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## Mobility 21 to Focus on Beating Traffic Congestion, Improving Air Quality

- Five Southern California counties to unite in regional effort

(Nov. 2, 2007) Key industry officials will discuss solutions to beating traffic congestion and improving air quality, Monday, at the Sixth Annual Southern California Transportation Summit – the first Mobility 21 alliance that will bring together five Southern California counties.

The summit, to be held at the Ontario Convention Center, will focus on drafting plans to help the region attract more state and federal dollars for transportation projects and building consensus in an area roughly the size of Florida in population.

California Senate President Pro Tem Don Perata and Dale E. Bonner, Secretary of the California Business, Transportation & Housing Authority, will kick off the meeting with elected officials and business, transportation and community leaders representing the region's 17 million residents.

CEO Roger Snoble and Metro Board Director Bonnie Lowenthal will represent the agency at the summit, scheduled from 8:30 a.m. until 2 p.m. at the convention center.

Past summits for Mobility 21 – an organization dedicated to solving Southern California mobility challenges – have focused primarily on Los Angeles County.

## Infrastructure funding

Summit participants are expected to discuss infrastructure funding in Southern California, an issue widely agreed to be critical to the economy, environment and quality of life of those who live and work in the region.

Other topics will include how the region can meet air quality standards and address the climate change challenge, as well as pragmatic solutions for reducing congestion in Southern California.

During the past five years, the Mobility 21 coalition has brought to national attention to such significant issues as:

- The growth in goods movement through the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach and its effect on freeway traffic and air pollution;
- The importance of housing and business construction along transportation corridors; and
- The need to protect Proposition 42 state gas tax funds so they are used for transportation improvements as they were intended.

Ideas from the summit will be incorporated into the Mobility 21 plan of action for the coming year.

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2008 Rose Queen Dusty Gibbs, center, and her Court assembled at the Del Mar station courtyard. From left are Rose princesses Courtney Rubin, Zena Brown, Chloe Ghoogassian, Gaelen Stanford-Moore, Kelsey MacDougall and Katie Merrill.



Photos by Dave Sotero

**Freeze-Frame!**  
**2008 Tournament of Roses Queen, Court Visit Gold Line**

By DAVE SOTERO

(Nov. 2, 2007) The newly selected 2008 Pasadena Tournament of Roses Queen and Royal Court visited Del Mar station on the Metro Gold Line, Wednesday, for a special photo shoot arranged by the Pasadena Star-News/San Gabriel Valley Newspaper Group.



Rose Queen Gibbs demonstrates how easy it is to "Go Metro."

The newspaper will publish a special edition on the queen and court in late December to commemorate parade festivities. Metro Rail and Gold Line services to parade events will also be included.

Metro is planning a media event with the queen and court to promote Metro service to the parade in late December.

Metro bus and rail will be free from 9 p.m. on Monday, Dec. 31, until 2 a.m. on the morning of Tuesday,

Jan. 1, on New Year's Day.

In a *myMetro.net* exclusive, Metro was able to accompany the special photo session and snap some early photos of the queen and court at Del Mar station, one of the Metro Gold Line's premiere transit villages.

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Rose  
Queen  
Dusty  
Gibbs  
smiles as  
a Metro  
Gold Line  
train  
passes  
her at the  
Del Mar  
station in  
Pasadena.



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Metro Transit Security K-9 Handler Gary Carney has been working with his partner Nitro, a 3-year-old chocolate Labrador retriever, for two years. Carney is one of three Transit Security officers who search daily for explosives on Metro's system.



## A True Partnership: Metro K-9 Handler Gary Carney and Nitro

By JIMMY STROUP

(Nov. 6, 2007) The trunk of Gary Carney's car doesn't look like yours. No umbrella for inclement weather. No blanket for impromptu picnics. No Thomas Guide. His trunk is filled with dog treats, leashes and harnesses.

His trunk carries those items because his trunk is part of his office: his patrol car. Carney's a Metro Transit Security K-9 Handler and those are the tools that he and his partner – a 3-year-old chocolate Labrador retriever named Nitro – use to search for bombs on Metro's system each and every day.

Nitro rides in the converted backseat while Carney drives the Metro System. As a fully-trained "bomb-sniffing" dog, Nitro searches for suspicious packages at Carney's order.

"Our job is mostly to be searching for unattended packages," Carney said. "If we come across an unattended package and I work him on the package and he doesn't alert on it, I know it's nothing."

## Far from where he started

Like a lot of transit employees, Carney's journey to the agency is an

Photos: Jimmy Stroup

odd one. He had originally applied for a job with the old Transit Police, but was aced out of the position when the force was decommissioned.

"At that time, when the old Transit Police disbanded, I was going through my background check, which is that last part of the process," he said. "I was really close to being finished when they disbanded."

Disappointed but determined, Carney took a job as a part-time bus operator, working for almost three years out of divisions in every part of Los Angeles, ending up mostly at Arthur Winston Division 5.

"If I had been full time, I would've stayed operating. Bus operator is a good position," he said. "I never had any problems with the work or the patrons, and I was good at it, I thought."

So when Metro Transit Security started taking applications, Carney "jumped at the opportunity" to try again for the kind of work he'd originally been after.

**Acceptance and training**

This time, his application made it all the way through. He was accepted into the Transit Security force and was trained as a K-9 handler. And his experience within the system as an operator was appreciated by his new managers there.

"It was easy for me when I started with Transit Security, since I already knew where everything was," he said. "I was already familiar with the bus divisions, the different routes and lines – all the different kinds of locations Metro has."

Carney and Nitro have been together for two years now. Their initial meeting was at a three-month course where Carney and Nitro participated in obedience exercises and explosives detection training.

"It was a heck of a lot of classroom work, actually; knowledge about explosives of all sorts. How to recognize the odors ourselves and not just rely on the dog," he said. "There are odors that the human nose can pick up, and you can differentiate between this or that."

**'It's like a game'**

Typically, explosives-searching dogs have a working life of five years, after which they usually retire to the home of their handlers. Labs can live as long as 15 years, so the majority of the dog's life could be in retirement.

Before he retires, though, to keep the dog as sharp and effective as possible, Nitro is housed in a kennel adjoining Carney's house; he's not



Carney directs Nitro to search buses, trains and stations for explosives, leaving no area un-sniffed. The search may be Carney's job, but Nitro enjoys the daily routine – which Carney said Nitro views as play time.



allowed in the house or even the garage. The Spartan lifestyle ensures that Nitro's usefulness remains peak until his retirement.

"You have to understand that work – for him – is like fun. For him, it's like a game," Carney said. "Labs are very playful and the play drive is what you look for when you're assessing a dog for this kind of work. You want them to want to go out and play. We've got him working but he thinks it's play time."

Once he stops being a work dog, Nitro will become just an ordinary dog at the Carney household. But in the meantime, the partners will spend their days along the vast system, constantly searching and staying very visible to Metro's patrons and employees

"We're out here dealing with the public, trying to assure them that they're safe in the system," he said. "I think the public and the employees want us out here. I'm constantly getting compliments about Nitro, about how good he looks, about how people are glad we're out working the system."

**A useful deterrent**

Carney said one of the most effective parts of having K-9 units patrolling the system – besides their ability to detect potentially dangerous devices – is the deterrent factor that seeing an officer equipped with a dog provides.

As for Carney, he feels that he's truly found his niche in this world. His love for animals is long-standing and has only grown because of his career as a K-9 handler. The animal-loving bug is apparently genetic, as well: Carney's daughter attends UC Davis on a scholarship and has plans for veterinary school.

And when Nitro is retired, Carney will train a new dog for the task of explosive detection on Metro's various lines, rail and bus.

"It's very important. It makes the Metro employees feel safe and lets the public know that we're out there in the system and out there for their benefit," he said. "I love it. I love being out here with my dog."

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With two canopy frame supports in the foreground, the Atlantic/Pomona station stretches to the east along 3rd Street. Photographs were taken October 22.



## Eastside Extension Construction Reaches New Heights as Canopy Rises

- Steel frames will be assembled through February

By NED RACINE

(Nov. 6, 2007) Construction of the six-mile-long Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension rose to new heights last month as the assembly of canopy frames began at the Atlantic/Pomona station. Installation of the frames will continue through February. Simultaneously, poles supporting the overhead power lines for the light rail trains will be added to the six new street-level stations.

Scheduled to open in late 2009, the \$899 million Eastside Extension features eight new stations (two underground) and will run between Union Station in downtown Los Angeles via the Little Tokyo/Arts District and

## Boyle Heights to Atlantic/Pomona boulevards in East Los Angeles.



Above, Eastside Extension tracks reach almost to Atlantic Boulevard as workers construct support poles for the overhead power system. The tracks are already installed in the railway.

- **Photos by Ned Racine**

At right, the rebar cage in the foreground will become a pillar supporting the completed station canopy. The partially constructed canopy frame can be seen in the background.





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## Funeral Services in October for Operator Linda K. Hammond

(Nov. 6, 2007) Funeral services were held in October for Metro Bus Operator Linda K. Hammond, who died of cancer Oct. 10. She was 58.

Hammond joined Metro in June 1999 and, over the years, worked at divisions 5, 3 and 8. She began her career at Carson Division 18 and was reassigned to the division in 2000.

A resident of Carson, Hammond is survived by a son, Ky Dalon Hammond; a daughter, Lynette Christine Hammond; her father, Elehue Bunn; and three grandchildren.



Linda K. Hammond



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## Retired Operations Planner Joel Woodhull, 70, Died Oct. 24

- Operated organic farm, campaigned for transit in Sonoma County

(Nov. 7, 2007) Joel Woodhull, who retired from LACMTA in 1995 after a 22-year career in bus operations planning, died of a major cerebral hemorrhage Oct. 24 in Santa Rosa. He was 70.

A memorial service will be conducted at 2 p.m., Saturday, at the Glaser Center, 547 Mendocino Ave., in Santa Rosa (707-568-5381).

A native of Los Angeles, Woodhull joined the SCRTD in August 1973 and in 1981 was promoted to director of scheduling. In this position, he was responsible for agency's transition from manual schedule making to computerized scheduling.

In 1986, he was named policy analyst manager and was responsible for conducting studies concerning transportation and land use as they affected transit. He retired as technical planning manager.

### Organic farmer

Following retirement, Woodhull and his wife, Joan, moved to Sebastopol in Northern California where they operated a nine-acre organic farm – Singing Frog Farm – and raised vegetables and many varieties of organic blueberries and bamboo.

Woodhull served as chairman of the Sonoma County Transportation and Landuse Coalition and was a founding member of the Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition, carrying membership card 001.

He led and supported many efforts to increase public transit and other transportation alternatives in the Sonoma County. The couple moved to Santa Rosa last March.

Woodhull earned bachelors' and masters' degrees in engineering at UCLA and a doctorate in transportation engineering at Renssalaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, N.Y.

He is survived by his wife of 48 years, Joan, and daughters Sara Woodhull of Mountain View and Victoria Anderson of San Carlos, and four grandchildren.





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## Division 18 Bus Operator Sergio Meza-Nunez Died Oct. 30

(Nov. 7, 2007) Funeral services were held recently for Metro Bus Operator Sergio Meza-Nunez, who died Oct. 30 following a lengthy illness. He was 43.

Meza-Nunez joined Metro in June 2006 as a BDOF operator and was made a full-time operator in August 2007. Beginning at Carson Division 18, he also worked at Crossroads Division 2 before returning to Division 18.

A resident of Compton, he is survived by his wife, Maria Meza, and two daughters.



Sergio Meza-Nunez

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CEO Roger Snoble, Chief Operating Officer Carolyn Flowers and South Bay GM Dana Coffey present Metro Bus Operator Cesar Guzman with the Spotlight Award at annual 'Night of Stars' awards banquet.



Photos: Gayle Anderson

## Metro Honors 'Best of the Best' at 2007 Night of Stars



Metro Director John Fasana to Operations: "You are the best ambassadors we have here at Metro."

- Director Fasana praises employees on the 'front line'
- [Go to>](#) List of operations, maintenance honorees for 2007
- Six employees Named 'Spotlight Award' Winners

By NED RACINE

(Nov. 7, 2007) Held 21 floors above the Metro Rail Universal City station, last Friday's annual "Night of Stars" banquet honored the top Transit Operations employees during an evening with a vintage Hollywood

Scenes from 'A Night of Stars'

theme.

Called to the stage by service sector, the 114 transportation and maintenance employees received their honors from CEO Roger Snoble, who served as master of ceremonies. Six employees whose actions this past year were especially noteworthy were designated "Spotlight Award" winners.

"Every organization searches for leadership and excellence," Snoble told the audience in his opening remarks. "Tonight we celebrate Metro employees who display both—every day. Operators and maintainers whose excellence touches thousands of our riders every day."

Carolyn Flowers, noting that it was her first Night of Stars banquet as Chief Operations Officer, confessed to feeling "humble in the presence of men and women who contribute so much to our organization every day."

"You bus and rail operators, you mechanics and service attendants, you are the foundation of our workforce," Flowers continued. "The foundation of our service delivery."

**Two Board members attended**

Snoble introduced two Metro Board members, Doug Failing, who also serves as the Caltrans District 7 director, and John Fasana, who was the evening's keynote speaker. Snoble noted that Fasana was a past chairman of the Board and has been a Board member for 14 years, now serving on the Operations Committee.

"You are the ones who are on the front lines," Fasana told the audience. "You're the ones who deal—those of you who drive—directly with our customers."

He thanked operators for making the most out of "what sometimes can be



Perennial bus operator Ralph Kramden schmoozes the boss, CEO Roger Snoble. Wife Kit admires the panache.



The Michael Brewer Band, which included several Metro employees, played jazz as the night began in the hotel's Terrace Patio.



Operations 'stars' get the star treatment on the red carpet.



Spotlight Winner Linda Wilkison on stage with CEO Snoble and COO Carolyn Flowers



a very challenging situation."

"You—in addition to that great service you provide—are really the best ambassadors we have here at Metro." He reminded his listeners that Metro carries well over 400 million passengers each year.

"The Board is working on a transit court so that when we have infractions out there on the system, we can get a more timely response to people who break laws," said Fasana, who also mentioned the Board was considering a riders' code of conduct. "If passengers are not following that code, we should have the right to remove passengers (who are) putting your safety at risk, as well as the lives of your passengers."

"We honor you one night each year, but you earn the honor every day," Snoble said in his closing remarks. "I realize excellence just doesn't happen. It's a decision that you make—dozens of decisions all the time to be . . . the best."

**Vintage Hollywood theme**

The event, featuring a "Vintage Hollywood" theme, was hosted by the San Fernando Valley Sector. It began with a reception at the Universal Sheraton's Terrace Patio. Vintage Hollywood impersonators, including Ralph Kramden and Marilyn Monroe, mingled with Metro stars and posed for photos.

The Michael Brewer Band, which included several Metro employees, played jazz as the night began in the hotel's Terrace Patio.

As attendees walked to dinner along a red carpet, they passed "autograph hounds" pleading for autographs and "paparazzi" eager to photograph them.

Fran Curbello, Communications manager, received a Shining Star award for her work planning and organizing the Night of Stars events.



Metro Rail twins Manuel and Tony Precie, Rail Operations maintenance, teamed up to work crowd control.



GM Richard Hunt surprises event organizer Fran Curbello with a special "Shining Star" award.



The "King" rocked the ballroom in the evening's Grand Finale. Below, fans such as Irma Rivera, pictured, later posed for pictures with the very true-to-form Elvis impersonator.





Serving on the Night of Stars committee were: Lorene Kelley, San Fernando Valley; Gary Shiroishi, South Bay; Larry Cosner, San Gabriel Valley; David Hershenson, Gateway Cities; Michael Sneed, Rail Operations; Tony Precie, Rail Operations; Suzanne Handler, Westside/Central; Mrytle Shoot, Westside/Central; George Williamson, Central Maintenance, and Bibiana Ramirez, Communications.

And the winners are...



Metro San Fernando Valley GM Richard Hunt announces the winners as each enters the spotlight to receive the award from COO Carolyn Flowers and CEO Roger Snoble.

**Metro Gateway Cities**

Cherican C Brown,  
Paul R Demazeliere,  
Fred E Espinosa,  
Jesus Gallegos,  
Leopoldo Z Licea,  
Edwin E Mejia,  
Tommy D Perry,  
Roberto Ramirez,  
Roberto Sarabia,  
Lester D Smith,  
Hsiao-Man Sun,  
Ky C Van,  
Al Woo,  
George Yee,  
\* Frank Morris

**Metro South Bay**

Emiliano Chavez,  
Frank V Hollingquest,  
Timmie Harrison,  
Hieu Hong,  
Peter P Hong,  
Thomas L Hummel,  
Boris D Mancia,  
Juan R Marquez,  
Jose E Perez,  
Jeffrey W Ralph,  
William C Sullivan,  
Archie L Trotter,  
William Vander Ploeg,  
Travis M Vong,  
Naim Yazdani,  
Rommel Vargas,  
Andrew Warren,  
Frank Ford,  
\* Cesar Guzman

**Metro Westside/Central**

Carlos Aguilar,  
Raul V Aguilar,  
Pete Avila,  
Melvin E Braxton,  
Jesus Canaza,  
David Y Corokhovskiy,  
Evan A Hale,  
Calvin M Hayes,  
James B Lindsay,  
Noi Liu,  
Michael Llamas,  
Ted R Loyo,  
Leonardo T Marin,  
Miller, Wayne E  
Richard S Munoz,  
Henry D Nguyen,  
Jose M Ramos Leal,  
Garbis Salamanian,  
Nelson A Sanchez,  
Saul E Sanchez,



		Cesar E Solano, Valente Torres, * Linda Wilkison
<b>Metro San Gabriel Valley</b> Hugo M Arreola, Tyrone J Bernard, Jim C Bui, Jesse Carrasco, Michael Chin, Richard D Duff, Cecil Escalante, Joel Felix, Jose S Gomez, Raymond L Guinn, Francisco Guzman, Jose T Jaime, Jesus S Jimenez, Hien Ky Mao, Juan M Navarro, Arturo Ramos, Antonio Rojas, Daniel B Saldana, Miguel A Sandoval, Albert E Scott, Kwang Y Soohoo, Daniel D Stacks, Billie C Underhill, Sixto A Valdez, Glen K Vong, * Anthony Cam Cam	<b>Metro San Fernando Valley</b> Alejandro Alers, Nelson O Arriaga, Paul M Banks, Jose A De Freitas, Lam V Duong, Joselito V Flores, Donald L Johnson, Louis G Lozano, En T Ngo, Dean Louis C Obieta, Elgar I Oritz, Jose R Prado, Elias Ramirez, Ivan E Roldan, Angel Salvador, Ryszard Scislowski, Jesus R Valverde, * Paul Rankin  <b>Central Maintenance</b> Duc D Banh, David Chan, Miguel Delgado, Max A Duran, Howard Luong, Keith Nielsen, Duc V Nguyen, Tom Sintoplertchai	<b>Metro Rail</b> Aaron E Cain, Ernest A Campos, Rogelio G Chacon, Tadeo B Cubero, Robert B Davis, Dave G Denkins, Luis E Diaz, Rick M Fung, Joel C Gibson, Chi Hong, Gordon K Lancaster, Ernest Molina, Ralph A Lee, Quynh T Nguyen, Robert A Nidetz, Kon N Pan, Ramon H Peniche, Lorenzo A Rivera, Hsien C Tang, Wesley M Tomikoshi, John Torre, Wilbert Vander-Ploeg, Armando H Valenzuela, David R Wilson, Kenneth Yu, Steven E Yakemonis, Christopher N Lee, Joseph W Kanter, Roger Martinez, Tu Phan, Mazhar J Chaudhry, * John Tena

\* Spotlight Winner



Waiting in the wings: Metro Rail award winners line up for the stage.

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Amy Lopez shows a free pedometer to bus operators Josephine Lenoir, Carolyn Lee and Latricia Cramer. The idea is to track the mileage walked during a week.



Photos by Ned Racine

## What Does 5 Pounds of Fat Look Like? Ask Division 9 Employees

- Second annual fair promotes healthier lifestyles

By NED RACINE

(Nov. 8, 2007) San Gabriel Valley Division 9 presented a health fair, Oct. 25, featuring health professionals bursting with information on creating a healthier life. The hit of the event, however, was a five-pound glob of yellow plastic.

That rubbery glob represented five pounds of fat. Many employees could not believe its size and appearance. Some could not resist holding it.

Suzy Corbett, a health education coordinator for Huntington Hospital in Pasadena, uses the glob to gain attention. "They're very surprised," said Corbett, who is a nutritionist by training, of the employees' reaction. "They like the shock value."

Corbett was one of several health professionals who spoke to employees during the division's second health fair, part of its effort to improve employee health.

"They create a lot of energy and focus," said Doug Middleton, a transportation manager at the division.

Middleton estimates that 100 Division 9 employees are involved in some activity growing out of the Health and Wellness effort, a one-year pilot program initiated by Corporate Safety.

Reduction in work injuries

"Hopefully, over time, we [will] see a reduction in absenteeism and a reduction in work injuries," Middleton said. "Healthier employees are going to be happier employees."

And so far that seems to be the case, although Middleton thinks one year of results would be needed to evaluate the program. "We do now have employees who have lost a substantial amount of weight. Some are just making better choices about what they're eating."

Visiting Corbett's nutrition table was Glenn Gatewood, one of those thinner employees. Gatewood, who has worked for Metro for 17 years, received a health warning from his doctor earlier this year.

Since then, Gatewood, a facilities system technician, has lost 70 pounds. "I thought I should make some changes. It was a lifestyle change for me."

Arlene Mills, who operates buses on lines 38 and 71, was also surprised by Corbett's displays. "This is the best investment the agency makes in us," she said of the health fair.

A 15-year Metro employee, Mills likes to walk for causes, such as AIDS research. She also participates in an 8.3-mile walk for the homeless.



Suzy Corbett, a nutritionist, holds a plastic blob representing five pounds of fat. Corbett also displayed four plastic cups on her table. Cup "B," for example, represented the fat in one all-beef hot dog or one-half of an avocado. "They're especially surprised that something that says 'no sugar' has so much fat in it," Corbett said of cup "D," which was equivalent to a no-sugar-added banana nut muffin.

**Regular dental exams**

Norah Teague, a chiropractor, offered health tips, as did Philip Taylor of Smile Finders. Teague showed a simple way to stretch neck muscles. Taylor reminded employees of the importance of regular dental



Norah Teague, a chiropractor, shows Michael Montero, a Division 9 bus operator, the value of stretching out his neck muscles. She later showed him how a simple hand towel can be used as a basic cervical brace to stretch muscles.

exams.

"If you go to the dentist every six months, you're not going to have an emergency," Taylor explained. "You owe it to yourself."

Amy Lopez, who organized the event for Metro, included a seminar by the American Cancer Society later in the day. She hoped to keep employees "mindful of what they are putting in their bodies and trying to make [a] positive change."

Richard Lopez, no relation to Amy, is a bus operator and a cheerleader for

the division's lunchtime walking program. An 18-year Metro veteran, he tries to accomplish two things by encouraging fellow employees to walk with him: get people to exercise more and to show them it's not so hard to exercise.

"We want it to come from within," he explained. "The agency can [only] do so much with providing these kinds of health fairs" for employees. Lopez and his fellow walkers cover a little over two miles during their lunch exercise as they traverse the division's parking lots.

Lopez wants operators to sign up for walking not only to benefit themselves but to benefit the community they serve. He wants Metro bus operators to be a role model for healthy living.

He also draws a link between operator fitness and transit safety. "When they get on our bus system, we are responsible for their safety and their wellness. That is a huge responsibility."



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## Former Operator Pleads Guilty in Stolen Day Pass Scheme

By PAM MURANO

(Nov. 8, 2007) A veteran bus operator pled guilty, Sept. 4, to grand theft and conspiracy to commit grand theft in a scheme involving the sale of stolen Metro day passes.

Appearing in Los Angeles Superior Court, former Gateway Division 10 Operator Yolanda Blackshire, 52, admitted to the felony charges and to passing the stolen day passes to a co-conspirator who sold them on the street.

Blackshire was sentenced to three years' formal probation and five weeks of community service with the Caltrans Community Service Project. A hearing will be scheduled to determine what amount of restitution she will be ordered to pay Metro.

Blackshire's co-conspirator in the scheme was sentenced to two years in state prison for receiving stolen property and conspiracy to commit grand theft.

In August, Blackshire confessed to a Metro Special Investigative Unit investigator and Sheriff's deputies during investigative interviews. She had passed her 25th anniversary with Metro that same month.

Blackshire resigned from Metro in lieu of termination.





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## Operator Pleads ‘No Contest’ to Felony Insurance Fraud

By PAM MURANO

(Nov. 8, 2007) A Metro Bus operator who was charged earlier this year with three felony counts of insurance fraud and one count of attempted perjury pled “no contest” to the charges, Oct. 24, in Los Angeles Superior Court.

Ricardo Valdez, 40, was sentenced to six days’ jail time already served, five years formal probation, 120 hours of community service, restitution to Metro of \$9,051 and a \$1,395 fine.

In 1998, Valdez was involved in a non-work related traffic accident and suffered injury to his back. He allegedly attempted to conceal this condition from Metro and blamed the back injury on accumulated trauma from driving a bus.

The Central City Division 1 operator was arrested April 13 by the state Department of Insurance Fraud Unit following an investigation by Metro’s Special Investigations Unit.

Valdez was charged with filing a fraudulent Worker’s Compensation claim for the injury in an attempt to gain benefits from Metro.

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Community Relations Manager Rich Morallo welcomes Metro volunteers, who pack the 15th floor Windsor Room for an appreciation luncheon held Wednesday.



Photos: Gayle Anderson

## Metro's 'Good Will Ambassadors' Honored for Volunteer Efforts

- This year, they've supported 60 community events, reaching more than 100,000 residents
- [Go to>](#) List of Ambassadors

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Nov. 8, 2007) It was way back in 1991 that Rose Marie Ordenes, a custodian now assigned to the Hollywood/Vine station, volunteered for her first Metro event – planting trees at a local park.

Salvador Buenrostro, an equipment maintenance supervisor at the Maintenance Support Services Center, participated in his first event as a Metro volunteer last April. He helped set up and staff an information booth at the LA Home Show.

Ordenes and Buenrostro were among some 50 Metro volunteers who were honored, Wednesday, during an appreciation luncheon at the Gateway Building.

The volunteers come from diverse areas within Metro – planning, procurement, customer relations, the operating divisions and service sector staffs, the library and many more. Also honored were representatives of the Citizen's Advisory Council and community organizations that sponsor outside events.

"As Metro volunteers and ambassadors of good will," said Chief Operations Officer Carolyn Flowers, "You make the neighborhoods, the community, everyone aware of our programs, and that is an important part of the marketing and communications arm of this organization."

**Volunteer their time**

She noted that volunteers, on their own time, speak at school career days, help with neighborhood cleanup drives, distribute information about riding transit, vanpools and carpools, and represent the agency in parades and other community events.

"To date this year, you have supported 60 community fairs, festivals and expos and reached out to more than 100,000 residents and families, telling them about the value of public transportation," she added.

Ordenes, a custodian for 21 years, volunteers once or twice a month or whenever she's asked to work a Metro event. "It helps people learn more about Metro, how to use our transportation. Ridership has increased and this program has helped tremendously."

A personable woman with a warm smile and a friendly manner, Ordenes says she might continue to volunteer even after she retires in two years. "I'm a social person and I like talking to people. It's nice to participate with the community. I've enjoyed it."



Metro's Ambassador Program coordinator Rich Morallo with long-time volunteer Rose Marie Ordenes.



Metro SFV GM Richard Hunt congratulates volunteer Salvador Buenrostro

**Resisted at first**

Buenrostro initially begged off joining the volunteer group, thinking he didn't have the time. He finally was persuaded to attend an event by his boss, Jess Godinez, a volunteer since 1995.

"I made the time and it was very enjoyable," says Buenrostro, who is responsible for maintaining cash boxes and other revenue equipment. "I talked to a lot of people about how important it is to work for Metro and ride Metro."

Some of the people he meets at the events have concerns about riding transit, but don't want to just talk to a voice on the phone. "They'd rather talk to a person one-on-one," says Buenrostro. "Helping relieve them of any concerns they may have is

great!"

What would he say to recruit a new volunteer?

"You get to enjoy the events for free," he says, and "if you're the type of person who likes to help people, that's another benefit. Your co-workers appreciate your helping out,

as well.”

**Volunteers: 2007 Roster of Ambassadors of Good Will**

\* **Anthony Lawson**, Metro Rail \* **Behzad Yassan**, Westside / Central \* **Bertha Bruner**, Customer Relations Info \* **Berthania Carswell**, South Western Law University \* **Dan Colonello**, Mail Service Supervisor \* **Daphne Feimster**, Bus Operator \* **Darnella Taylor**, Bus Operator \* **Dixie Dorsett**, South Bay Sector \* **Dominiqu Hern**, Volunteer Helper \* **Marie Tervalon**, Customer Relations \* **Donna Cox**, Bus Operator \* **Esther Panopio**, US Philippines Expo \* **Evelina Del Castillo**, Mgr/Central Maintenance \* **Fe Alcid-Little**, Procurement \* **Frank Clarke**, Purchasing \* **George Echert**, Adm. Analyst \* **Jacqueline Exeart**, Customer Info \* **Jennifer Gill**, Community Relations \* **Jennifer Victorin**, Loren Miller Elem \* **Jesus Godinez**, Revenue Collection \* **Jim Walker**, Library \* **Joann Harper**, Board Secretary's Office \* **Joesph Hernandez**, Chief Admin Analyst \* **Johanna Gan**, South Western Law University \* **Kathy Drayton**, Service Sector Office \* **Pheel Wang**, Thai Community Development Ctr \* **Rachel Bird**, Assistance Mgr (Div 8) \* **Regina Howard**, Community Partner \* **Renita Anderson**, Management & Budget \* **Rey Coutts**, MTA-OCI \* **Ruben Panopio**, US Philippines Expo \* **Leslie Smith**, Customer Relations \* **Salvador Buenrostro**, Revenue Collection \* **Sarah Winfrey**, Marketing \* **Scott Page**, Regional Transit Planning \* **Sherie Ayers**, Management & Budget \* **Sherrie Zellars**, Risk Management \* **Tameka Jennings**, Bus Operator \* **Thang Tran**, SGV Service Sector Office \* **Tom Rodriguez**, Print Shop \* **Valerie Harrison -Boyer**, Community Relations \* **Virginia Ward**, SGV Sector \* **Wajeha Bilal**, Watts Civic Leader \* **Wally Shidler**, Customer Relations Consultant \* **William Walker**, Board Secretary's Office \* **Willie Atienza**, Internal Audit \* **Yolanda Jones**, Bus Operator \* **Carole Ozanian**, Home Show \* **Kathy Banh**, Metro Staff.



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## Private Burial at Sea to be Held for Metro's Ron Dupuis

(Nov. 9, 2007) A private burial at sea will be conducted for Ron Dupuis, director of Contract Administration, who died Thursday during convalescence following a heart attack last May. A public "celebration of life" reception will be held at a later date.

Dupuis, 53, experienced cardiac arrest aboard his boat, May 19, while it lay at anchor in Avalon Harbor at Santa Catalina Island. He was evacuated to St. Mary's Medical Center in Long beach where he was revived, but was found to have suffered extensive brain trauma.

After several months of hospital care and physical therapy, he was transferred to a brain trauma center near his home in Tustin. During the wildfires, he was transferred again to a hospice care home where he died.

Dupuis joined Metro in July 2000 as director of Purchasing. Previously he worked for transit agencies in San Diego and Orange County where he held a variety of positions, starting out as a bus mechanic.

Along the way, Dupuis earned a bachelor's degree from Western University and a law degree from the Thomas Jefferson School of Law. He was an avid reader, loved the outdoors and was an accomplished snow skier and sailor. At every opportunity, he indulged his passion for sailing.

He is survived by his wife, Shohreh, and daughter, Sonnyjoy. For information about the "celebration of life" reception, contact Don Dwyer at [dwyerd@metro.net](mailto:dwyerd@metro.net).



Ron Dupuis, Director of Contract Administration, joined Metro in July 2000.



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## Annual Gift Giving Drive Begins November 13

- Metro hopes to send 5,000 gifts to Fred Jordan Mission

By NED RACINE

(Nov 9, 2007) The road to thousands of smiling, often overlooked children, begins Nov. 13 as the annual gift-giving drive for the Fred Jordan Mission starts with the distribution of gift tags.

Metro presents its collected gifts to the Fred Jordan Mission for Skid Row Kids on Dec. 10 in front of the Gateway building. The success of that 12th annual event depends on the number of Metro employees who donate an unwrapped toy.

Organizers have a goal of distributing gifts to 5,000 children this year, including more gifts for middle-school children.

To celebrate the event and open house, gift tags will be distributed Nov. 13 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the Gateway Building's 3rd floor. Light refreshments will be served. Additional tag distribution days have been added through Nov. 16.

Gift tags also will be available for employees at the Metro Support Services Center (MSSC) and at participating divisions. Gift Giving coordinators at each location will have information about the toy drive. Jim Montoya is the contact at the MSSC and other divisions. Amador Silva is the contact at the Rail Operations Center and the Rail Yards.

Employees can also pick up a gift tag through December 5 at the Diversity and Economic Opportunity Department on the 13th floor. This is also the drop off point for gifts from Nov. 25 through Dec. 7 (no later than 4 p.m.).

In addition to toys, donations of new unwrapped gifts can include blankets, games, backpacks, pencils and paper, soccer balls, basketballs, raingear and even canned goods.

Volunteer are needed to help with distribution of toys, Sunday, Dec 16, at the Fred Jordan Mission. In prior years, toys and food bags were prepared for up to 10,000 children and their parents.

For further information, contact Barbara Thomasson at 922-4526.






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## 'Celebration of Life' Set Nov. 18

**UPDATE:** (Nov. 13, 2007) A "Celebration of Life" reception is scheduled Sunday, Nov. 18, for Ron Dupuis, who died Nov. 8 at a hospice care home. The reception begins at 1 p.m. at the Dana Point Yacht Club, 24399 Dana Drive in Dana Point (949-496-2900). Friends planning to attend the adults-only reception must RSVP by Thursday, Nov. 15, to Katie Berg-Curtis at [kberg.curtis@gmail.com](mailto:kberg.curtis@gmail.com) or phone (714-720-3333).

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Flanked by instructors, the Metro Rail Train Operators Class of Nov. 07 graduates with full honors in a ceremony held in the windsor room of Metro Headquarters on Wednesday.



Front row, from left, Monique Barrett, RTOS Rachel Barlow, RTOS Lisa Chew, Karen Butler, Rosa Nunez, Egriselda Molina, RTOS Jennelle Price, Willard Johnson (Instructor). back row, from left, Arnold Johnson (Instructor), Gerald Harper (Instructor), Frank Hooks (Instructor), Jose Arias, Ralph Newman, Roland Burts, Paulo Prado, Oscar Portillo, Hugo Repreza, RTOS Abraham Miranda, Hector Gutierrez (Instructor), Metro Rail GM Mike Cannell, Rail Instruction Manager Linda Leone, Ricardo Perez (Instructor). Photo: Gayle Anderson.

## Graduating Class of Train Operators Adds 14 to Metro Rail Ranks

By GAYLE ANDERSON

The November graduating class of Metro Rail train operators added four Rail Transit Operations Supervisors (RTOS) and ten train operators to the ranks of some 200 rail operators who pilot the Metro Rail system through a countywide maze of tracks and tunnels to transport a steadily growing ridership.

"The expertise acquired and achieved by operators means the quality of service will continue," Rail General Manager Mike Cannell told the graduates.

One by one, Cannell presented each graduate with a framed official certificate and a distinctive new Metro Rail employee badge.

Rail Division Transportation Managers Bruce Shelburne and Davide Puglisi welcomed the graduates to the ranks, noting the expertise gained in the seven-week intensive training course is already evident.

Comparing the achievement to "passing the bar exam," UTU Local 1565 Chairman Tim Del Cambre praised the graduates' teamwork and dedication to a professional goal.

Training consists of an overview of the rail system and concentrated instruction on rules and procedures followed by hands-on yard operation, mainline operation and procedures specific to operation of each Rail Line, said Linda Leone, Rail Instruction Manager.



Directed by Leone, the class was conducted by rail training instructors Arnold Johnson, Willard Johnson, Gerald Harper, Frank Hooks, Hector Gutierrez and Ricardo Perez. After observing an in-service trip and completing individual evaluations, instructors officially certified the graduates on Nov. 2 and Nov. 5.

The graduating class of 2007 includes four new supervisors: Rachel Barlow, Lisa Chew, Abraham Miranda, and Jennelle Price. The new operators are Monique Barrett, Karen Butler, Rosa Nunez, Egriselda Molina, Jose Arias, Ralph Newman, Roland Burts, Paulo Prado, Oscar Portillo, and Hugo Repreza.

Three graduates take up posts on the Metro Gold Line; three more landed at the Metro Blue Line and one has joined the Metro Green Line. Three graduates transferring from Bus Operations return to their divisions and will rotate into Rail Operations when positions become available.


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## Benefits Open Enrollment for Non-Contract, AFSCME, EXPO, and Teamster Employees

- Signup period is Nov. 13 through Nov. 27, 2007
- **LINK** Click here> <http://benefits.metro.net> <to access the new 2008 Benefits Open Enrollment system

By JAN OLSEN

(Nov. 13, 2007) This year, non-union employees and board members may complete their benefit enrollment online via the newly implemented Oracle Advanced Benefits (OAB) platform. Open Enrollment to select medical, dental and other group insurance benefits for 2008 through OAB is accessible on the Intranet via employee work computers and on home computers via the internet/Intranet link. The Open Enrollment platform will be accessible beginning today, Nov. 13, through close of business Tuesday, Nov. 27. The Benefits Open Enrollment system includes detailed sign-on instructions and user's guides, links to websites, brochures, and forms to assist in making important decisions regarding individual benefit choices for 2008.

### Important steps to take:

**1. Access the 2008 Benefits Online Enrollment System** – available from 11/13/07 through 11/27/07.

This link is also located in the right-hand column of the myMetro.net home page on the Intranet. This system is available online from any location at <http://benefits.metro.net>.

Easy-to-follow instructions are included to explain your unique User ID and password for employees who do not have an FIS account.

If you are a current FIS user, you can access the system using your FIS user name and password. Once you have signed on, you will see Benefits Open Enrollment listed as one of your responsibilities.

The online system will allow you to review your current enrollment choices, add, delete, or update dependent information, and make changes to your benefit plans for calendar year 2008, if you so desire. Please pay particular attention to instructions (printed in **"red"**), which will assist you in successfully completing your enrollment.

If no changes are made, current plans will remain in effect during calendar year 2008, with the exception of the Flex Spending Accounts and the Non-Tobacco Users Life Insurance, both of which require an election each year.

The 2008 Guidebooks, brochures, plan enrollment forms, and links to insurance carrier websites are included on the system. Specific insurance carrier websites require Internet access, and are provided as a

convenience, but are not required to complete your enrollment process.

**2. Print a copy of your Confirmation Statement** and retain for your records.

Contact the Pension and Benefits staff at 922-7186 if you have any questions or need assistance completing your Open Enrollment. Please be aware that the annual open enrollment period is a very busy time. If necessary, please leave a detailed message, including a call-back number, so a Benefits employee can reach you in a timely manner.

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Following a Marine tradition, the cutting of the Marine birthday cake falls to the oldest and youngest marines in the room. Jack Bartman, Division 9 bus operator, watches Pena Glen, the youngest marine, cut the cake with a sword. Glen receives a surprise later when re discovered David Palm, Division 7 maintenance manager, was at the celebration. Palm was Glen's gunnery sergeant during Glen's 12-week basic training.



Photos by Ned Racine

## Division 9 Event Marks Veteran's Day, Marine Corps' 232nd Birthday

- All service branches represented in Veteran's Day celebration

By NED RACINE

(Nov. 13, 2007) San Gabriel Valley Division 9 held its fifth Marine Corps Birthday celebration, Nov. 9, and paid tribute to all members of the armed services.

More than 50 Metro employees met in the new Division 9 break room to hear veterans speak of the importance of their military service.

After a color guard from the Marine 3rd Air Naval Gunfire Liason Company in Long Beach presented the United States flag, Jack Gabig, general manager, San Gabriel Valley Sector, thanked the veterans in attendance and anyone whose family member had served in the United States armed forces.

Gabig also introduced Harry Baldwin, City Council member from the City of San Gabriel and member of the Metro San Gabriel Valley Sector Office.

Flags lined two sides of the break room, acknowledging each branch of the United States military, including a flag commemorating those who are prisoners of war and missing in action. As with previous celebrations, veterans swapped memories and cut a cake in honor of the Marine Corps'



232st anniversary.

Despite the gaily decorated cake—complete with the Marine Corps seal—the morning event turned somber as it commemorated the sacrifices of those who served and those who did not return.



Richard Hunt, general manager, San Fernando Valley Sector, presents a certificate to Sam Harper, UTU, victor in a barbecue cook-off with Doug Middleton, Division 9 transportation manager. Those attending the Veteran's Day celebration were able to eat the winning and losing entries.

Richard Hunt, general manager, San Fernando Valley Sector, chose to attend the Veteran's Day celebration over another event. An Air Force veteran, Hunt read a piece titled "What Is an American?" from *Stars and Stripes* magazine; a piece Hunt has kept for 37 years. "This is my way of saying 'thank you' to the veterans."

"I do have a profound appreciation for the people who served our country in uniform," Hunt said. He reminded his audience that when he served in Southeast Asia, it was not popular to serve in the military. "Every time I needed encouragement . . . I would read it," Hunt said, emotion in his voice.

Robert New, director of Purchasing, an Army veteran and volunteer at Veterans Administration facilities in Westwood and San Diego, spoke on how veterans are valuable leaders and motivators.

Sal Llamas, Division 9 assistant manager, Maintenance, read a proclamation from President Bush on the importance of Veteran's Day. Llamas is a former Marine who served two tours of duty in Iraq.

Llamas, who recalled he had served on a number of burial details, also explained the origins of "Taps." "Taps" is always played when military veterans are laid to rest and every day at "lights out." "Taps" was first played on a battlefield in 1862.

After "Taps" was played, The audience shared a moment of silence to honor fallen veterans.

John McBryan, Division 9 maintenance manager, a former Marine and one of the organizers of the Veteran's Day event, noted that he and other Division 9 veterans are kicking off a fund raising effort in 2008. They hope to erect a permanent memorial in a corner of the break room to honor all military veterans.

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



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CEO is First to Sign Up for Metro's 2007 Gift Giving Campaign



Photo by Bill Heard

Wearing a new Metro sweatshirt in holiday green, CEO Roger Snoble joins the Gift Giving Campaign crew to place his name at the top of the list as a donor to the 2007 Gift Giving Campaign. The annual drive began Tuesday with a signup table on the 3rd Floor. Metro Headquarters employees can pick up gift tags through Wednesday, Dec. 5, in the Diversity and Economic Opportunity Department (DEOD) on the 13th Floor. Gift tags also will be available at the Metro Support Services Center and at participating operating divisions. Gifts may be dropped off at DEOD from Nov. 25 through Dec. 7 at 4 p.m. Shown with the CEO, from left, are Elizabeth Garcia, Jeanne Kinsel, Stephen Goodwin, Tashai Smith, Violeta Aguilos, Perla Cherbony, Keith Compton and Barbara Thomasson. (11/13/07)

Go to [myMetro.net](#):  
**Annual Gift Giving Drive Begins November 13**  
- Metro hopes to send 5,000 gifts to Fred Jordan Mission



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## Craft Fair Sparks Interest in Employees' Unusual Handicrafts

By NED RACINE



(Nov. 14, 2007) Pakastani art shaped the items sold by sisters Shamaila Samuel and Jane Mohsin, an Accounting supervisor. Their mother embroiders the handbags the sisters were selling; some embroidered bags take 40 hours to create.



Addie Allison, Division 1 stenographer, has always loved buttons. She originally decorated cigar boxes with her collections but has now evolved to ornamenting jewelry boxes and crosses. Allison now procures her buttons from Los Angeles' Fashion District, although her favorite decorations are found objects.



Teri Forenelli-Valenzuela and her sister Maria Valenzuela sold bags, purses and trays based on *Loteria*. Valenzuela, a Metro real estate officer, described *Loteria* as Mexican Bingo. Instead of using numbers, *Loteria* uses images. Teri has been creating items incorporating the *Loteria* images for 10 years, but yesterday was the first time she sold them.

**Photos by Ned Racine**

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**Funeral Services Set:** (Nov. 15, 2007) Funeral services have been scheduled for Rosendo Jauregui, who died Nov. 10 in a motorcycle accident. A viewing will be held from 7 to 9 p.m., Friday, Nov. 16, at Guerra-Gutierrez Mortuary, 5245 E. Pomona Blvd., at Atlantic Boulevard, in Los Angeles (323-721-8444). The funeral will begin at 9:30 a.m., Saturday, Nov. 17, at the mortuary. A processional to Calvary Cemetery will follow the service.

## Funeral Services Pending for Division 2's Rosendo Jauregui

- The maintenance supervisor died, Saturday, in a motorcycle accident

(Nov. 14, 2007) Funeral services are pending for Equipment Maintenance Supervisor Rosendo Jauregui of Crossroads Depot Division 2, who died Nov. 10 in a motorcycle accident.

Although the accident is still under investigation, Jauregui appears to have lost control of his motorcycle on the I-10 Freeway near the Temple City Boulevard exit in Rosemead.

A passing motorist discovered the wrecked motorcycle and Jauregui's body at about 9:30 p.m. and alerted police. He was pronounced dead at the scene from head trauma. He had not been wearing a U.S. DOT-approved helmet, according to friends.

Jauregui, 54, joined Metro in May 1975 as a mechanic "A" and was assigned to North Los Angeles Division 3. After 23 years, he retired in November 1998, but was rehired the following month as an equipment maintenance supervisor at West Valley Division 8.

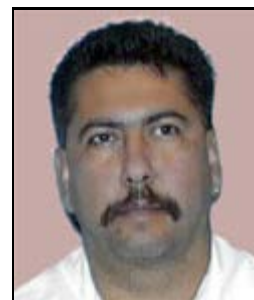
In December 2002, Jauregui transferred to Crossroads Depot Division 2 where his most recent assignment was as third shift supervisor, working from 9 p.m. to 5:30 a.m.

"He was a good guy," said Donell Harris, Division 2 maintenance manager. "He loved his job and working for Metro. He talked about wanting to put a clean, safe product on the road for the customer. His goal was to put the best product possible out there."

Comments from co-workers at Division 2 included: "He was a father figure to those of us who don't have a father." "We had our challenges as co-workers, but you could always count on him when you needed him. We liked to make him laugh because he was a different person when he laughed."

According to friends, Jauregui enjoyed fishing, hunting, cigars and riding his motorcycle. A runner, he participated in the 1990 LA Marathon.

A resident of Alhambra, he is survived by his wife, Lupe, and two sons.



**Rosendo Jauregui**





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### Transit Services Bureau Wins Merit Award for Vandalism Program

(Nov. 14, 2007) The Sheriff’s Transit Services Bureau has been named a Challenge Awards Merit recipient by the California State Association of Counties (CASC) for its successful vandalism reduction program.

The program was one of 10 Merit award winners among California counties with populations over 700,000. Other Merit winners included a literacy program in Alameda County, a health services program in Kern County, a drug treatment and education program in Riverside County and a tutoring program for foster youth in San Diego County.

The Merit award citation for the Transit Services Bureau described “a graffiti plague” on Metro vehicles, noting that graffiti damage costs the agency \$12 million a year and generates “a public perception that the Metro transit system was unsafe.”

“In December 2000,” the citation says, “the Bureau implemented a highly effective Vandalism Reduction Program led by the special problems unit. In 2006, teams arrested 156 “taggers” and solved 770 vandalism cases worth more than \$1 in damage to Metro property. Several taggers were ordered to pay restitution and court costs in excess of \$25,000 per person. Savings to Metro...increased to more than \$7 million per year for cleanup and repair of buses and rail lines. A recent survey reported 88 percent of transit patrons now felt safe on Metro systems.”

The selection of winning programs was based on demonstrated leadership, innovation, collaboration, creativity, resourcefulness and effectiveness, as well as the potential for elements of the program to be used as models for other counties’ programs. The award was announced Tuesday at CASC’s annual meeting in Alameda County.

CSAC represents the state’s 58 counties before the public, the Legislature, administrative agencies and the federal government, fostering vital public programs and services.

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## Chief Ethics Officer Karen Gorman Named Acting Inspector General

(Nov. 15, 2007) Chief Ethics Officer Karen Gorman was today named acting Inspector General, succeeding William Waters who retired Oct. 22.



**Karen Gorman**

The announcement was made following a special Board meeting.

Gorman will serve in the post until a permanent appointment is made. She joined Metro in May 2000 to head the Office of Ethics and Lobby Registration.

Prior to joining Metro, she served as a deputy trial counsel for the State Bar. In that position, she prosecuted attorneys charged with violating the Rules of Professional Conduct. She also counseled attorneys on ethics, taught ethics, managed an attorney substance abuse program she created and negotiated discipline agreements. She supervised a staff of paralegals, investigators and clerks.

During a hiatus from the State Bar, Gorman served as an Auxiliary Legal Services attorney with the LA County Counsel's office, representing the Department of Children and Family Services in Dependency Court.

Gorman is a 1976 graduate of San Jose State University, where she earned a bachelor of science degree in business. She is a 1979 graduate of the Western State University College of Law in Fullerton, where she earned her juris doctor decree.

She was admitted to the State Bar of California and Northern Federal District Court in 1979 and to practice before the U.S. Supreme court in 1991.

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Marketing brochure illustrates the rideshare advantage. Check it out: [metro.net/vanpool](#)



### Moving Forward: Metro Vanpool Program Reaches 500 Vehicles

- Program now transports upwards of 4,500 riders daily and logs 1 million revenue miles a month

By JIMMY STROUP

(Nov. 15, 2007) Metro's Vanpool Program hasn't even been in operation a year yet, but the number of vehicles enrolled in the subsidized program – 500 – makes it seem like it's been around a lot longer than that.

Transportation Planning Manager Jami Carrington – who has been working with Metro's Research and Development group to develop the program since it's infancy in 2002 – said the 500 mark is an important milestone, but has grander plans for the program that transports upwards of 4,500 riders daily and logs some 1 million revenue miles a month.

"We expected to enroll more vanpool vehicles that travel shorter distances," she said. "What we are actually experiencing are fewer vans commuting longer distances."

The vanpool program currently operates on grant money obtained by Carrington and her team. One of the primary goals of the program is to achieve enough participation to qualify for annual revenue from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

The FTA provides grants to public rideshare programs like Metro's Vanpool Program based on public "passenger miles," which is the number of riders multiplied by the miles they travel daily.

#### How it works

Basically, Metro contracts with private vanpool companies that agree to enroll riders. To be eligible for the program, the vanpool participants must



be traveling to an LA County workplace and agree to all reporting requirements.

Metro then agrees to pay a subsidy to the vanpool company, reducing the cost to their riders and making vanpooling more attractive to potential vanpool riders. The average vanpool rider saves more than \$600 in drive-alone costs each month by enrolling in the Metro-subsidized program.

"That's where it starts; the rider signs the van lease and applies for the program subsidy through the vanpool services vendor," Carrington said. "The private company is the gatekeeper; they're doing the most important work. We're there the rest of the way collecting the data and producing the reports for the federal grants program with the FTA."

Within the next two years, the vanpool program should be fully funded by the FTA at a ratio of about \$2 for every \$1 in vanpool program costs. In this way it serves the agency by creating an alternative public transportation option and by generating more funds for the region.

"The program is self-sustaining. No Metro funds should be necessary after these first years," she said.

**Started with enrolling vanpoolers**

Metro's only been through the first few phases of the campaign to make commuters aware of how vanpooling can work. It started with enrolling vanpoolers who were already in a program.

Soon, Metro will begin to advertise on the sides of the vanpool vehicles themselves, pointing the way to the Web site – [www.metro.net/vanpool](http://www.metro.net/vanpool) – for more information.

"There's some background and education involved in converting people," Carrington said. "Once people learn about it fully, it becomes more attractive and people start saying, 'Oh! That seems like it could work well for me.'"

This time next year, the Research and Development team hopes to have nearly 800 vehicles involved in Metro's program – which would equate to a daily ridership of more than 5,500 people.

Carrington admits it's a lofty goal, but she's hopeful for a program that's gaining ground all the time. And at only eight months old, Metro's program has already surpassed San Diego's vanpool program in size; that program has been operating for more than 10 years.



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**Track Repairs to Delay Metro Blue Line Service This Weekend**

By DAVE SOTERO

(Nov. 16, 2007) Work crews will begin repairs, tonight, on a Metro Blue Line grade crossing between the Imperial/Wilmington and Compton stations. The repairs will continue through through Sunday, Nov. 18. Patrons should allow extra travel time and expect delays to train service during this period.

From 9 p.m., tonight, to the close of service Saturday night, Nov. 17, northbound and southbound service between Imperial/Wilmington and Compton Stations will be taken out of service.

Metro will instead operate bus bridges to transport passengers around this closure. Transit patrons should allow a minimum of 30 minutes additional travel time and expect delays.

All northbound passengers will disembark trains at Compton station and board buses at the bus stop on Willowbrook Avenue. Buses will travel to Imperial/Wilmington station within approximately 12-15 minutes.

All southbound passengers will disembark trains at Imperial/Wilmington station and board buses on the west side of the station at Metro Bus Line 120-121 stops. Buses will travel to Compton station within approximately 8-10 minutes.

The last northbound train prior to service disruption this evening will leave Transit Mall station in Long Beach at 8:21 p.m., arriving at Imperial/Wilmington station at 8:50 p.m. The last southbound train prior to service disruption will leave 7th and Metro at 8:26 p.m and arrive at Compton station at 8:52 p.m.

On Saturday, Nov. 17, trains will operate every 15 minutes in the morning, 12 minutes mid-day and 20 minutes in the evening. Buses will continue to provide service between the Compton and Imperial/Wilmington stations.

On Sunday, Nov. 18, all trains will operate every 20 minutes, beginning southbound from 7th and Metro at 5:05 a.m. and northbound from Transit Mall station at 5:03 a.m.

The last train southbound from 7th and Metro will depart at 12:45 a.m. and northbound from Transit Mall station at 11:23 a.m. The last train north to Wardlow from Transit Mall station will leave at 1:41 a.m.



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## Metro Will Fund Groups Applying to Start Employee Clubs

- Subsidy is \$300 this fiscal year; application deadline is Dec. 31
- Download procedure, form for Employee Clubs at [Forms Online>Communications](#)

(Nov. 20, 2007) Do you like to knit, discuss books, star gaze, collect transit memorabilia, restore old cars, photograph nature? Want to start an employee club?

Metro Employee Activities plans to provide funding for 10 employee clubs this fiscal year and is encouraging groups of employees with similar interests to get together and organize clubs.

The application deadline to start an employee club is Monday, Dec. 31.

"Our employees have a vast number of interests and talents," says Danielle Boutier, director of Communication Services, "and we want to help bring them together to have fun and develop their skills and interests."

Approved clubs will be eligible for annual subsidies – currently \$300 per fiscal year – from Employee Activities. To qualify clubs must submit organizational rules or bylaws, a list of officers, a meeting schedule and justification for the use of funds.

## Open to all

Clubs that set qualifications or screen for membership must explain the process. Clubs must be open to all employees regardless of race, color or creed, political or religious affiliation.

If more than 10 groups apply for funding this fiscal year, Boutier says, a drawing will be conducted to select those that will be funded. The number of clubs to be funded each year will depend on funds available in the Employee Activities budget.

To remain eligible for funding, a club must use at least 70 percent of its funding each year. Receipts and documentation of how a club uses its funding may be required.

Funds may be spent for speakers or to attend conferences, club clothing items or supplies, parties or events, or other appropriate activities. Funds may not be spent on alcohol or other items or activities that violate Metro policies.



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## Funeral Services Set for Retired Bus Operator Joyce Foreman

(Nov. 20, 2007) Funeral services are set this week for retired Metro Bus Operator Joyce M. Foreman, who died Nov. 14, following an illness.

A viewing is scheduled from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Friday, Nov. 23, 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 9 a.m., Saturday, Nov. 24, at Welcome Baptist Church, 8615 South Central Ave. at the intersection with Manchester Avenue in Los Angeles.

Foreman, 59, joined SCRTD in September 1975 as a full-time bus operator and retired in October 1998 with 23 years of service. She was assigned to the old Division 16 in Pomona a short time, although for the majority of her career she was assigned to Arthur Winston Division 5.

A resident of Perris, Calif., she is survived by her husband, Gilbert; four adult children, Carl, Larry, Darren, and Tracy. Two cousins are Metro employees: Carolyn J. Grant, a custodian with Wayside Systems, and Toni L. Roberts, an assignment coordinator clerk assigned to Manpower Systems and Support.



Joyce M. Foreman





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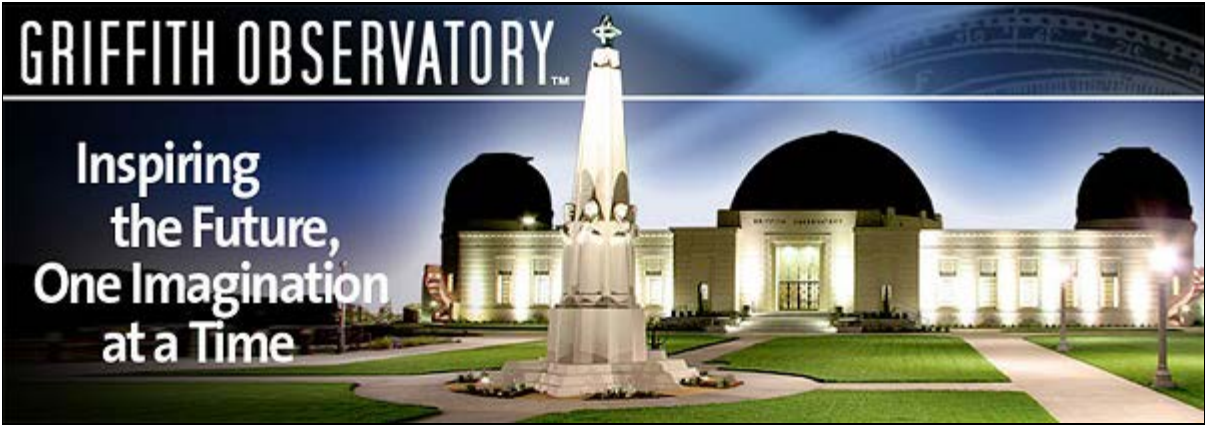
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Check it out: [www.griffithobs.org](http://www.griffithobs.org)

Shuttle Service Offered Between Subway and Griffith Observatory

(Nov. 20, 2007) Beginning this Saturday, LADOT will offer shuttle bus service to the Griffith Observatory from the Vermont/Sunset Metro Rail station.

The Observatory Shuttle will operate Saturdays and Sundays between Griffith Park and the Metro Red Line station, leaving every 35 minutes between 10 a.m. and 10 p.m.

The fare for the LADOT red trolley bus will be 25 cents, except for riders with LADOT or EX Transit passes and seniors with Metro employee ID cards, who can ride for free.

Children under age 4 also can ride free when accompanied by an adult. For more information about the shuttle, go to [www.ladottransit.com](http://www.ladottransit.com).

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## Metro to Use 'Disney on Ice' Tickets to Aid Eastside Businesses

- Promotion designed to draw customers for those affected by construction

By NED RACINE

(Nov. 21, 2007) Tickets to the "Disney on Ice" show are about to become more than a fantasy for businesses along the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension construction zone.

Beginning Nov. 26, Olga Arroyo, Community Relations consultant, will visit 25 businesses that are being or have been impacted by construction of the six-mile-long light rail line.

Arroyo will invite the businesses to participate in Metro's "Bring Your Family to Disney on Ice" promotion. Each participating business will draw a winner who will receive a Family 4-pack of tickets valued at \$64.

"We hope to provide the impacted businesses with a tool to promote their business and invite their customers to spend in their stores," said Yvette Rapose, Community Relations manager.

If a business chooses to participate, each would place a ticket receptacle in the business. Signage would invite customers who purchase a minimum amount to print their contact information on the back of the receipt and deposit it in the receptacle.

"The minimum spending amount will vary business to business depending on what the business sells," Arroyo said.

On Dec. 14, Arroyo will return to each participating business and ask the owner to select a winner by drawing a receipt from the receptacle. She will notify the winner. When the winners pick up their tickets, Community Relations will photograph the winners and the business owner.

"This will not only encourage folks to come spend money," Rapose said, "it will encourage repeat business as customers try to win the Family 4-pack."

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In the control room of the Rail Operations Center, five of Santa's helpers hold some of the toys donated to the Fred Jordan Mission for Skid Row Kids. From left are RTOS Espie Diosdado; CCTV Observer Lucy McIntyre; RTOS Amador Silva; Secretary Lupe Delgadillo and RTOS Ruben Ramirez.



Photo by Ned Racine

## Rail Operations Center Conducts First Fred Jordan Toy Drive

- ROC simultaneously gathers non-perishable items for its food drive

By NED RACINE

(Nov. 21, 2007) The Rail Operations Center (ROC) has begun gathering toys and food for its first contribution to the Fred Jordan Mission for Skid Row Kids. Metro will donate the items to the mission, Dec. 10, during an event in front of the Gateway Building.

"I was volunteered to go the [planning] meeting, and I liked the idea," said Amador Silva, a rail transportation operations supervisor, and one of the ROC toy drive coordinators. He's hoping 100 percent of the approximately 100 ROC staff members will contribute.

And, noting the brightly wrapped bins in the control center for donated food, Silva added, "We want to fill these."

"We hope we can continue this for many years to come," said Rail Transportation Operations Supervisor Ruben Ramirez, who reminded rail division staff that the ROC is open for donations 24 hours a day, seven days a week through Dec. 6.

## Toy Drive Coordinators for Rail Divisions

Line

Coordinator

Blue Line	Rose Mendoza
	Ramon Reilly
	Gladys Nuila
Gold Line	Josie Robles
	Jose Serrano
Green Line	Jennie Johnson
Red Line	John Sanchez
	Martin Jurado
Rail Operations Center	Amador Silva
	Patricia Alexander
	Ramona Escareno

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## Board Chair Pam O'Connor Sets Next Internet Chat for Dec. 12

- Board Chair responds to 32 follow-up questions, comments from October online session

### In this report:

- [LA should share bikes as in Paris](#)
- [Gold Line Montclair extension](#)
- [Train service to LAX](#)
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- [Speed up the Gold Line](#)
- [Train from the Valley to the Westside?](#)

(Nov. 21, 2007) With one live, Internet chat session successfully completed October 18, Metro Board Chair Pam O'Connor will resume her live, online chats at noon, Wednesday, Dec. 12.

Accessed at metro.net/chat, her next topic will be the impact of Southern California traffic on the environment.

Questions from the public during the October online chat included such subjects as what Metro is doing to ease traffic congestion and the future of subways in Los Angeles. At one point, 115 Internet users from across LA County were signed onto the chat.

"Thanks for all the questions and the cogent observations and suggestions that accompanied them," O'Connor wrote in a document posted today on the metro.net web site. "...(W)e look forward to our next Live Chat in December.

O'Connor provided answers to many of the questions submitted by the public, but 32 more e-mails were received following the hour-long session. Following are the questions and comments and O'Connor's responses.



**Paul:** Why can't we set up fee-collecting stations for traffic control and raising funds for more complete and fast building of the light rail network?

**Pam O'Connor:** Paul, I assume you're referring to congestion pricing like freeway toll roads or charging motorists to enter the Central Business District like in London and other cities. Metro is actively seeking ways that we can better price the use of the transportation infrastructure to make it operate more efficiently. In addition, revenues generated by pricing options would be applied to more public transit and road projects. One method is through congestion pricing which also reduces congestion by giving commuters and others an economic incentive to share a ride. Look for some pilot projects to be implemented within about two years. It is a different approach, but our traffic congestion and mobility needs for the new century are going to require new thinking....thinking about "new mobility."

**Richard:** Subway to the Sea: for pity's sake, don't let a few short-sighted NIMBYs cripple yet another transit project. The subway extension must go down Wilshire. If necessary, mollify the NIMBYs by excavating a space for a station at Crenshaw, but defer construction of a station in that space until the NIMBYs die off.

**Pam O'Connor:** Richard...Metro is legally required under state and federal environmental regulations to study all reasonable transit alternatives to serve the Westside, not just a "Subway to the Sea" or a Wilshire Boulevard alignment. Metro staff also is gathering public input on subway, above ground rail, Bus Rapid Transit and a non-build scenario to ensure that all alternatives are considered and so that we meet requirements for grant funding in order to recommend the most cost-effective, locally preferred alternative to the Metro Board of Directors next year.

#### **LA should share bikes as in Paris**

**Lois:** Hi Pam, I'm wondering how you feel about having the Velib system come to LA's Metro stations. I expect there would be a lot of help from various CRA Redevelopment areas if the Metro Board supported this concept. Thanks for considering. Best, Lois

**Pam O'Connor:** Lois, I was recently in Paris and saw how popular bike-riding has become thanks to the Velib system where more than 20,000 rental bicycles are available throughout the city and anyone can borrow one at little cost for short-term rides and connections. Part of its success in Paris is that it is part of a set of mobility options, including dedicated bus lanes. And the rules of the road for bicyclists and motorists are strictly enforced!

Bicycling is a great way for traveling and it doesn't pollute. Here in Los Angeles County, Metro is a strong supporter of bike programs. We have spent more than \$150 million funding such projects as the Long Beach Bikestation, bike paths, bike lockers and racks at Metro Rail and Metrolink stations and other public facilities to encouraging commuting by bike. Our buses also have bike racks in the front. No extra charge. You can also take bikes on Metro Rail though there are restrictions during rush hours since the trains may be crowded.

I think something like the Velib program has potential for implementation at a subregional level such as with the Westside Cities (that includes portions of Los Angeles). I know the program has been

successful in Lyon and adjacent cities in France and here in the U.S. New York has begun a smaller program and I understand Chicago and other U.S. cities are looking into it. And we need to support cities' efforts to create safe bike path networks. Good suggestion. Thanks.

**Victor:** Last year I was hearing rumors about Line 460 being terminated at Norwalk Green Line Station. I was wondering why not put Commuter Express to operate a line from Disneyland to Union Station via Fullerton Park and Ride.

**Pam O'Connor:** There are no plans at this time to change Metro Bus Line 460, which operates between Los Angeles and Disneyland. Any major changes to this route would be subject to a public hearing, so you would have an opportunity at that time to offer your suggestions. Metro subsidizes municipal operators such as LADOT, which oversees Commuter Express, but Metro has no say over their operations. So, Victor, is Disneyland the "happiest place on earth?"

### **Gold Line Montclair extension**

**Tony:** What is the status on the Gold Line Montclair extension? The former Santa Fe Railroad right-of-way is there; what are the plans on extending the Gold Line East? I feel that this should be a priority; the 210-freeway corridor is getting more and more traffic. There is no mass transit using the 210, other than one Foothill Transit Line (690) that uses that corridor. We need the Gold Line to be extended east as far as Montclair. When will construction start, and in what phases will the project be completed?

**Pam O'Connor:** Tony...A possible Metro Gold Line extension to Montclair is one of dozens of critical highway and transit projects that the Metro Board of Directors will consider when it adopts the Long Range Transportation Plan that prioritizes projects and available resources for transportation projects in Los Angeles County through the year 2030. A draft plan should be presented to the public for review and comment by next spring before being considered by Metro directors.

The bottom line, however, is that there are many more meritorious projects, like the Metro Gold Line extension, than there is money available from the state and federal governments. So at Metro we're looking at new and different ways to provide transit funding. Many of the new ideas will require public support. We'll talk about the possibilities in a future Live Chat.

**Richard:** Dear Pam, I almost always drive a car by myself, when commuting to work or running errands. As far as public transit, I rarely take it, unless my car is in the repair shop. I really would like to take public transportation more, but the main problems are 1.) buses are rarely on time, 2.) rail is not close enough to my destinations, and 3.) it takes me at least twice as much time using public transit. What are your plans to address these issues? On another note, why do I only hear about light rail, subways or busways, but never about monorails?

By the way, I for one am in favor of adding a gas tax to subsidize public transportation. Gasoline consumption is directly related to usage of the road infrastructure as well as directly impacting the environment. To offset the impact on lower-income people and to promote public transportation usage, I would like to see free public

transportation, entirely paid by a gas tax.

One of the inconveniences of using public transportation is coming up with the exact fare. Most people I know don't like the bus because you never know how long you may have to wait for the next bus. You might get more affluent people onto public transportation by making it easier to predict when the next bus will come.

I also looked at the system map of Metro and realized that there were some gaps which could address the transportation concerns of a large number of people. If there were some sort of rail (or monorail!) service in two corridors, it could alleviate some heavily traveled roads. 1.) There is a significant North/South gap in the San Gabriel Valley area. If a rail line were implemented between the Sierra Madre Villa Gold Line station and the Norwalk Green Line Station, possibly along the Rosemead Boulevard alignment, it could take many cars off of the currently crowded 605 and 710 freeways, in addition to alleviating the increasingly crowded North/South surface street traffic. 2.) On the Westside of town, there is a gap which could be closed between the Sepulveda Boulevard Orange Line station and the Aviation/LAX (or Mariposa) Green Line stations. This could take a major amount of traffic off of the gridlocked 405. Granted, this would be more difficult, since it is more densely built in this area, but it would be a huge benefit to commuters, as well as those who want access to the airport via this route. I hope my suggestions will prove helpful and receive some serious study and consideration.

I wish you success in your quest to improve public transit in Los Angeles and thank you for soliciting my input.

**Pam O'Connor:** Whew, Richard, that's a list! You're right, speed and convenience are two major considerations for commuters and others who are considering public transit. But saving money and helping the environment in an era of rising gas prices and rising parking costs and global warming also should be weighed. Metro is working to speed up the bus system with an expansion of Metro Rapid. By June 2008, 500 Metro Rapid buses will serve 28 transit corridors covering 420 miles and 35 cities throughout Los Angeles County. We also are offering new Metro Express bus service that takes advantage of freeway carpool lanes, and our new Metro Connections program will streamline service to major transit hubs. And I hope we can encourage cities to work with Metro to make the Rapid Bus system a real Rapid Bus by developing a network of dedicated bus lanes so they can move faster.

Metro is making it easier to use the system. You can purchase Metro passes so you don't have to worry about exact fare, and we will continue to work to make that pass seamless and easy to use.

Soon we also will debut a new web feature that allows you to see when the next bus is coming.

Monorails have been considered for L.A. County but they haven't fared well against light rail and subway because of limited passenger capacity and some operational and construction challenges.

The gasoline tax hasn't been raised in more than a decade, so this is one option that is being looked at for raising more revenue for critically needed highway and public transit projects. As noted in another answer, Metro is looking at a variety of options to fund transit improvements but it will take public support to choose and implement

the best options.

I'll pass on your comments about ways to close gaps in the transportation system to our planners. Thanks for sharing.

### **Train service to LAX**

**Jonathan:** Why doesn't Metro operate shorter trains that run more frequently? Once or twice a week, I commute via train from Northeast LA to LAX area. I take the Gold, Red/Purple, Blue, and Green Lines (all of them). The timing of the trains and the wait time to transfer makes the commute up to 30 to 40 minutes longer than it needs to be. Why not run shorter trains every 6 - 10 minutes even during non rush hour times. The wait time at Rosa Parks station is way too long AND NOISY! It seems as though the Blue line almost always arrives right after the Green Line leaves making a wait time of often 15 to 20 minutes on a noisy platform in the middle of the 105. Aside from shorter wait times, could some noise shields be installed on Green and Gold line freeway stations? It is impossible to even hear the public address announcements that are made from time to time. Thanks.

**Pam O'Connor:** Using shorter trains and running every 6-10 minutes during off-peak periods has reasonable merit in terms of service, but it has to be balanced with operating costs which would increase because of additional staffing requirements. For example, if we were to schedule Green Line mid-day service to a one car train every 7-8 minutes (the same as the peak headway), we would use the same number of cars currently in service during the same period (running every 15 minutes), only with twice as many train operators required to provide the service as is currently necessary. That being said...

Jonathan, you make an excellent point regarding the timing of trains. For example, during weekday peak periods, the Blue Line runs every 5-6 minutes, while the Green Line runs every 7-8 minutes. While both lines are running frequently, there are times when a customer will just miss a train. The same goes for the mid-day service period.

At this time, we are in the initial phases of developing an overall system service plan that will improve connections by adjusting service delivery (that is, trains traveling) on the Metro Green and Blue Lines to compatible headways or times between trains. We're working on getting the funding and new vehicles so that we can get these improvements going.

The noise at freeway stations on the Green Line and Gold Line is definitely an issue. I've forwarded your request to appropriate staff to look at possible solutions.

**Clarence:** Rapid bus service is badly needed on Venice Boulevard. Lines 333 and 33 are always crowded and buses are filthy on Manchester Bus Line 115 and Vermont Bus Line 204. Some buses have not been cleaned in over a month. I see bus passes on the floor of the bus from last month. Help.

**Pam O'Connor:** Clarence...Our South Bay Sector General Manager has shared your concerns about bus conditions with the Metro Maintenance Department. We make every effort to clean each bus on a daily basis. It is a challenge where there are occasions when resources are limited, but that's no excuse. We need to keep working to make sure our vehicles are clean. Now, during the time the bus is in operation, it's up

to our passengers to do their part to keep our vehicles clean. Keep us posted on the cleanliness, and we will continue to work hard to make your next bus ride and every bus ride better.

### **Routing of Expo Phase 2?**

**Theodoric:** What is the routing of Expo Line Phase 2? When are you going to have a disabled tap card? When will the tap card replace the EZ Pass?

**Pam O'Connor:** Theodoric...Phase 1 of the Expo Light Rail Line from downtown Los Angeles to Culver City is currently under construction. Phase 2 is in the environmental review stage in which the merits and impacts of possible alignments will be studied. The decision about an alignment will be considered after these analyses are completed. Check out [www.buildexpo.org](http://www.buildexpo.org) for periodic updates and schedule information about important milestones (release of the Environmental Review document, meeting dates, etc.)

There will be a Transit Access Pass (TAP) card for disabled persons when the TAP program is rolled out for the general public next year, and plans call for TAP to be used on Metro and other public transit carriers in Los Angeles County, but Metro hasn't finalized a date for TAP's general public debut.

**Joseph:** In light of global warming, increasing gas prices, the economic impact of traffic congestion, isn't it time to reconsider the restrictions on bikes and the rail system? By not allowing bikes on at the very time they would most likely need to be on, you are denying an entire type of commuter. The bike commuter's option increases enormously if you allow them to use the rails without restrictions. Please consider removing this ban. I want to leave my car at home, but the limited transit options make car-less commuting very difficult if you don't allow me to take my bike at rush hour.

**Pam O'Connor:** Joseph, I agree with you that commuting by bike is an eco-friendly program that Metro must support and it does in a big way. Metro has invested more than \$150 million in bike facilities and education programs. Our buses are equipped with bike racks and bikes are allowed on the trains, however, due to the fact that some trains are crowded during weekday rush hours, Metro doesn't allow bikes on trains from 6:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. and from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. unless trains are moving in a direction opposite the peak hour flow of commuter traffic on the Metro Blue, Green and Gold lines. On the Metro Red and Purple Line subway trains, bikes are not allowed in either direction during peak hours from Union Station to Wilshire/Vermont only. No other restrictions apply. I'll ask our Operations staff to review these restrictions in the hopes of encouraging more commuters to bike with Metro. In addition, check out a chat question about the Velib program in Paris, a system where many convenient bike stations are available for folks to take a bike for use for a segment of their commute. And you can find out more about the Paris program by "Googling" Velib.

**Gloria:** I regularly ride Metro Line 256 from Highland Pk to Pasadena. Why is there no other public transportation available from the ELA/EI Sereno/Monterey Hills area to the Gold Line station in Highland Park? The #256 runs every 40 min. or so and that's if we are lucky that it runs at all. It is not a reliable service. Many of us in Monterey Hills work in Pasadena or Downtown LA and the Gold Line is so close to us



that it would make sense to make it more convenient for those of us in that area and the eastside to be able to take advantage of that station. If we have to wait 40-50 minutes for a bus to take us 5 minutes away from home, you won't get us out of our cars to help support the reduction of the carbon footprint and reduce gas consumption. What do we need to do in order to get that line to run more frequently or how can we get a DASH line to run from the El Sereno/Monterey Hills area up the Highland Park Gold line station? Although many of us in Monterey Hills are working professionals, there are many retired senior citizens and those who are not financially able to afford cars and gas so public transportation is their sole means to get to and from work. (Currently there is a city ride bus that shuttles from Huntington Drive up through Monterey Hills to Figueroa and Ave 60. Too bad it doesn't run longer hours during the work week and nothing at all during the weekend. I am being selfish but what an idea! I could stay late at work, have dinner in Old Town, and not worry about hailing a taxi or my safety if I walk home late at night on my hillside. I guess I'll keep on dreaming).

**Pam O'Connor:** Gloria....There are several bus lines from East LA and the El Sereno areas that do connect with the Gold Line but not in Highland Park. Metro Lines 68, 70, 71, 78 and 79, for example. From Monterey Hills, Line 256 provides this service.

As you probably know, bus service levels are based primarily on ridership demand. In the case of Line 256, the average peak load per bus is about 13 passengers. This is about one third of a fully seated load. The present service levels of about 33 minutes during the morning rush hours and 45 minutes at other times, is adequate to accommodate this passenger demand.

That being said, the power of information technology providing real time information can help. Although the buses are on a schedule, we all know about the vagaries of traffic congestion in our county. Real time information is, especially, important for use of buses with long periods of time in-between buses. Metro is working on a feature that provides real time bus information via the Internet...Metro staff is working on developing a system and I hope it rolls out soon!

The DASH system is a very good community-based shuttle system that is planned and funded by the City of Los Angeles. The Councilperson for the Monterey Hills area is Jose Huizar. Metro staff would be very willing to work with the City to expand DASH service where needed.

As you also note, the backbone rail lines need good connectivity to neighborhoods to work for a wider range of people.

**Jennifer:** I bought a pass online on the 11th of this month. Will I get a pass for December?

**Pam O'Connor:** Jennifer....Yes! If you purchased your pass on Metro's e-commerce site on Nov. 11, we will mail out your December pass around Nov. 21, so you should have it in plenty of time for the start of December. Let us know how it works for you.

### **Clean Metro buses daily**

**Geraldine:** Can you please have all the buses cleaned on a daily basis? There are dust, debris, stains, and bad odors on them? The price increase to \$5 for a day pass (Regular cash fares remain \$1.25)

is not just due to politics, gas hikes and all the added features like the ongoing cooking recipes, news, what's new on Metro, etc. Also, people who rely on the bus 24-7-365 have struggles with their groceries, strollers, bags from arriving and or to their destinations - people walk-in and bump into one another - block the walkway and really make it hard. I have not seen any design or changes by Metro to accommodate the reality of the people. Honestly, the TV screen-monitor is not necessary but the above mentioned importance are very real and when you decide to do a survey, 99% of the people will surely say that it is a need more than a want. Also, it will prevent a hazard when it comes to an emergency or any sort. Cleanliness and space is very very apparent and immense on the people who commute throughout Southern California. Thank you for taking the time to read this e-mail. On a closing statement, Metro drivers have a very kind, well-mannered attitude is extremely helpful. Not only do they wait for the elderly running to catch the bus, but, are conscientious when it comes to the awareness of the riders who are in their watch. Great job on hiring them! P.S. For the Christmas season, will you guys have something for Angelenos to be able to watch the Light Festival in Los Feliz (for those who don't have cars?) Thank you!

**Pam O'Connor:** Actually, Geraldine, Metro works hard to accommodate bus riders, particularly senior citizens. More than 2,000 new buses have been purchased and placed in service during the past few years and most of these are low-floor buses that are easier for the disabled and senior citizens to board and exit. We also have several hundred high-capacity buses in our fleet so there are more seats. It's good to hear that our bus operators are doing a good job. I'm often impressed with my fellow riders, the younger people who offer a seat to an older person and other kind gestures among riders.

And Metro has expanded the network of Metro Rapid buses so you can get to your destination faster. Metro buses are cleaned at least daily but, due to heavy use, some buses might get dirty during the day. I'll have our Maintenance staff look into the cleanliness issues. Sorry, Metro has no plans to serve the Los Feliz light festival.

**Jerry:** As a daily Metro rider, it seems to me like Metro does not understand one simple concept that could increase their ridership dramatically without spending millions of advertising dollars: faster transit. Even riding the Gold Line is slower than driving in traffic - even the express trains barely average 30 MPH (regular trains average 25 MPH). I can drive from my home to work in 35 minutes, but taking the Gold Line and the Red Line takes an hour and fifteen minutes. For many people it's not worth the inconvenience AND the additional time. I wish MTA would concentrate more on making mass transit faster than sitting in your car in traffic. Diverting the money wasted on HOV lanes to improving grade crossings like Gloria Molina's debacle in Highland Park would go a long way.

**Pam O'Connor:** Jerry...Speed counts and Metro is working to speed up our system both on the rail and bus side. Harnessing technology, Metro has shaved minutes off the Metro Gold Line runs and Metro Rapid buses are about 25 percent faster than local buses. Metro Express buses that take advantage of freeway carpool lanes and the Metro Red and Purple Lines that travel underground are often faster than solo drivers. I think we need dedicated bus lanes then you'd really see transit moving faster. But the reality is public transit will rarely beat a car in a race.

Even if speed is the prime consideration, that equation changes when other factors such as cost are entered. Factoring in the cost of parking and gasoline, insurance, the cost of buying a car and depreciation and maintenance should enter the equation. Also the time spent looking for parking. And we are all going to have to figure out what we can do to minimize our carbon emissions. There are choices to be made.

Other options to transit include rideshare which is cheaper and more relaxing than driving yourself. And by carpooling or vanpooling, you reduce your carbon footprint.

As far as HOV or freeway carpool lanes are concerned, in Los Angeles County today, there are about 480 miles of freeway carpool lanes. On an average weekday, more than 800,000 people take advantage of the carpool lanes. During peak hours, a carpool lane carries about 1,400 vehicles or 3,300 people compared to 1,200 vehicles and an estimated 1,800 people in adjacent mixed flow freeway lanes. Carpoolers save about a minute per mile traveled in the carpool lane compared to solo drivers.

**Metro Red Line parking**

**Ngan:** Two questions relating to Metro Red Line parking. Hope you can answer both! 1. Universal and NBC has decided to build where the current Red Line parking is located at Universal City. They stated that the parking structure would allow parking for Metro patrons. Currently, the parking lot is free. With the new multi-level structure, will Metro patrons be required to pay for parking? 2. Can you address the parking issue at the NoHo station? With all the new housing and business construction, I fear that you have to get to the station by 6 a.m. to get any parking space. Will Metro build a parking structure (multi-level) to accommodate the increase number of cars? Single level lots just don't solve the problem. Thank you.

**Pam O'Connor:** Ngan...As part of any joint development deal around the Metro Rail stations in North Hollywood or Universal City, Metro will insist on securing substantial increases in parking for transit users. For example, we envision a 1,500 space parking garage at North Hollywood to replace the 956 parking spaces we currently have. There are no plans at this time to charge for parking. (Though, frankly, I personally think that parking needs to be priced; right now people are not paying the real price of driving alone. However, I'm not speaking for the Metro Board here.)

Please note that numerous Metro bus lines also serve the Metro Rail stations and there are also bike lockers at the stations.

**Carlos:** I am currently living in Valencia / Saugus area and work in Downtown L.A. Prior to that I lived in Burbank and grew up close to Downtown L.A. I have worked and driven to many locations in addition to working on the field.

I have a lot of experience with driving many roads and surface streets. I have several Ideas that might help reduce the traffic congestions on our highways. One Idea for our freeways is to make the number 1 lane into an express lane that would be open to all drivers. I believe the number 1 lane is the lane closest to the center divider,

And then use the second lane for carpool use and only sharing the carpool lane with single riders when merging on or off the express

lane. It would be used for traveling long distances between freeway interchanges and can only be entered or exited several miles before or after Freeway transitions.

For example: one automobile traveling from Valencia to L.A.X. Today the driver would take interstate 5 and transition to interstate 405 then transition to interstate 105 then exit on Sepulveda and take century to the L.A.X terminal. If the express lane would be in place this individual would be able to merge onto the carpool lane using the special colored lines allowing single drivers to share carpool lane and then merge onto the express lane prior to the first interchange.

The driver would only be allowed to exit or merge on the following transitions.

- (1) 405 and the 118 interstates.
- (2) 405 and the 101 interstates.
- (3) 405 and the 10 interstates.
- (4) 405 and the 105 interstates.

The major advantage to the express lane is the elimination of merging with traffic that will only be using part of the roadway span and slow traffic down due to merging. I think the logistics of building this type of intersection is partially in use at the carpool ramp traveling South on the 110 transitioning to the West 105. The same ramp is used for East 105 to North 110 I believe.

Another Idea is to have flex bus lines that can be adjusted according to the needs of the users. This idea is kind of like a van pool.

**Pam O'Connor:** Whew, Carlos, you are on a roll there! Thanks for your suggestions. I'm forwarding these to Metro's Planning staff for consideration.

### **Light rail, busways on freeways**

**Jonathan:** Has there ever been any thought about putting light rail or exclusive transit busways near (or in the middle of) all existing freeways? These are existing routes that people are used to traveling. What if this was coupled with smaller buses that ran neighborhood circuits from major stops along freeway routes rather than so many long bus routes that make travel across town slow and cumbersome (many time-consuming transfers). Such a system would better duplicate people's current driving habits and would more likely get them out of their cars and into public transportation. Imagine sitting in stand still bumper to bumper traffic on the 405 and you see light rail trains quickly buzzing up and down the middle of the freeway. That would be a powerful advertisement for public transportation. Now if trains were equipped with wireless internet connection, people could also be productive during their commute rather than wasting hour upon hour in traffic every day. Now that is value added! It is disgusting to me that they are wasting so much \$ building a carpool lane on the 405. That is going to do NOTHING to solve the terrible gridlock on the Westside. We need quick, efficient, public transportation.

**Pam O'Connor:** Jonathan...since most of our freeways in Los Angeles County are way over capacity and there's little room to widen them, it's just not practical to remove existing lanes to construct and operate light rail in the median. There are exceptions. The Metro Green Line on

the Century Freeway was incorporated when the freeway was built. Also, the Metro Gold Line travels in the median of the 210 Freeway for a short distance in Pasadena but it's on a former Santa Fe Railroad right-of-way, which had been preserved. Metro does own about 200 miles of former railroad right-of-way throughout the county and we're looking at converting segments into light rail and busways.

Carpool lanes do provide some value on the 405 freeway. The southbound lane has been a great benefit to commuters who rideshare. Carpoolers save a minute per mile in travel time compared to solo drivers, and Metro buses also have access to these lanes so there's added incentive to use public transit.

In Los Angeles County today, there are about 480 miles of freeway carpool lanes. On an average weekday, more than 800,000 people take advantage of the carpool lanes. During peak hours, a carpool lane carries about 1,400 vehicles or 3,300 people compared to 1,200 vehicles and an estimated 1,800 people in adjacent mixed flow freeway lanes.

**Adrian:** I live in the San Fernando Valley. The worst bus service is on Winnetka Ave, Desoto Ave., Tampa Ave., Topanga Canyon Blvd. and the waiting is 25 minutes to one hour for the buses. Why aren't there buses through Canoga Avenue and Parthenia Street?

**Pam O'Connor:** In October 2005, the frequency of weekday bus service on Winnetka Ave., De Soto Ave., Tampa Ave. and Topanga Canyon Blvd. was improved to 30 minutes or less during peak periods and 50 minutes during off-peak periods. The objective was to provide more convenient connections with Metro Orange Line and other Metro services. Whenever possible staff schedules connections between bus lines and train service to minimize wait time between trips. According to recent observations, the current level of service provided is sufficient to accommodate passenger demand.

Adrian...Currently, Canoga Avenue is being studied as a potential transit corridor and a possible extension of the Metro Orange Line. A segment of Parthenia St. (from Corbin Ave. to Reseda Blvd.) is served by LADOT's Northridge Dash Shuttle Bus Route. Requests to expand service along this corridor should be made to the Los Angeles Department of Transportation.

The ongoing struggle is always how to find funding to enhance services, especially, a problem today when Metro finances are strained and resources are limited due to increased costs and the State of California diverting transit funds to other, non-transit uses.

**Prema:** Why can't you extend Reseda and Devonshire Bus #240 to Reseda and Rinaldi?

**Pam O'Connor:** Prema...Metro Staff will consider your request to extend Line 240 service north on Reseda Blvd. to Rinaldi St. as a part of its Metro Connections Line Restructuring Study. Your request will be considered along with other proposals for future action. The proposed extension would require additional finances and resources. Unfortunately, Metro's current operating budget shortfall will likely hinder our ability to fulfill this request at this time.

**Crowding at NoHo station?**



**Jason:** As I read about the planned development surrounding the North Hollywood Station, I just found myself wondering whether there has been a study of the current usage of the station. I commute and exit North Hollywood Station in the morning on my way to work and it has not been designed to handle the number of users that utilize that station. Frequently, either the elevator and escalator malfunctions which create a traffic nightmare as far as exiting the station goes. Additionally using the stairs is difficult for many people, especially, during the summer months when the temperature reaches over 100 degrees. Additionally, the "reverse-commute" bus service along Lankershim has been severely cut back in recent months. Going north in the AM on the line 224 seems to be a recipe for a headache because you never know when the bus is actually going to come (and for me the experience is repeated when I wait for the 164). Additionally, I have a concern about metro.net. Why is it that when I enter the directions to get to my home from North Hollywood I am not given an option to use the Red Line which in most cases does help me get home 25-40 minutes quicker than the selected options on Metro.net.

**Pam O'Connor:** Jason...Metro staff is looking into your complaints about the elevators and escalators (an especially critical element of the system for people with limitations on mobility) as well as about the Metro.net trip planner. Regarding bus service, according to recent observations, the 5 to 10 minute service frequencies provided on Line 224 (Lankershim Blvd.) are sufficient to accommodate passenger demand. In addition, Lines 353, 363 provide four additional trips/hour during morning and afternoon peaks. Anyone traveling between North Hollywood Station and Lankershim and Victory can use any of the northbound buses departing the station (Lines 224, 353 and 363).

Also, new Metro Rapid Line 724 (Lankershim - San Fernando) will be implemented in June 2008 and will provide 10 minute peak and 20 minute off-peak service in this corridor.

**Ryan:** The Santa Clarita Valley is severely underserved by rapid transit. Metrolink is the only option to get into Los Angeles, and there are very limited mid-day trips. City of Santa Clarita Transit is making small strides to connect LA with the SCV, but funding is simply not available for any type of rail. What can Metro do to connect the rest of LA with Santa Clarita?

**Pam O'Connor:** Ryan...Metro and Santa Clarita Transit are working together to jointly fund Line 8 which operates seven days per week between Santa Clarita Transit Center and the Sylmar Metrolink Station. In addition, Santa Clarita Transit provides weekday peak bus services to Warner Center, Century City, downtown Los Angeles, Sylmar, Westwood, Van Nuys and Sherman Oaks. I hope to make a field trip, by transit, out to Santa Clarita in the next few months! Any suggestions on where to get a good lunch and interesting destinations?

**Therese:** When are we getting back our stop on Sherman Way between Laurel Canyon Blvd. and Whitsett? It was taken away without any advance notice and we who live at the apts. near there were never consulted. Some of us are senior citizens, others have children and I have seen people rushing to catch the bus in the morning who run across the street recklessly with children in tow because they might have time to get to a nearby stop carefully but don't have time to go to the corner without taking great risks with their lives and that of their children...we have enough problems with jaywalking without

compounding the problem by making those jaywalkers into "jayrunners". 2. Why does it take so long to move the benches when a stop is moved? Those of us who have heavy loads such as grocery shopping would appreciate speedier fixes. Why can't the same people who move the signs also be able to move the benches?

**Pam O'Connor:** Therese....Line 163 bus stops on Sherman Way between Laurel Canyon and Whitsett were abandoned on 6/28/06 in response to operator complaints that the stops were difficult to serve since there were neither traffic controls nor crosswalks at the stops. Traffic controls and crosswalks are under the City of Los Angeles jurisdiction.

Bus stops need to be good places themselves with at least one bus bench and, when possible, some shade/rain protection. Not having a bench can be a barrier to use of transit. Regarding your specific questions about the bus benches...within the City of Los Angeles, advertising bus benches are placed and maintained by Norman Bench under an exclusive, revenue-sharing franchise. Requests for placement or relocation of these benches should be placed with the City of LA's Bureau of Street Services at (800) 996-CITY or via their website at <http://www.lacity.org/BOSS/Administration/service.htm>

### **Graffiti and vandalism**

**Mark:** I am tired of seeing graffiti and other vandalism on the busses. Post the images of the "Ten Most Wanted" taggers on TransitTV and have the passengers anonymously identify these taggers. Should this identification lead to a conviction, that passenger will receive as a reward, a monthly pass for six months or a year.

**Pam O'Connor:** Mark, I share your frustration with taggers. Vandalism costs Metro about \$12 million a year, money that could be much better spent adding more service (and you can see from many of the chat questions, folks have suggestions for more service). Thanks for suggesting the idea for a reward incentive. I've passed it on to our security staff for consideration. Keep those good ideas coming in!

**Delia:** Hi Pam, A year ago I started taking Metro. And I'm pretty satisfied but when I have trouble with some drivers and e-mail it to Customer Relations, does it really get looked into? Sometimes coming home I have drivers pass me and others up for just no good reason.

**Pam O'Connor:** Hi, Delia. I know that one bad experience can sometimes overshadow the many positive ones! Metro responds each month to more than 5,000 calls and e-mails from customers such as yourself who have questions or complaints about the service. This is in addition to those asking for basic route information. Yes, we do respond to every inquiry and alert the Operations managers if problems are reported. And it would be helpful if you could tell us the time, date, location and the number of the bus when you report a problem either by calling Customer Relations at (213) 922-6235 or e-mail [customerrelations@metro.net](mailto:customerrelations@metro.net).

**Rob:** Is it too much to expect from you that the ticket kiosks be kept in working order? There have been problems at the Gold Line at Union Station for the past month! This is ridiculous!

**Pam O'Connor:** Rob....Sorry for the inconvenience. Metro regularly services all its ticket vending machines at the Metro Rail stations,

however, I've asked our Revenue staff to double-check the ticket machines at the Gold Line at Union Station.

**Brock:** I have noticed that there has lately been a good deal of money put into advertising, but rather little into marketing and market research. For instance, there is no easy information about taking Metro to the Rose Bowl (not on the Metro site OR on the Rose Bowl site). And yet, riding the Gold Line to the UCLA game two weekends ago, I was quite impressed with how much more pleasant it was than driving. This would be an easy way to capitalize on would-be commuters and introduce a vast array of car-loving Angelenos to give public transit a try. I am sure there are other examples of places to "Go Metro" that people just don't know. Perhaps an examination of venues that are difficult to drive to/from may be an interesting place to look for new ridership.

**Pam O'Connor:** You're on target, Brock. A good way to attract new riders is get them to try Metro instead of hassling with traffic and parking to major events such as the Tournament of Roses in Pasadena or the Marathon, the Hollywood Santa Parade, Fiesta Broadway, and major sporting and cultural events. If they have a positive experience like you did, perhaps they would opt for Metro for their commuting needs, at least once a week. The good news is that Metro actively promotes riding public transit to major events. We have cross-promotions with Staples Center and many partners from Ringling Bros. and the Harlem Globe Trotters to the play Wicked at the Pantages Theater across from the Metro Red Line station at Hollywood and Vine. Often Metro riders enjoy substantial discounts to these events plus they save on gas and parking. Check our Destination Discounts on metro.net. The Tournament of Roses is one Metro's biggest success stories.

Each year more than 30,000 parade and Rose Bowl fans ride the Metro Gold Line to Pasadena. Metro does press events with the Rose Queen and her court, advertises, produces brochures and other materials to promote the New Year's service, but we'll look into other ways to do even more to spread the word. Next season, GO METRO to GO BRUINS football!

### **Speed up the Gold Line**

**Harry:** The Metro Gold Line is very slow between Southwest Museum and Highland Park. Is Metro considering doing something about it? Sound barrier or going underground? It would definitely help to go faster, especially, the express line. Also, I'm hoping for the regional connector between the Gold Line and the Blue Line to be an actual project soon. Keep up the good work and make L.A. a transit system city like Boston and NYC

**Pam O'Connor:** Harry....Currently there are no plans for operational changes on Marmion Way, between Avenue 50 and Avenue 57 in Highland Park. Trains operate 20 miles per hour in "Street Run", with movement governed by the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation Traffic Control System. The narrow right-of-way, with driveways and parallel streets, preclude significantly higher speeds.

It should be noted that the Gold Line Express service will be ending on December 14, with those trips being converted to "all-stop" local trips. Trains will run every 7-8 minutes during peak periods. This is being done to provide increased service to Transit Oriented Developments at

non-Express stations (Lincoln Heights, Fillmore as examples) either recently completed or under construction.

As I mentioned to Jerry, that there are other considerations besides speed that appeal to many users. The places around stations are becoming great places for people providing housing and services. When one takes their multi-ton personal vehicle with them, one spends time to find a place to park it, and has to pay to park it, and then has to go back to the specific location where the vehicle was left to sit. So, if one wants to be free of the vehicle for a trip, to sit back and relax while someone else is doing the driving and you're reducing your carbon footprint the trade-off is a few more minutes when the train is in "Street Run" mode.

A Regional Connector Alternatives Analysis Study, along with various other project Alternative Analysis Studies (Eastside II Extension, Westside, Canoga, Crenshaw, Harbor Sub-Division), is currently underway.

**Raj:** Metro Bus Line 130 going east used to go to La Mirada and was very useful for many residents on the way. This has now been cut down to only Cerritos Mall and so those of us living east of Cerritos Mall have no service. Please extend the route 130 E to La Mirada again. Thank you.

**Pam O'Connor:** Raj, while we'd like everyone to be close to a bus stop, the real constraints of living within a budget means that we have to look at how many people bus routes serve. The route of this line east of Cerritos was shortened in December 2003 to end at the Los Cerritos Shopping Center in Cerritos. Metro took this action because ridership demand was very low east of the mall. While some impacted riders found the former route to be convenient, it was not cost-effective to continue to operate, and we at Metro had to make some tough decisions such as cutting Line 130 back in order to ensure a prudent use of public subsidy.

**Braj:** Metro Bus Line 275 has such a circuitous and long route that the service is practically useless for regular commuters. There is no connection to the Metro Green Line or Blue line stations for most residents of Cerritos if they can not go to Cerritos Mall. Please streamline Line 275 so it provides fast service connecting Cerritos to the Metro Green Line station. Thank you.

**Pam O'Connor:** Metro discontinued operation of Line 275 in June 2007 due to low ridership. While it was unfortunate Metro had to take this action, the folks who operate Norwalk Transit agreed to continue to operate this line, so now it's managed exclusively by that agency. You can find them at: <http://www.ci.norwalk.ca.us/transportation.asp> . Your suggestions to restructure the service to serve the Metro Blue or Green Lines should be forwarded to Norwalk Transit for further consideration.

**Jason:** The current marquee display on the bus now is too "multitasking". I have these suggestions: To tell the passengers stop has been requested, put a red light right next to but separate from the display. The red light will be on when the cord is pulled by a passenger, and it is off when the rear door is opened. I notice that because the "STOP REQUESTED" display is temporarily off when the next stop announcing is in process, some unaware passengers will continuously pull the cord even if a stop has already been requested.

This causes excessive AND unnecessary damage to the cords. The next stop street name or location name should be marquee'd every few seconds instead of only once (because it is quite easily missed), and continue until the stop is reached or passed. Ideally, announce one stop at a time instead of using "followed by". The date and time display should be: 1. placed separately from the bus stop announcing display, or 2. displayed as marquee alternatively with the next stop street name.

**Pam O'Connor:** Good suggestions, Jason. I was just in Paris and I took the bus almost exclusively...you see more from the bus! Just like you mention, they keep the "stop requested" (don't remember what it was in French, but it wasn't hard to figure out) on which did provide me with some assurance that the bus would stop at the stop I needed. Also, it marquee'd the name of the current stop and the "prochaine" (next) stop which was also very helpful in way finding. And the name was also on each of the bus stops which helped to confirm that one was in the right place. I'll share your comments, and my experiences, with Metro Operations.

**Train from the Valley to the Westside?**

**James:** When will there be a train from the Valley to the Westside of Los Angeles? If that is not planned, is there a reason? Thank you

**Pam O'Connor:** James...Metro has no plans to build a rail line from the Valley to the Westside at this time. We do operate Metro Rail service from North Hollywood to Hollywood and downtown with rail connections to Long Beach, Pasadena, Norwalk, El Segundo and other cities. Metro is studying a variety of rail extension options including providing more service to the East Los Angeles, the Westside and San Gabriel Valley and a regional connector that will make fluid connections with the Metro Blue, Gold and Expo lines, but there are limited resources. The Valley is not getting shortchanged, however. A northbound HOV lane on the 405 Freeway is in the works and that can be serviced by Metro Express buses as well as carpoolers.

**RB:** I just have a comment about the need to expand and accelerate rail construction. First of all, it's cooler to ride a train than a bus. LA and Metro can make all the bus lanes they want and it still won't be as cool or fun or as metropolitan as riding a train. World travelers never talk about how great a city's bus system is when they return, they gloat about the subway systems and the high speed train networks. It's easier to get around on a train/subway/light rail than a bus. At least rail stations have maps and signs and information so you can plan your entire trip from start to finish, which is a lot less stressful. Sure you can plan a bus trip ahead of time if you have an Internet connection, etc. But that only works if you know where you want to go. Rail allows riders the freedom to travel without a destination in mind. Having a rail system isn't just about getting from home to work. It's about being able to explore the city, visit other areas, etc. A train system gives people the ability to go to new and different places without the fear of getting lost, turned around, etc. There's something comforting about seeing that big Metro sign near the subway stations. That Metro sign beckons to travelers and commuters alike. It says that no matter how far away they are from home, they can always get back. Maybe Metro can start adding this angle in with the rest of their arguments for expanded rail service

**Pam O'Connor:** RB, I must say "au contraire!" Riding buses can be



cool, too. As I was telling Jason, I rode the bus for all my trips in Paris, except one. Frankly, many of the Paris subway stations take a bit of navigating and aren't the easiest to use. And the buses in Paris were an incredible way to explore that City. But, mon ami, one need not go to Paris to explore world class cities...there are 88 in Los Angeles County alone! So, try exploring Sunset Boulevard from the Pacific Ocean to downtown L.A. via Metro Bus Line 2 or ride the Metro Orange Line across the San Fernando Valley. With a day pass, you can jump off to explore a new place, have a cup of coffee and continue the route on another bus, until you see the next place to explore, all day long.

Buses will remain the backbone of public transit for decades to come (and I hope that there will be lanes dedicated to buses) but an expanding rail network complements the bus system. Rail doesn't make sense everywhere but there are corridors where buses can't handle the passenger demand so rail is the most efficient way to go. The right tool for the right job. We continue to work on ways to help riders better navigate the Metro Bus system including web improvements and new bus stop signs to give passengers more information. Thanks for your comments.

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## Metro, Caltrans, CHP to Share ‘Best of California Award’

- Award cites innovative use of technology in real-time traffic information

(Nov. 27, 2007) A national information technology research institute has named Metro, Caltrans District 7 and the California Highway Patrol as winners of the 2007 “Best of California Award” for their cooperative work and innovative use of technology at the Los Angeles Regional Transportation Management Center (LARTMC).

The Center for Digital Government (CDG) will present the agencies a “Most Innovative Use of Technology Award” in the project excellence category during a ceremony, Dec. 12, in Sacramento. California’s chief state information officer is a member of the CDG evaluation committee.

In selecting the agencies for the prestigious honor, the CDG acknowledged their “truly outstanding professional accomplishment within the public sector Information Technology community”.

Metro’s Regional Integration of Intelligent Transportation Systems (RIITS) Network is the key traffic information data portal system at the LARTMC. The RIITS network enables Caltrans to disseminate real-time traffic information with 17 other regional transportation agencies, including Metro and the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT).

All traffic websites in Los Angeles receive their real-time traffic information from the LARTMC, including such websites as Sigalert.com, Traffic.com and the Metro real-time traffic website.

ITS America, an organization that advocates the development and deployment of intelligent transportation systems in the U.S., also recognized the significance of the LARTMC project by awarding it the Partnership Deployment Award at its annual meeting in June 2007.

The Center for Digital Government is a subsidiary of e.Republic, a publishing, research, event and media company focused on information technology for state and local governments and education.

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## Deputies Conduct Probation Searches on 9 Convicted Taggers

- Damage to the Metro System exceeded \$10,000

By JIMMY STROUP

(Nov. 27, 2007) Transit Services Bureau (TSB) deputies served probation search warrants, Nov. 21, against nine offenders who were on probation for tagging Metro property.

Sheriff's Sgt. Augie Pando said the damage the nine offenders caused to the Metro System exceeded \$10,000. Pando and Sgt. Mike Estrada each led a team that included probation officers to homes throughout the San Fernando Valley to check for probation violations.



Graffiti paraphernalia such as spray paint cans, nozzles or drawings or graffiti-like images (such as the ones in the photo above) are usually forbidden by the judge when a convicted tagger is placed on probation. The homes of nine graffiti offenders on probation were searched, Nov. 21, to ensure that they were in compliance with their probation requirements.

"We went out to see if they're in compliance with what the judge told them they were supposed to be doing," Pando said. "At one house, this guy was told that he couldn't be in possession of any kind of paint, [yet] he had, maybe, 30 cans of spray paint."

Estrada's team visited four properties and found one offender in violation of his probation and two in full compliance.

Contraband graffiti equipment – identified by the offender's grandmother as his – was found in one house, but deputies were unable to locate the suspect. A violation warrant will be sworn out against him.

### Suspect in a closet

While at the home of one offender, Pando's team discovered a man hiding in a closet. He was taken into custody after deputies learned there was a Grand Theft warrant out for his arrest.

TSB deputies like to keep vandalism probationers on their toes, Pando said, but because of their regular duties are not often able to check on them.

He said offenders in violation of probation will face a judge; probation revocation or sentence enhancements are at the judge's discretion.



"It's up to the judge and up to what the probation officers recommend," Pando said. "We just go out to the houses and serve the searches."

TSB deputies are planning to check on probation violators again in December.

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## Introduction of Articulated Buses Reverberated Throughout Metro

- 60-foot vehicles pose challenges for maintainers, but new technology saves Metro money
- [More>](#) Super-Sized Americans Place Strain on Metro Buses

By NED RACINE

(Nov. 28, 2007) Once upon a time, when Mike Bottone began maintaining buses, a bus was a bus was a bus. The size and complexity of Metro's 60-foot articulated buses changed all that.

Photo by Ned Racine



Mike Bottone, director of Equipment/Vehicle Acquisition, stands with a Metro 60-foot articulated bus. Bottone began working on the vehicle design in December 2002, three years before the Metro Liner began service on the Metro Orange Line.

Bottone, director of Equipment/Vehicle Acquisition, has worked 33 years at Metro. "When I started, the longest bus we had was a 40-footer. I think the newest bus we had in our fleet was a 1972 or 1973 Rohr Flexible at the old Division 15."

The decision to purchase the 60-foot articulated bus, also known as the Metro Liner, reverberated throughout Metro, affecting parking, fueling and maintenance. That decision was a broad effort to increase seating capacity and to improve service efficiency.

"We saw an opportunity through the bus manufacturers to go with a larger bus to increase that seat capacity while still maintaining a normal degree of maintenance on the vehicle," Bottone explained.

"[Now] you have one bus carrying 80 or 100 people where before [a 40-foot bus] only carried maybe 60 people; so you gain 40 people," he said. "You didn't have to have two buses doing the same thing."

## More parts, more maintenance

Not surprisingly, the new 60-foot articulated giants require additional maintenance. They have more parts, including an extra axle, extra tires, extra braking system, large-capacity air conditioning system, more fuel tanks and three doors instead of two.

Even if the larger bus takes four hours longer to maintain over 6,600 miles—the maximum period between inspections—Bottone believes it saves Metro money.

Bottone points to another kind of economy from the 60-foot articulated buses. Rather than putting two buses on the road, each getting three miles per gallon, Metro can use one bus getting 2 miles per gallon.



"When you add that all up," he said, "what is normally an eight-hour inspection on a 40-foot bus (diesel) has now ballooned to almost 12 hours" for the 60-foot, CNG vehicle."

**'Most technologically advanced vehicle'**

"[Metro Liner] is probably the most technologically advanced vehicle when it comes to electrical and computer systems," he said. "We're looking at probably five computer systems that tie into the overall bus electronics system." Even the Metro Liner's air conditioning system has a computer.

One of the first challenges the divisions faced was parking the Metro Liners.

"Where do you store them?" Bottone said the divisions asked. "If you park two, you need the space for three 40-foot buses." Some divisions that have received the 60-foot buses have adapted by re-stripping their parking places.

Fueling was another challenge. Even though Metro required the Metro Liner manufacturer to deliver a 60-foot bus that could use the same facilities as a 40-foot bus, some divisions still needed to upgrade their fueling facilities.

Then there was the challenge of servicing the articulated giants. "The hoists and the pits had to be changed," Bottone explained. Hoists for the articulated buses at Arthur Winston Division 5, for example, ranged from \$160,000 to \$185,000.

"When the first 60-foot bus arrived, there was only one location that had two pits that were long enough to accommodate a 60-foot vehicle, he said. "That was Division 7."

West Hollywood Division 7 operated less successful articulated vehicles in the 1970s and early 1980s.

For all their advantages on busy bus lines, the 60-foot articulated vehicles bring a built-in maintenance challenge: their weight. With more passengers comes more weight. "More weight is more strain on the engine, transmission, structure of the vehicle," Bottone said.

Keeping up with new vehicle technology, Bottone believes, is easier for him because he began as a mechanic. He also worked on a General Motors assembly line and saw how vehicles were changing.

"I look forward to the new advances," he said. "I embrace it."

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**Super-Sized Americans Place Strain on Metro Buses**

- Average passenger weight exceeds APTA guidelines – men by 21 percent

By NED RACINE

(Nov. 28, 2007) Mike Bottone, director of Equipment/Vehicle Acquisition, monitors the strain passengers put on Metro's 60-foot articulated buses. One strain neither he nor bus manufacturers can control is the weight of the passengers.

The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) has guidelines for determining bus capacity taking into account average passenger weight, but Bottone believes those guidelines are out of date.

APTA suggests manufacturers devote so many square feet and so many pounds to an average passenger. That measurement, conceived in the 1970s, was designed to accommodate 95 percent of the male and female riders. The average weight used was 150 pounds, Bottone noted.

“One hundred-fifty pounds by today standards, 30 years later, is a pretty minimum weight, compared to what some people are carrying around,” he said.

Bottone would be right. The National Center for Health Statistics reports the average weight of United States men over 20 years old is 190 pounds. For women over 20, the weight is 163 pounds.

“I do know, through the APTA meetings I’ve gone to, there has been some serious discussion about reviewing that [weight standard], Bottone said.

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## CTC Vote Leaves SoCal Short of Transportation Funding, Snoble Says

- Delegation asks for up to \$2.2 billion, but region may receive only \$1.5 to \$1.7 billion

(Nov. 28, 2007) The California Transportation Commission doesn't "understand or appreciate" goods movement problems in Southern California, says CEO Roger Snoble, following a commission vote in Sacramento, Tuesday, that left the region short of needed funding.

Photo by Juan Ocampo



CEO Roger Snoble addressed the Mobility 21 conference in November.

Although 36 legislators, Snoble and others called on the CTC to allocate up to \$2.2 billion to the region from a \$3 billion state transportation fund, the commission adopted guidelines that could provide between \$1.5 and \$1.7 billion for goods movement in Los Angeles and the Inland Empire.

Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez and other legislators argued that the region should get at least 70 to 75 percent of the funding since 85 percent of the ocean cargo handled in California comes through the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach.

The CTC-adopted guidelines would provide \$640 million to \$840 million for the Bay area; \$250 million to \$400 million for San Diego; and \$60 million to \$80 million for projects in other areas.

In a statement released Wednesday, Snoble said, "It is unfortunate, that in approving the Trade Corridor Improvement Fund (TCIF) program today, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) continues to demonstrate that it does not completely understand or appreciate the full magnitude of the goods movement problems in our region.

### 'Will shortchange the region'

"Today's decision to share goods movement dollars 'evenly' across the state aimed to satisfy everyone, but in the end will shortchange the region that, by any objective measure, deserves these funds.

"I make no apologies for fighting for goods movement dollars that should rightfully be spent in our region. The fact is, according to the California Air Resources Board, over 1,200 residents from our region die prematurely every year due to the effects of air pollution related to the goods movement industry.

"Today's CTC action is further proof that Los Angeles County must look to its own resources if we are going to comprehensively address the

needs of our region.

“It is unfortunate that the State does not fully recognize the magnitude of the goods movement problem in our region.”

Snoble thanked Nunez, Assembly Budget Subcommittee Chairman Mike Feuer, Assembly Member Bob Huff, Assembly Transportation Committee Chairman Pedro Nava and the members of the Southern California legislative delegation “for fighting so hard for our fair share of funding.”

He also thanked CTC Commissioner Larry Zarian, a former Metro Board chairman and LA County's only commissioner, for supporting the region.

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Transportation activist Jacki Bacharach accepts her award as Citizens Advisory Council "Person of the Year." With her are Board Chair Pam O'Connor, CEO Roger Snoble and Council chairman Roger Christensen.



Photo by Bill Heard

## Transportation Activist Jacki Bacharach Named 'Person of the Year'

- Metro Citizens Advisory Council's honoree for 2007

(Nov. 30, 2007) The "mother of Metrolink," a founder of the SCRRA, charter member of the Alameda Corridor organization and longtime transportation activist Jacki Bacharach has been named Metro's Citizens Advisory Council Person of the Year for 2007.

Bacharach, who served for 12 years as an LACTC commissioner, received the honor during Thursday's Board meeting.

Advisory Council chairman Roger Christensen called her "a vibrant, living chapter in Southern California transportation history."

The plaque he presented to Bacharach cited her "lifelong dedication, leadership and vision in successfully advancing regional mobility and transportation in California."

Bacharach recalled her "incredible experiences as we shaped transportation in LA, especially the rail system."

"I feel that Metrolink has truly changed the way Southern California operates and I'm very proud of my part in that," she added. "But, as we all know, there's so much more that needs to be done and I hope to be here, along with you, shaping the future."






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## CEO UpDate

### Commission Decision on Funds May Reduce Relief from Rail Freight Traffic



By CEO ROGER SNOBLE

You might have read about my disappointment this week at the way the California Transportation Commission chose to allocate funds from the Trade Corridor Improvement Fund, money designed to solve problems created by goods movement. Although Metro does not move freight, this is a crucial issue for us.

Our ports (Los Angeles and Long Beach) are the preferred deep-water port on the west coast. This means all the Pacific Rim trade, which is growing by leaps and bounds, comes into our ports and then has to travel through our region to get to the rest of the country.

Other regions take care of their own commerce. We have to take care of everyone else's—in an area that is hugely congested on its own. The international trade really exacerbates our traffic situation and our air quality situation, in part because a lot of the equipment used to move this trade is diesel. And diesel particulate matter that is particularly harmful to humans.

### 1,200 premature deaths

It is estimated that 1,200 premature deaths occur because of the air pollution caused from goods movement. Many hundreds of thousands more people suffer from by asthma and emphysema as a result. Which is one reason why we have been raising this issue for the last six years.

We raised the issue to the point that when the state came up with the bond issue, it included \$2 billion directly for infrastructure improvement for goods movement. Now, everybody else in the state is looking at that pot of money and saying, "Hey, we want our share of that money too," even though they don't have the same situation we have. The problem is the state, in its effort to give everybody money out of the bond issue, really is not allowing the money to go where the need is the greatest. The need is clearly here.

Metro will not get any of the Trade Corridor Improvement Fund money directly, but our partners at both ports, our neighboring counties, the Alameda Corridor East, the Alameda Corridor and Caltrans would. They use the money to facilitate this freight getting through our region much faster with less disruption.

## 100 trains each day

We have places along the Alameda Corridor East where 100 trains go through a day. They can be up to 8,000 feet long, and they can block traffic for 20, 30 minutes. That causes a lot of delay, a lot of idling vehicles and barriers for emergency vehicles. For our bus operators, all that freight on trains and trucks really complicates trying to make schedules. If we can separate out the freight trains and trucks from normal traffic, that will make life a lot easier for our operators and our mechanics.

It's really easy to say, "We wish this freight would go to other ports and spread the problem around." That would be nice from a pollution and congestion standpoint. That's not going to happen any time soon. And, like it or not, that freight is a huge economic engine for the Los Angeles region, our five county partners and the state of California.

We're going to push hard for the state to realize that the problem is here and should be funded properly. In the meantime, we've got a start of \$1.5 billion, a lot of money, money that can go toward starting projects quickly. But the simple fact is we need a lot more, both from the bond issue and what other funding we can get.

I know our operators will be under a little bit more strain and extra pressure because of the traffic and the craziness of the season. Still, I hope you make the best out of this joyous season and enjoy the fact that you are helping a lot of people do things that make their holidays brighter and cheerier. I hope each of you enjoys this holiday season.

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November 30, 2007

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Metro Security Chief Jack Eckles, center, commended Transit Security Officer Timothy Huang, at left, and Stephen Burnley, at right, for assisting a man who collapsed on the El Monte Busway. Their supervisor, Sgt. J.C. French is at far left and Lt. Jacob Lopez is at right.



Photo by Bill Heard

## Security Officers Commended for Saving Man on Busway

- While one officer held traffic, the other moved unconscious man to safety

(Nov. 30, 2007) Two Metro Security officers were commended, Thursday, for almost certainly saving the life of an intoxicated man who wandered onto the El Monte Busway last Friday night.

Transit Security Officers Stephen Burnley and Timothy Huang responded when Flyaway employees saw the young man stumble onto the busway from Patsaouras Plaza about 6:30 p.m., Nov. 23.

While Huang, riding a Segway, blocked oncoming buses and traffic, Burnley drove cautiously along the busway trying to find the man who was dressed in dark clothing.

About 200 yards past the entrance, he spotted the man collapsed on the roadway where he easily could have been hit. He dragged the unconscious man to safety and called for assistance. Sheriff's deputies took the man into custody.

"He was lucky Steve pulled him over," said Huang. "Cars were going 60 to 70 miles an hour and there's no way they could have seen him."

The citation presented to Burnley and Huang praised the officers' "unwavering skill and dedication to duty...a major contributing factor resulting in the rescue of a helpless man on the El Monte Busway."

At the presentation ceremony, Security Lt. Jacob Lopez said, "Sometimes we ask a lot of you. In a situation like this, courage was the ultimate."

Security Chief Jack Eckles told officers assembled for the presentation that, "Oftentimes, it's not until after the fact that you realize what danger you may have been in or what danger the person you helped may have been in; you're just doing your job. This is our way of saying we know the difference."