.m. and two Los Angeles County Fire Department units rolled in soon after. Hess, Pochick and Valdez assisted CHP in creating a path for emergency rescue

vehicles. Floyd and Valle moved debris so tow trucks could enter the accident zone and remove the vehicles.

After he made his broadcast to the CHP, Pochick and the other security officers began checking the vehicles for evidence of a crime. Pochick found an unresponsive woman in one vehicle. He estimates that eight people, including members of the Traction Power team, were needed to pull her from the automobile.

'I said a quick prayer'

"I said a quick prayer," Pochick said. "We carried her about 50 yards." He recalls that the woman was very heavy, that the carriers worked as a team, like a caterpillar. He also remembers the heat from the burning car.

"The flames were following the fuel line under the car," Pochick said. "The passenger compartment was now on fire, and the trunk had begun to smoke." Lee and Paton jumped as the tires on the burning car began popping.

"We couldn't rouse her," Pochick said of the accident's only fatality. "It appeared she was alive, but we weren't able to revive her."

Because of his past experience with the Sheriff's Department, Pochick thinks the accident might have begun with a high-speed crash. "The spread pattern of the debris showed high impact," Pochick said.

It was about an hour before the fire was extinguished. "At that point we've done all the rescuing we could do," said Pochick, who recalls being on the radio a lot.

Lee and Paton were shocked and disgusted that several drivers tried to sneak through the traffic lane they helped create for emergency vehicles.

"It looked like a movie scene," Paton said. "I haven't seen anything close to that," Paton insisted, since he worked on relief efforts following Hurricane Katrina.

"Pay attention when you go through training for fire extinguisher or first aid training," Paton advises. "You never know."

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Rasheeda Hicks-Rashid accepts a jacket from UTU member Gerardo Perez for her 24 years with Metro. SFV GM Richard Hunt stands on the right.



Photos by Jennie Harris

Four Chatsworth Retirees Leave Behind a Century of Service

By Jennie Harris

(August 22, 2207) One hundred years of combined service was honored at a Chatsworth Division 8 retirement party last Friday.

TOS Joe Putt (36 years) and bus operators James Sherman (31 years), Rasheeda Hicks-Rashid (24 years) and Russell Ilejay (10 years) are all now busy with post-retirement plans, including traveling, fishing, and spending time with their families.

Ilejay was unable to attend the celebration.

"It's bittersweet to see these employees go," said Transportation Manager Maria Reynolds. "We're very proud of the service that they gave us, and we wish them well."



TOS Joe Putt poses next to one of his retirement gifts, a lamp constructed from an old-fashioned fare box. Only retirees with 30 years of Metro service receive this gift. "I worked 36 years for one of these," he said.

Reynolds briefly took Putt back to 1971, the year he was hired, by calling out that year's top songs such as "How Can You Mend a Broken Heart" by the Bee Gees, and noting the average cost of a car was \$3,700, and the minimum wage was \$1.60 an hour.

Putt, who has a badge number of only 908, has quite a history. He worked for IBM for eight years, and then was activated with the Army Reserves to Chu Lai in Vietnam. When he came home, he ran his own business for about a year, "It just didn't pan out as I wanted it to," said the Los Angeles native.

Putt took a test to be a traffic controller, and after placing 90th in the western third of the United States, "Dick Nixon said they were freezing federal hiring, so this dream job disappeared." And that's when he went down to SCRTD and applied for a bus operator position.

When Putt was in high school in the 1950s, "everybody thought that riding the bus was for losers," he said. Los Angeles officials modified ordinances with hopes of making the city the automobile capital of the world. "It was very nice for the first 10 years, but long-term it proved to be very shortsighted."

Putt has two daughters, Jennifer, 22, and Joanna, 18. Once his youngest moves out, "I'm out of here." He wants to move somewhere smaller, greener, with less aggressive drivers than Los Angeles.

"In the 70s, most of the Valley was farmland," Putt said. "Suddenly you got all of these people and you have to stand in line for everything. It's just not the same."



10 years as a bus operator and 21 years as a bus mechanic, James Sherman pauses with his wife, Ellen, and grandson, Steven, in front of Division 8.

Sherman, who has spent the last 10 years as a bus operator and the 21 years before that as a bus mechanic, looks forward to spending more time with his 11-year-old grandson, Steven.

“One thing about retirement, is that you gotta get used to it,” said Sherman. “I’m still waking up at 2 a.m.”

Hicks-Rashid recently moved to a new home in Texas and plans to open her own business some day. But for now, “I’m just resting, because I was hardly home,” she said.

What was it like working for Metro for 24 years? “It helped me raise my children and send them to college,” said Hicks-Rashid, who has three adult daughters.

Richard Hunt San Fernando Valley General Manager said to the retirees, “We hope that your next set of endeavors is rewarding and that you have a long, happy, prosperous retirement.”

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Transit Services Bureau officers reporting finding these tagging tools in the residence of a 19-year old arrested for causing \$82,000 damage to Metro trains, buses and stations. LASD Photo



19-Year-Old Suspect Held on \$50,000 Bail for \$86,000 Tagging Damage

- LA Resident Targeted Blue Line, Buses and Stations

By Ned Racine

(August 23, 2007) A 19-year-old male Los Angeles resident has been arrested by Transit Services Bureau (TSB) deputies on suspicion of causing \$86,000 in vandalism to Blue Line trains, buses and stations, the highest total attributed to any tagger the TSB has arrested.

The TSB's Special Problems Unit conducted a 2-1/2-month investigation, resulting in the August 15 arrest of Jesus Escobar on suspicion of graffiti vandalism, according to Sheriff's Sgt. Augie Pando.

Metro estimated the cost of the vandalism as \$76,000 for the Blue Line and \$10,000 for buses.

After his arrest, Escobar admitted to vandalizing the buses and trains and provided the deputies with a signed confession, along with an apology to Metro, according to Sgt. Pando. Escobar is being held at the Century Regional Detention Facility in lieu of \$50,000 bail.

Deputies served a search warrant on a residence in the 9100 block of Bandera Street and discovered scribing tools, gummed labels (know as

"slap tags"), cans of paint and samples of Escobar's work, Sgt. Pando reported. Escobar, who used the moniker of SHOTSER or SHOTZ, is believed to be a member of the BRUC (Been Rocking Your City) tagging crew.

The suspect assumed he was being arrested on a narcotics warrant, noted Sgt. Pando, and told the deputies he was growing a small amount of marijuana in his back yard. Deputies seized the plant. Narcotics charges were later filed against Escobar.

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Detectives Ron Smith, left, and Keith Schumaker and the unmarked Sheriff's van that served as their "Trojan Horse" during an investigation of robberies at the Metro Green Line's Crenshaw Station and a nearby bus stop. The Trojan Horse, found in Greek mythology from the 12th century BC, contained Greek soldiers who sacked the city of Troy.



LASD photo

'Trojan Horse' Charade Leads to Arrest of Suspect in Crenshaw Station Robberies

- Charges to include armed robbery

By NED RACINE

(July 24, 2007) Earlier this month, Transit Services Bureau detectives proved that a Trojan Horse need not be filled with Greek soldiers nor constructed of wood to be effective.

Detectives Keith Schumaker and Ron Smith implemented "Operation Trojan Horse" on July 16, hoping to ensnare armed robbers preying on Metro passengers near the Green Line's Crenshaw Station and a nearby bus stop.

On July 2, 3, 6 and 9, between 8 and 11:30 p.m., riders entering or leaving the Crenshaw Station, or bus stop outside the station, were confronted and robbed by four, and sometimes more than eight male, suspects. iPods, cell-phones, cash and clothing were among the items stolen.

On July 9, Smith reports, one victim was pistol whipped, suffering moderate injuries to his face and head. Due to the number of suspects involved in the robberies, Transit Services Bureau (TSB) detectives and

patrol personnel began surveillance of the station and bus stop using uniformed and undercover officers.

Beginning July 5, Smith and Schumaker contacted the local school police, Hawthorne and Inglewood police departments and gang units. They canvassed neighborhoods and walked door-to-door talking to residents. Aiding them was a Metro-supplied video from the Crenshaw Station. The surveillance video captured some of the suspects allegedly committing the robberies or being at the scene at the time of the crimes.

When they interviewed two 10-year old boys standing on the sidewalk near 116th Street and Crenshaw Boulevard, the detectives received their big break. Smith said the boys identified almost every suspect captured on the video and provided a location where the suspects congregated.

Armed with the boys' information, Schumaker and Smith drove by an apartment complex on July 16 and saw eight males matching the suspects' description standing outside. Detectives Smith and Schumaker left the area and began preparing an operation that would involve TSB patrol personnel, two K-9 teams, a Sheriff's helicopter, two Lennox Sheriff's station patrol units, and a gasoline-powered "Trojan Horse."

Mock Traffic Violation

The July 16 Operation Trojan Horse actually employed two vehicles: an undercover van and a marked patrol unit. While Schumaker drove the van, Smith and two other deputies hid in the back. Sgt. Christian Meadows, in the patrol vehicle, began the ruse by stopping the van for a mock traffic violation.

The patrol vehicle and van stopped beside the apartment complex where the suspects stood. As the suspects moved toward the van, drawn by the traffic stop, Smith and the other two deputies jumped from the van's side door and detained four males.

One of these, Christopher Copeland, 18, was identified as a primary suspect and arrested. The three other males were interviewed and released.

After interviewing Copeland, who lives with his parents near the Crenshaw Station, the deputies identified two additional suspects and the tentatively identified of several more involved in the four armed robberies.

A search of Copeland's bedroom yielded items which directly implicated him in the robberies, according to Smith. Copeland then admitted his involvement in the crimes and identified two more suspects, aged 13 and 18, Smith said. The parents of those suspects agreed to turn their sons in to TSB.

Smith reports TSB detectives are preparing to file felony charges of armed robbery against Copeland with follow-up proceedings to arrest the remaining suspects. Yesterday Smith arrested two more males, one 16 and the other 19. Each, he said, have signed confessions admitting their role in the robberies.

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Metro Café Switch:

New manager Jose Muniz takes charge; Russell Carlson takes a bow.



Taking the cake: Diana Estrada, foreground, welcomes Manager Jose Muniz to Metro Cafe while Rubi DePompa bids farewell to departing manager, Russell Carlson, center right. Aramark District Manager Ruben Crane, at right, rear, treated Metro employees to congratulatory cake baked in honor of Carlson.



Carlson and Muniz hand out slices of cake to many well-wishers who stopped by to give their best regards. Carlson put a year in at Metro, joining Metro Cafe last June after managing the cafeteria at the



Save room for the ravalis: Chef Eddie Garcia's specialty is Italian food. Chef Garica is already drawing

Los Angeles times.	aves for the main menu presentation, the perfectly seasoned roasted vegetables and the tasty, hearty soup.
The Scoop:	
Russell Carlson: After nearly 30 years in the food service industry, Carlson is heading to the hills of Echo Park to spend some quality time with his children "while they're still children:" 8-year-old Jacqueline and 18-month-old son, Shawn.	Manager Jose Muniz: He just flew in from managing the cafeteria of the aerospace giant Boeing facility in Anaheim. He's been with Aramark for 10 1/2 years. A newlywed, Muniz lives with his wife Ileana in Hawthorne.
	text and photos by gayle anderson

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Real-time wall-mounted screens keep rail operations aware of up-to-the-minute changes in the location and functionality of each rail line. In an adjoining room, closed-circuit television feeds from each station are constantly monitored by observers. Both systems are controlled by the new SCADA upgrade.



Photos by Jimmy Stroup

SCADA: New Light Rail Monitor and Control System Comes On-Line at the ROC

By JIMMY STROUP

(July 24, 2007) Just like your body's central nervous system, a complex array of computers controls Metro's light rail system, sending out instructions that keep trains running and support equipment functioning around the clock.

Recently expanded and upgraded, the control system – called SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) – is now on-line. Switching the Metro Blue Line over to the system in July signified the completion of a project that began in late 2002.

The SCADA system is a sort of catch-all of technology that monitors and controls almost every



The consoles at the ROC allow rail operations controllers to ensure the various parts of the rail system are working properly. One or two controllers watch each line every moment it is in operation, using software developed by ARINC Corp. in the recently completed SCADA upgrade installation.

aspect of the light rail operation – from controlling the power that runs the trains to monitoring the power that charges the batteries on the emergency floodlights on the train platforms.

SCADA is part new installation and part upgrade. The Blue Line, as the oldest of the light rail lines, required the heaviest SCADA upgrade and refitting. The Green Line was only moderately modified to work with the new SCADA system and the Gold Line was designed with the system in mind,

so little was altered on the newest of Metro's light rail lines. The Red Line works with its own, independent SCADA and wasn't part of the upgrade.

"SCADA has a lot of technical aspects to it. But the most important is letting us run rail operations from one central location – and really monitor and control all the important parts of the system," said Chuck Weissman, Transit Systems Engineering supervising engineer. "It greatly reduces the amount of manpower needed to run the system safely and efficiently."

A dimly-lit room

From a large, dimly-lit room at the ROC (Rail Operations Control), the new SCADA system is used by Metro Rail officials to direct and monitor all three of the light rail lines 24 hours a day.

SCADA is accessed by controllers at the ROC on dual-screened consoles, augmented by giant, real-time representations of each rail line on large screens mounted on walls around the room. Colored graphics on the wall displays provide a complete overview of the rail system, including current train positions and alarm summaries.

Comprised of both the hardware that connects everything on the rail lines to the ROC and the software that allows controllers to manage any piece of the rail system to keep the rail lines going, SCADA is truly the central nervous system of Metro Rail operations.



This row of electronic racks were part of the old SCADA system that once controlled the Metro Blue Line. What it took 10 racks of electronic equipment to achieve in 1990 is now easily contained in one of the storage system consoles that run the newly upgraded SCADA system.

"The smallest aspect of control can be monitored at the ROC – power, communications, even the crossing gate positions are tied into the SCADA. We can even see if the arms are lingering too long in the down position, irritating drivers, or we can see if it's stuck," Weissman said. "And if this is happening, we can send someone out to fix it, fully informed of the problem."

When the Blue Line opened in July 1990, it operated with a SCADA system that still functions. But as technology has improved in the years since, it's become difficult to obtain equipment to maintain that SCADA. Compared to the new multi-rail line SCADA, designed and installed by ARINC Corp. under contract to Metro, the old Blue Line SCADA looks positively "ancient," said Weissman.

'Ready to pick up the slack'

"SCADA monitors the back-up capability of systems, too, ensuring that emergency systems are ready to pick up the slack in case of a system fault," Weissman said.

The SCADA upgrade was also designed to handle the additional load of monitoring and controlling the Gold Line's Eastside Expansion, due to open in 2009, so this system should serve Metro long into the future, Weissman said.

Eventually a single SCADA system will allow all rail operations to be controlled by the same system. For now, though, the Red Line's SCADA system – which is not as sophisticated as the upgraded system, but is capable of nearly everything the light rail SCADA is – will remain separate.

Melanie Reis, ARINC project manager in charge of assisting Metro with the installation of the SCADA system, was pleased with the way the project came together, as are the Metro Rail engineers. For her, the SCADA system is simply the best way to monitor and control a rail system as complicated as Metro's.

"You know about the little things before they become big things so you make sure you can deal with them," she said.



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Sector Public Hearings Set to Discuss Proposed Service Changes

By RICK JAGER

(July 24, 2007) Three service sector governance councils will hold public hearings in August to receive public comments on proposed changes to Metro bus service.

The service changes under consideration include the implementation of three Metro Rapid Lines, 27 other local and limited service lines and three shuttles aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the bus system.

Approved changes may include alternatives suggested during public comment. The proposed service changes would be implemented on Dec. 16, 2007 or later.

The Gateway Cities Governance Council will conduct public hearings at 7 p.m., Aug. 7, at the Norwalk Arts & Sports Center, 13200 Clarkdale Ave. in Norwalk. The second hearing will be at 5 p.m., Aug. 9 at The Gas Company, 9240 Firestone Blvd. in Downey.

The Westside Central Governance Council will hold its hearing at 5 p.m., Aug. 8, at the La Cienega Tennis Center, 325 So. La Cienega Blvd. in Beverly Hills.

The San Gabriel Valley Governance Council will conduct a public hearing at 6 p.m., Aug. 13, at the sector offices at 3369 Santa Anita Ave. in El Monte.



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Metro Bus Operators must beat the clock and leave the orange cones standing in the grueling Obstacle Course of the Metro Bus Rodeo.



Photos by Gayle Anderson

Operators May Now Register to Compete in 2007 Bus Rodeo

- Signups for operators, judges and volunteers accepted on-line or at the operating divisions. Check it out: [Bus Rodeo](#)
- Employees and guests invited to Rodeo, Sept. 15, at Santa Anita

By DAVE HERSHENSON

(July 25, 2007) Registration is now open for bus operators who plan to participate in Metro's 32nd annual Bus Rodeo, which will be held Sept. 15 at Santa Anita Race Track.

Qualified operators interested in participating in the driving competition, or employees interested in judging, can sign up on-line at myMetro.net or at the operating divisions.

This year marks the first time employees can register on-line, and the debut of a new Bus Rodeo web page.

The web page features details about the 2007 Bus Rodeo, including dates, times and the location for practice, preliminaries and the finals, photographs from previous events, information on the maintenance events, and on-line registration for competition and volunteers.



Division 2 mechanics take on the Bus Inspection event in 2006.

All who volunteer as judges for the Roadeo prelims will receive an official 2007 Bus Roadeo hat, T-shirt and pin, as well as lunch.

Winners from this year's event, hosted by the Gateway Cities Service Sector, will defend Metro's 2007 Grand Champion title next spring at the American Public Transportation Association's international competition in Austin, Tex.

This year's Roadeo will be held at the Santa Anita Race Track parking lot at Gate 4, a slightly different location than last year.

On-line registration now available

Sign-up forms will also be distributed to eligible operators at the divisions. Employees can sign up either on-line or by filling out the paperwork.



Arthur Winston Division Mechanics Team compete in Metro Bus Roadeo 2006: From left, Andrew Warren, Jr.; Rommel Vargas and Frank Forde. The team took first place with a whopping 1205

points.

To access the Bus Rodeo Intranet web page from home, employees should:

Go to www.metro.net, scroll down near the bottom of the home page and click on "Metro Employee Access."

Log in by entering your badge number and hire date.

Click on the "Select a Department" menu selection button in the upper right corner of the Intranet home page, and click on "[Bus Rodeo](#)."

Employees can also access the Bus Rodeo page from work. The site can be accessed on the Intranet by following step 3 above. Division employees can ask a manager for assistance.

Operators may practice from Aug. 30 to Sept. 4 from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. The preliminaries will be conducted between Sept. 5 and 8. Everyone who competes in the preliminaries will get the official Rodeo hat, belt buckle, T-shirt, and lapel pin. Finalists will also receive other Rodeo items.

"We're expecting as many as 300 bus operators to compete in this year's preliminaries – competing for 35 finalist positions on Sept. 15," said Frank Cecere, assistant manager at OCI.

In addition to the main bus operator competition, three-member mechanic teams from different divisions will compete at the local finals. There will also be a mini-competition among some division managers, and among some sector general managers. Some union officials will also compete at the Bus Rodeo.

All Metro employees and their families are invited to this year's Bus Rodeo. In addition to the operators and mechanics competition, attendees can enjoy various exhibit booths, activities for kids, live entertainment, a great barbecue lunch, a car and motorcycle show, and a great day out.

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One of more than 4,500 call boxes in the Kenneth Hahn Call Box System, this call box sits along the I-5 Freeway. The number of call boxes will be reduced due to the growing use of cellular telephones to summon freeway emergency services.

SAFE Board Approves Plan to Consolidate Freeway Call Box Network

Emergency calls to freeway system drop in age of cell phone

By NED RACINE

(July 25, 2007) While studies continue to name Southern California as having the worst traffic in the country, the LA SAFE Board recently approved a plan that will restructure the county's call box system and provide additional ways for motorists to obtain emergency roadside services.

The restructuring plan, approved by the Board of Los Angeles County Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (LA SAFE) will adjust the spacing of the call boxes in the Kenneth Hahn Call Box System, which currently includes more than 4,500 call boxes.

Call box spacing will be extended from a quarter-mile apart to a half-mile apart, with the exception of call boxes on transitions or sites that pose safety or operational issues. The restructuring will reduce the number of call boxes to between 2,000 and 2,500.

"Reductions in some of our call box operations are expected and the restructuring of the call box system will result in some savings," Mike Greenwood, Deputy Executive Officer of Operations, commented during his presentation to the LA SAFE Board at its annual meeting June 28.

The call box system, named after County Supervisor Kenneth Hahn, who spearheaded creation of the freeway emergency call box system, has seen its average calls per month shrink with the explosive growth of cell phone ownership. The call box system averaged approximately 100,000 calls in 1990, compared with only 10,000 cell phone calls, according to LA SAFE Program Manager Ken Coleman.

Only 5,000 calls a month

Now the system receives an average of only 5,000 calls per month. While still a valued service, according to Greenwood, he said motorists are using alternative means to contact emergency services, changing the call box system from a primary motorist aid resource to a secondary safety system.

Simultaneously adapting to new technology, the call box system is being converted to digital wireless service, a conversion which began in FY 2007 and should be complete by FY 2009.

LA SAFE recently introduced the #399 "Mobile Call Box" service and is developing a 511 Motorist Aid and Traveler Information System. The #399 service allows motorists to use their cell phones instead of a roadside call box. Call volumes to #399 are projected at 5,000 per month for FY 2008, increasing to a projected 12,500 per month in FY 2013.

Operation of the 511 system, funded by LA SAFE, will provide LA County traffic, transit, weather and other general traveler information via phone or the Internet when it is implemented later this year.

Composed of Metro board members, the LA SAFE board also funded the I-710 Big Rig Demonstration, a Freeway Services Patrol service that seeks to quickly remove disabled big rig trucks from the truck-heavy I-710 freeway. The demonstration would conclude in FY 2008. Operation or expansion of the program will depend on a final evaluation conducted by Metro.

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Photos by Ned Racine

Eastside Extension: 2 Million Hours Without a Lost-Time Accident

- A 'world-class' achievement, says one safety official of the three-year record

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(July 26, 2007) Two million work hours and counting – that's the almost unprecedented record construction workers on the Metro Gold Line's Eastside Extension have compiled without a single lost-time injury.

It's an achievement one safety official for the contractor – LRT Eastside Constructors – called "world-class." CEO Roger Snoble noted that the accident-free record had reached 1,112 days, adding that "the safety mindset of our construction workers is not to let accidents happen."



With Metro Construction Safety Manager James Brown at his side, CEO Roger Snoble congratulated the construction team for an on-time, on-budget, high-quality project that has set an enviable safety record.

Since work began in July 2004 on the six-mile alignment that stretches from Union Station to Pomona and Atlantic in East LA, the crew has strictly observed safety procedures through complex phases of construction that have involved excavating twin 1.7-mile tunnels, as well as heavy construction at the surface.

"The guys take safety seriously," said Javier Lora, a Metro senior safety specialist assigned to the Eastside project. "It's reinforced from the top and that always makes all the difference. Communications has been the biggest factor" in keeping safety top-of-mind on the job.

During a celebration, Wednesday morning, some 200 workers gathered under tents at the job site for a barbecue lunch, congratulatory speeches by Metro officials and a raffle.

Safety Achievement Award

Snoble presented an Outstanding Safety Achievement Award plaque to the crew "in recognition of 2 million safe hours."

Board Chair Pam O'Connor praised the construction crew for "leading the effort of building a network of transit that will be here for the whole of the 21st century." And, she said, "You've done it safely."

Supervisor Gloria Molina, in whose district the Eastside Extension lies, noted that the project was 12 years in the making. "I'm so impressed with the work you've done in the last three years. It's amazing how we've progressed so quickly."



Supervisor Gloria Molina, who fought to bring the Metro Gold Line to East LA, said the project "is a tribute to the unbelievable work" the construction crew has done over the past three years.



Board Chair Pam O'Connor congratulated the Eastside Extension construction crew, saying they are "building the backbone of the 21st century."

It was obvious from interviews with various construction officials that the safety record compiled on the project since July 2004 is remarkable. All spoke admiringly of how individual construction workers have adopted a "Safety's First" attitude.

"Whether it was a year ago or now," said Dennis Mori, executive officer for construction project management, "they have exactly the same attitude. They want to keep each other safe...and the contractor is part of our safety culture...."

A tip of the hat

Added Chuck Loggan, an official with the construction joint venture, "You have to tip your hat to the fellows on the job site for being diligent and managing safety while getting the job done."

Safety officials pointed to constant communications efforts, including daily "tool box" meetings and ongoing safety hazard evaluations of the job site as major factors in the 2 million hour record. They also noted that workers are encouraged to report any hazard they see on the job.



Metro Senior Safety Specialist Javier Lora, second from left, talks with construction workers Julian Garcia, Michael Bolton and Kurt Edwards.

"No employee is asked to work in a condition they feel is unsafe," said John Isham, safety director for the Washington Group, a joint venture partner, adding that supervisors will shut down the job and correct any safety hazard before workers are allowed to proceed.

Isham said the Eastside project is a model for all his company's construction projects. "It's the example we use to set up a job and run a very complex construction project."

"Safety is a culture here," he added. "Safety isn't just the right thing to say, they absolutely believe it and it shows. Very few jobs of this nature reach 2 million hours without a lost-time accident."

Metro Construction Chief Rick Thorpe cited the contractor's focus on safety and Metro's efforts to support the contractor in providing a safe job site. "The contractor recognized the importance of safety and that Metro believes Safety's First. That's our motto and it's been fantastic!"


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10 Named Employees of Quarter for 3rd Quarter FY 2007

(July 26, 2007) Ten employees, whose work is the picture of five of the seven Metro core values, have been selected as Employees of the Quarter for the third quarter of FY 2007.

The employees are being honored in the categories of employees, innovation, safety, teamwork and customer satisfaction. Fiscal responsibility and integrity are the two values not represented this award cycle.

- Employees: **Toshimasa Manaka**, Rail Fleet Services

Manaka's dedication saved Metro at least \$60,000 this quarter by reverse engineering circuit boards used in a fan assembly that were in need of repairs usually performed by third parties at great expense. He also developed a schematic to troubleshoot and repair a number of the ailing circuit boards and solved a long-term supply issue.

- Innovation: **Simon Guevrekian, Ruben Hernandez, Rodger Maxwell, Agustin Moreno, Susan Phifer** and **Peishan Wang**, Service Performance Analysis.

This team made itself invaluable by becoming involved with the Automatic Passenger Counting System from the very beginning of the program, ensuring the system provided the most accurate and meaningful boarding estimates in the history of the agency.

- Safety: **Richard Flores**, Rail Transportation

Metro Gold Line Rail Transportation Operations Supervisor Flores constantly observes a safe work environment by insisting on application of safety standards like the 8 mph in-yard speed limit, stringent use of safety shoes and vests, and regular inspection of facility and work areas.

- Teamwork: **Diana Hardge**, Maintenance

When the automated bus system went down in February, Service Attendant Leader Hardge coordinated the effort to keep the buses maintained, minding overtime, manpower and water restrictions. She was integral in keeping the North Los Angeles Division 3 maintenance team together through a change of management and consistently innovates solutions to problems by thinking with a team mentality.

- Customer Satisfaction: **Jeff Boberg**, Communications/Research and Development

Boberg's recent changes to the Customer Satisfaction surveys provided valuable data to planners interested in restructuring routes to the

greatest customer benefit. He also cross-referenced Orange Line surveys from the past to current surveys in an attempt to create the most meaningful data to be used in new ventures like the Metro Rapid Services.

Nominations for 4th Quarter FY 2007

Now it's your opportunity to honor outstanding employees who epitomize Metro's core agency values. Nominations are now being accepted for the fourth quarter FY 2007 awards. Submit nominations to Jennifer Salamanca, Mail Stop 99-19-3, by Tuesday, July 31.

Nomination forms are available on MyMetro.net under "[Forms Online](#)," on the "[Employee Recognition](#)" page.

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Rail Safety Tour Leaders Receive Many Thanks from Students

- ‘You guys are the best,’ one child writes.

By JENNIE HARRIS

(July 26, 2007) Every month the thank-you cards come in – some in crayon, some scrawled in pencil, some embellished with drawings – all thanking the “superheroes” of the Community Relations Department's Transit Education Programs.

About 50 cards a month come to administrative interns Ashley Molina, Jackie Martinez and other team members who guide an average of 200 elementary school pupils and their chaperones on weekly rail tours as part of the Metro's Rail Safety Orientation Program.

The children learn that the train is nothing to be afraid of as long as they observe safety rules, and that it can take them to fun places.

Elementary school kids are the majority of the safety tour participants, however, anyone five and over is welcomed. Each tour group is given the opportunity to ride Metro Red, Gold, and Blue lines.

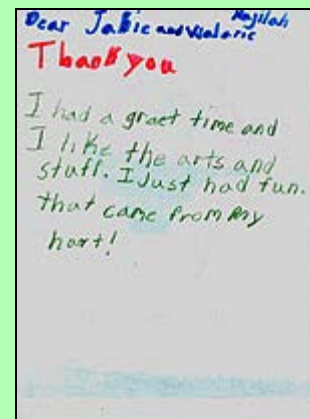
I really liked the Gold Line. It was like a rollercoaster to me.
Faith Evans, Normandie Christian School

“Are we really underground?” ask some students on a recent tour as the subway train pulls out of Union Station. During a stop at Civic Center station, they say “‘Let’s go again! Nothing happened to us,’” says Martinez.

Martinez leads the kids up the stairs to the surface of the station to show the children where they are. They say, “Wow, this is cool. Let’s go back on the train again.”

At the end of the tour, the students ask Martinez, “Do you get to ride on the train all

Metro's Community Relations Department receives a hefty packet of thank you cards from elementary students about once a month for leading them on the Rail Safety Orientation Tour. The tour teaches students that they can go to fun places so long as they follow rail safety rules.



day? That's awesome!"

I forgot to tell you that I thought Union Station was so beautiful I said "Wow!" when I saw it. I was so happy that I would like to go back and visit. Maybe even live there one day. I wish I would be an MTA worker when I grow up so I could see Union Station everyday. I like the rides!

Thank you for a wonderful experience.
Sincerely, *Sheeny Ng*, Brightwood School

Once the students test out the trains and learn the safety rules from their tour leaders, they receive a day pass to ride wherever they want for lunch. A few of the popular places are Chinatown and Olvera Street.

"Having little kids tell you 'We want to be like you when we grow up,'" says Martinez, "that's the cutest thing ever."

Some students and teachers who take the tour have never even ridden the train before. For many classes, the safety tour is the "trip of the year," says Martinez.

Thank you for everything because without you guys I could have die already because I could have not followed the rules. And your rules could have helped me. You guys are the best. Your rules helped everyone. Your job is great. Because you help people. You could be a superhero.
Angela Chen, Brightwood School




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Metro Customer Call Center Improves Service by 59%

(July 27, 2007) Over the past year, Metro's Customer Relations Call Center has reduced the average time a caller must wait to talk with an information agent by 59 percent – from six minutes, 10 seconds to two minutes, 30 seconds.

The Call Center is now answering 56 percent more calls per month, on average, than it did in FY 2006 as the number of calls grew from 79,085 to 141,542.

The Trip Planner, which customers can access on metro.net, is now processing a monthly average of 1.75 million transactions. That's 25 percent more activity than recorded in FY 2006, when the Trip Planner processed a monthly average of 1.3 million transactions.

Metro Vanpool Program Gaining Strong Enrollment

(July 27, 2007) In its first three months of operation, the Metro Vanpool Program is experiencing strong enrollment and is transporting some 3,800 passengers each day.

Launched in April with participating vanpools beginning operations in May, the program has received positive feedback from businesses and vanpoolers. By Aug. 1, nearly 430 vanpools will be enrolled in the program, according to Metro Vanpool Project Manager Jami Carrington.

The first phase of marketing, which consisted of contacts with existing vanpools and employers enrolled with Metro Commute Services, is complete.

Phase two, the general public launch, will begin August 7 with a kick-off media event. The event is prelude to a Metro workshop for employers that will promote this year's California Rideshare Week activities, events and promotions in October.

Metro Scores with Business-to-Business TAP Pass Sales

(July 27, 2007) Metro Commute Services experienced its best sales month so far with business-to-business Transit Access Pass (TAP) sales, signing up 23 companies in June.

A total of 155 worksites now participate in the annual TAP pass program. The companies, which employ more than 2,000 workers, are among the “pioneers” of the TAP program, says David Sutton, director of Metro Commute Services.

Among the 23 companies to sign up for the TAP pass program in June were the Beverly Hills Hotel, Loyola Marymount, Earthlink and McDonald’s. Revenue from pass sales to the newly recruited companies amounted to \$269,575.

Metro Commute Services offers rideshare programs and support to more than 1,100 work sites and 382,545-plus workers.

TAP passes are equipped with a smart chip and are capable of storing a variety of passes and value. In the future, the new fare media will enable customers to travel on many of the local transit operators with just one card.

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Division 18 Takes 'Most Improved' for FY 2007



(Sept. 28, 2007) Carson Division 18 won "How You Doin'?" honors for FY 2007 as the "Most Improved" division. The award included a \$2,000 stipend. Transportation Manager Cindy Karpman counted teamwork at the division as the reason their maintenance and operations performance was increased. Transportation Manager Ken Matsuno echoed that sentiment. "We've got a good crew here – they really worked hard and pulled together to get some real improvement," he said. The "big check" was awarded to both maintenance and transportation at Division 18. Matsuno and Karpman hold the check, surrounded by operators and maintainers. --From Jimmy Stroup * Photo by Jimmy Stroup

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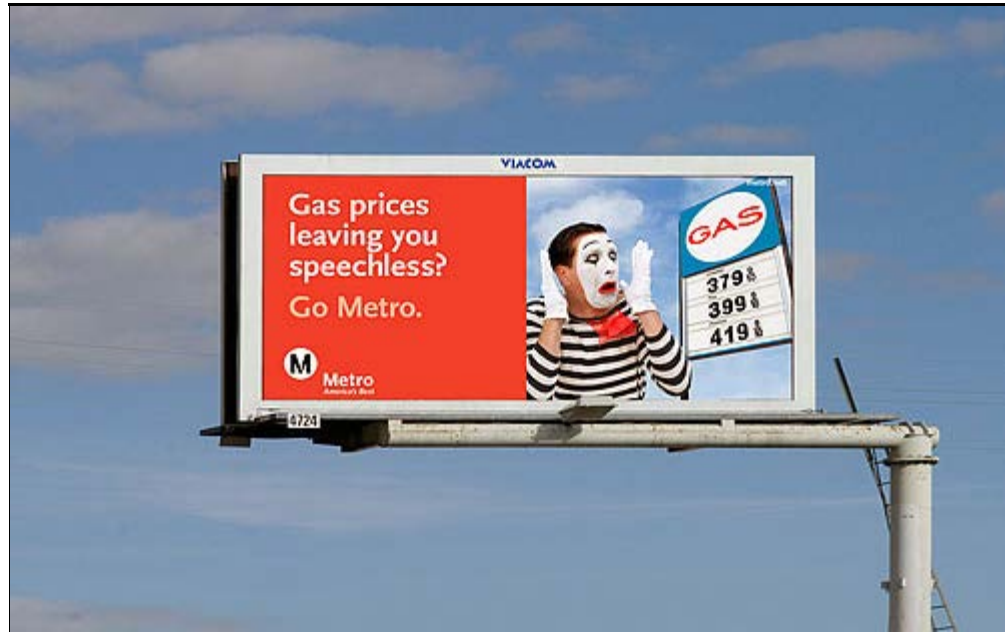
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It's everywhere: "Go Metro" campaign brings home first place in the "Overall Ad Campaign" category of the annual APTA AdWheel awards.



Images: Metro Design Studio

Metro Ads, Brochure Garner Two APTA AdWheel Awards

(Aug. 29, 2007) The American Public Transportation Association's (APTA) annual AdWheel Awards honored Metro with two first place awards for excellence in advertising, communications, design, marketing, and promotions.

Winners will be announced officially at the APTA Annual Meeting in Charlotte, N.C. in October.

Metro earned first place for its "Go Metro" campaign in the "Overall Ad Campaign" category. The Transportation Marketing and Communications Association (TMCA) also awarded the campaign first place earlier this year.

The agency also took top AdWheel honors for the "Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension" brochure showcasing the future rail line in the "Print Media Brochure" category.

"We're honored that APTA is following up on its "America's Best" designation for Metro with more top awards for our communications



These two awards add to the dozen AdWheel wins Metro has taken over the last few years. Metro's received eight other marketing and design awards this year, including three TMCA awards, two Signs of the Times awards, a Print Magazine Business Graphics award, a Society of Environmental Graphic Design award, and an American Institute of Architects award.



Everywhere.

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Funeral Services, Wednesday, for Operator Gregory Bradley

(July 31, 2007) Funeral services for Metro Bus Operator Gregory Bradley, who died in a traffic accident July 26, are scheduled at 2 p.m., Wednesday, in Los Angeles.

The funeral will be held in the Angelus Funeral Home chapel at 3875 South Crenshaw Blvd. The funeral home is located on Crenshaw between Coliseum Street and West 39th Street (323-296-6666). A public viewing will be held until 9 p.m. tonight at the funeral home.

Burial will follow the funeral at Inglewood Park Cemetery, 720 East Florence Ave., in Inglewood (310-680-2631).

Bradley was westbound on 120th Street in Willowbrook last Thursday evening when an SUV northbound on Wilmington Avenue ran a red light and plowed into his bus at the driver's compartment.

Bradley, who was not wearing a seat belt, was catapulted through the windshield and was pinned beneath the right rear wheels of the bus. He was pronounced dead at the scene.

The SUV driver, Richard Jones, 41, of Inglewood, was reported in critical condition at Saint Francis Medical Center. The lone passenger on Bradley's bus was transported to Martin Luther King Jr.-Harbor Hospital with minor injuries.

Bradley, 35, a resident of Compton, joined Metro as a part-time operator in October 1997. He was promoted to full-time operator in February 1999.



Operator Gregory Bradley





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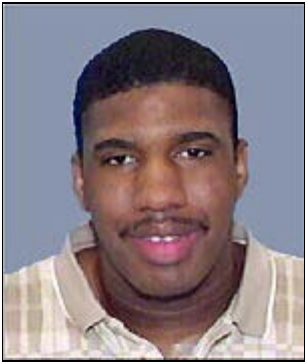
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Bus Operator Gregory Bradley Killed in Traffic Accident

(July 27, 2007) A Metro Bus operator was killed in a traffic accident, Thursday night, when an SUV ran a red light in Willowbrook and crashed into his bus at the left-side driver's compartment.

South Bay Division 18 Operator Gregory Bradley, 35, was thrown through the windshield and was pinned beneath the right rear wheels of the bus. He was pronounced dead at the scene.



Gregory Bradley

The driver of the white Lincoln Navigator was traveling northbound on Wilmington Avenue when it struck the bus, which was westbound on 119th Street. The SUV left no skid marks, according to a witness.

The SUV driver was transported to Saint Francis Medical Center in Lynwood and was reported to have died as a result of the accident.

The lone passenger on the bus was transported to Martin Luther King Jr. -Harbor Hospital with non-life threatening injuries.

Bradley, who was single, joined Metro as a part-time operator in October 1997. He was promoted to full-time operator in February 1999.



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New Board Chair O'Connor to Head 'Climate Action' Task Force '

- Task force will seek ways Metro can help reduce greenhouse gases, combat global warming
- Director John Fasana named to head 'congestion pricing' task force

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(July 31, 2007) Expressing deep concern about LA County's environment and global warming, Metro's new Board Chair Pam O'Connor will convene and chair a task force on "comprehensive sustainable climate action."

In her inaugural remarks as the FY 2008 Board chair, July 26, O'Connor noted that California's Global Warming Solutions Act would likely affect Metro. Her task force will "identify policy and program recommendations...and other initiatives in order to establish a...Metro sustainable climate action."

The Global Warming Solutions Act (AB-32), which was passed by the Legislature, July 26, and signed by Gov. Schwarzenegger, aims to reduce California's greenhouse gas emissions 25 percent by 2020 and to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. It also requires mandatory reporting rules for significant sources of greenhouse gases by Jan. 1, 2009, among other provisions.

In addition to her task force, O'Connor announced that she had named Director John Fasana to lead a task force on "congestion pricing." In June, the Board directed the staff to develop a detailed operating plan for congestion pricing, which in some cities has included tolls for driving in traffic-choked urban areas and other means of promoting carpooling, bicycling or mass transit use.

'Green best practices'

"We're all proud of having made Metro a leader in environmental initiatives," she said, as evidenced by the agency's large fleet of clean-fuel buses. "And many of our cities and the county are moving aggressively to implement even more green best practices into their operations."

O'Connor said that, along with municipal transit operators and other transportation agencies, Metro's challenge is to connect people with the places they go to work, play, worship and receive education and health care.

"It does remain a daunting task because our population continues to



Board Chair Pam O'Connor

increase, and so do their expectations," she said. "The ongoing challenge of growing needs and limited funding is exacerbated by the proposed state budget which eviscerates transportation funding. At the same time, we're faced with global environmental impacts, such as the growth of our ports, air quality and climate change."

O'Connor closed her remarks by expressing pride in Metro employees "who work hard every minute of every day...It is their energy; it is their enthusiasm that gets the job done."

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Retired Burbank cop and Metro Bus Operator Robert Lucas finds driving a bus "a whole lot of fun." He was injured in a bus accident earlier this year and is using a cane these days while on light duty.



Photo by Jennie Harris

Ex-Marine, Ex-Cop, Robert Lucas Is Happy to Drive a Bus

- 'I greet all my customers with a smile,' he says.

By JENNIE HARRIS

(Aug. 31, 2007) Robert Lucas served in the Marine Corps during the Vietnam War, patrolled Burbank on his police motorcycle, and engineered video game software. At 57 years of age, he now enjoys operating buses out of West Valley Division 8 in Chatsworth.

"I just find it a whole lot of fun," said Lucas, a Seattle native.

Lucas spent most of his career with the Burbank Police Department. He was a lieutenant during the last six of his 26 years.

"When you're working in law enforcement, you always see the ugly side of humanity," he says. "You get jaded after a while."

As a police officer he was trained to approach everyone suspiciously, and he felt that the public scorned him. Working for Metro, he feels appreciated by the public, and his outlook on people has changed.

He shows off his two pins, one for participating in "National Night Out

Against Crime” with the Sheriff’s Department, and the other for outstanding customer service.

Greeting ‘with a smile’

“I greet all of my customers with a smile, and when you’re friendly and you greet somebody that way, it automatically diffuses a possible situation,” says Lucas.

On July 28th, two days after Operator Gregory Bradley died when a red light runner hit his bus, a 75-year-old woman ran a red light and hit Lucas’s bus in the same place as Bradley’s, the left-side driver’s compartment.

The woman was driving so fast that when she hit the 60-foot Metro Liner, it moved sideways 12 feet. She died, and Lucas and three Metro passengers suffered injuries. He is still on light duty and goes to physical therapy for his back and knee.

“I’m sick of being on light duty, but I have to do what the doctor says,” Lucas grumbles. “I miss driving the bus, I miss being out there.”

Lucas had many “close calls” as a motorcycle cop, and before the July 28 accident, he recalls thinking, “All I need is someone to slam into the side of my bus.” He had a premonition that something was going to happen. “I’m not going to think that anymore.”

Lucas has been with the agency since April, and already plans to work his way up Metro’s ladder. He is looking into a bachelor’s degree in public administration to go along with his bachelor’s and master’s in music and bachelor’s in computer science.

Lucas has been married 35 years to his wife, Viviam, and has four adult sons.

Are there any similarities between driving a bus and being a police officer? Since both work with the public, he says, “You meet some really strange characters.”