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[Hot off the Web]

(Feb. 5, 2008) One way to reduce congestion on Los Angeles freeways is to promptly help stranded motorists and remove traffic accidents. The Metro Freeway Service Patrol (FSP) does this without charging motorists.

The FSP tow-truck drivers, who patrol Los Angeles County freeways looking for tie-ups, also reduce the chance of secondary accidents caused by onlookers or impatient drivers. When FSP removes a vehicle, the driver tows it to a safe drop location off the freeway.

Visit the [Metro Freeway Service Patrol](#) pages on *metro.net* and learn how to contact these Good Samaritans of the freeways (hint: dial #399). The commute you save, might be your own.



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The NCMA LA Gateway Chapter was recently awarded the Walter R. Graalman Gold Award for excellence. Metro employee members (from left) Joe Marzano, Margaret Merhoff, Lonnie Mitchell, Phyllis Walker and Susan Dove each contributed to the group effort that earned the chapter its national recognition.

Photo by Jimmy Stroup



NCMA LA Gateway Chapter Receives National Recognition for Excellence

By JIMMY STROUP

(Feb. 5, 2008) The LA Gateway chapter of the National Contract Management Association (NCMA) received an award at the NCMA Leadership Conference in Las Vegas on January 12 for its excellent record of promoting professionalism and education in the field.

The Walter R. Graalman Gold Award is awarded to NCMA chapters that meet a certain criterion of excellence. In only its fourth year, the Gateway chapter was recognized as "Quality" in 2005, "Bronze" in 2006 and now "Gold" for last year.

"It takes working and achieving a level of professionalism by what you've done and contributions to the profession itself," said Phyllis Walker, the chapter's president. "We've had several of our members published in the NCMA magazine, *Contract Management*, which discusses relevant and current issues in the field."

To qualify for the award, a chapter has to provide its members with educational opportunities, host speakers to further the knowledge of contract managers and demonstrate that its members excel in the field.

"Our programs are set up to provide training to the various kinds of things we could encounter in our daily work," Walker said. "We have experts come in and give talks on lots of different subjects. Eric Feldman, inspector general of the National Reconnaissance Office, spoke earlier this year about 'How to Detect and Prevent Procurement Fraud.'"

Velasquez a catalyst for chapter

Walker said that Ed Velasquez, Metro senior contract administrator, serves on the NCMA national Board of Directors and was the catalyst for bringing NCMA to the agency.

Velasquez broached the idea of starting a chapter at Metro to Lonnie Mitchell, chief administrative services officer, who supported the effort. Now the LA Gateway chapter boasts an active roster of 80 members.

Contract management is a sort of catch-all job that could be compared to a movie producer – there is no part of a contract job that a contract manager doesn't become heavily involved in.

Walker, for example, was involved in the bus and rail advertising contracts, and is currently working on the emerging congestion pricing programs. Contract management covers a project from the planning stages through source selection and award, contract administration and contract close-out.

"What we do runs the gamut – there is no one thing that contract management is or isn't," she said. "We have to be flexible."

Individual excellence as well

Just last year, Phyllis Walker and Bob New, Metro director of purchasing, were both inducted as Fellows of the NCMA. Chapter Vice President Margaret Merhoff, Metro contract administration manager, was awarded the Albert Berger Outstanding Leadership Award, which recognizes exemplary leadership at the chapter level.

A contributing factor to earning the Graalman Award was Bob New's individual contribution to forwarding NCMA values. New taught 15 courses through UCLA Extension. The courses are geared toward teaching information needed to pass NCMA certifications.

"It's a lot of work we've done," Walker said. "It's the members' contributions – individually and for the chapter – that made our getting the award possible."


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CEO UpDate

Examining the Draft 2008 Long Range Transportation Plan

- Plan shows employees and customers Metro's future path



By CEO ROGER SNOBLE

Last week the Metro Board approved the Draft 2008 Long Range Transportation Plan for circulation for public comment. The 45-day comment period begins Mar. 12. This gives the cities, Caltrans, the County and all the other agencies and interested parties an opportunity to comment on it.

Then Metro staff will review those comments and come back with a final recommendation. The Board will probably not adopt a final plan until May or June.

CEO Roger Snoble

The Long Range Transportation Plan is an important document for all of Metro because it enables us to know what we're going to be working on and spending money on. It's also a document that we submit to the Southern California Association of Governments for our official plan; it goes to the state and to the federal government.

The Long Range Transportation Plan is also a legal document. When we pursue federal money through the New Starts program or even the Small Starts program, one of the first things the evaluators look at is the long range plan. They want to know not only that you can afford to build the project and come up with the local share, but they need to know we can afford to operate it for the next 20 years; so we would not be eligible for federal funding without this plan.

The last Long Range Transportation Plan was approved in 2001. It should be updated more often, but, of course, that's been very difficult because of the instability of the funding sources—primarily at the state and federal levels.

Because of escalating construction costs and fluctuations in our funding, the 2008 plan, unfortunately, really only enables us to complete the main projects in the 2001 plan. Even with adding five more years of funding to the plan, we must delay some projects and borrow more money than we currently allow ourselves to borrow to be able to fit everything in.

Because the long range plan doesn't add anything new, it puts more pressure on what we've always called the Strategic Plan—those projects we would like to build if the money would appear. We need to

make the Strategic Plan more of a real strategic plan by identifying a group of highly productive projects ready to go in the near term. We should be ready to use those projects as the basis for finding new funding sources, such as an increase in the sales tax or an increase in the fuel tax or another revenue source. To do that, we have to present a vision of what projects would make a difference from a congestion standpoint and an air quality standpoint. That way we could go to the voters or to the legislators and say "Here's what we would like to do. Let us do it."

While the long range plan's discussion of new projects grabs the headlines, most of the money in the plan goes to operations. Only that amount over and above operating our system is available for building new projects. It's sexier to build a new project rather than allocate resources to operate it, but it doesn't make sense to build a project if you can't run it.

In fact, funding sources are pretty much fixed in terms of operating funds; they come from Prop A and Prop C. Besides a quarter of a cent through the Transportation Development Act, we don't receive direct operating money from the state. So most of the Prop A and Prop C money actually goes to operations.

Also often lost in the headlines is the need to reinvest in our system. We have to keep buying new buses. We need to buy new rail cars. We need to keep the tracks and the right-of-way up to standards. We have to update the facilities that maintain those buses and rail cars. The building we built at Division 9 for the San Gabriel Sector, for example, is the first new building this agency has built for operations in the last 25 years.

Every new transit project, of course, requires funding to maintain it. Many people choose to ignore that. Our customers understand it. They understand what it means when the buses or rail cars start getting old and unreliable. And they have certainly seen that. More than 10 years ago this system was the poster child for neglect. Six or seven years ago, there were 300 buses a day that were scheduled to be on the road but never got off the lot. That is a terrible level of service. Today, the reliability is much better.

So the Long Range Transportation Plan is really important to anyone who is an employee or customer of Metro. For Metro employees, they can see the path for the future. To ensure this being a viable agency decades into the future, we need to be doing the proper planning now. And we are.

February 5, 2008



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China Greenlee, a Twenty-Three-Year Metro Employee, Has Died

(Feb. 6, 2008) China Greenlee, a bus operator for Arthur Winston Division 5, died suddenly Jan. 29. The cause of death remains unknown.

Greenlee, who began working for Metro in Jan. 1984, had just passed her 23-year anniversary with Metro. She had formerly worked in Carson Division 18 and East Valley Division 15.

A viewing will be held tomorrow from 2 to 8 p.m. at Simpson's Family Mortuary, 3443 W. Manchester Blvd in Inglewood (323.752.5524). Funeral services will be held on Friday, Feb. 8 at noon at the same location. Internment will be at Inglewood Park Cemetery.

"Operator Greenlee was a fun-loving person, who enjoyed being a bus operator," recalled Curley Little, Division 5 transportation manager. "She was always upbeat and outspoken, and she will be deeply missed by all of her co-workers here at Arthur Winston Division 5."

Greenlee is survived by her four children: Anthony, Cory, Rasheeda and China, as well as five grandchildren.

Gail Ligon, division stenographer, remembers Greenlee's love of her poodle, which she dyed blue. "She loved that dog," Ligon said. "And she didn't care who knew it."

"She enjoyed interacting with the patrons and being with her co-workers," Little said.



China Greenlee

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Metro interns take an out-of-service train directly to Division 20, where they toured the maintenance shop, visited the tower that overlooks the yard and learned how the trains are tracked as they enter and exit the yard. *Photos by Marion Colston*



Metro Interns Tour Metro Rail System at Metro Red Line Division 20

By DIANNE SIRISUT

(February 6, 2008) Approximately 30 Metro interns toured Division 20 on Jan. 31, where they were introduced to Metro's Rail maintenance and operations.

The tour, guided by Duane Martin, director of Rail Transportation Operations, was part of the Organizational Development and Training Department's effort to familiarize the interns with Metro's wide range of responsibilities.

Martin's briefing included an explanation of train operations for the Metro Red, Purple, Blue, Green, and Gold Lines, particularly how the rail lines are operated and maintained on a day-to-day basis.

The interns took an out-of-service Red Line train to Division 20, toured the maintenance shop, visited the tower that overlooks the yard and learned how the trains are tracked as they enter and exit the yard.

Arianne Bulus, an intern with Organizational Development and Training, said she was in awe of how complex it is to maintain the rail fleet. "I used to think that the trains were just circled around the tracks; it was cool to see how much goes into coordinating and maintaining the trains."



Director of Rail Transportation Operations Duane Martin leads a tour of Rail Operations for some 30 Metro interns.

Alice Tolar, an intern with Planning's Central Area Team, said, "The in-

service training was a great experience! . . .the tour was really insightful because I was able to make the connection between what we do at Gateway and how my function supports the other areas of Metro."

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Serenity Now: Yoga instructor Jillian Szafranski leads Avital Shavit into the energizing Utthita Parsvakonasana or, extended side angle pose, at noontime class sponsored by Metro Yoga, an employee club of Yoga enthusiasts.



Metro Yoga Club Offers Noontime Class

(Feb. 6, 2008) Avital Shavit has practiced Yoga since childhood, literally at her mother's knee. The transportation planner continues to incorporate Yoga into her workout program and, now, thanks to the interest of fellow employees and the new program from Employee Activities to provide funds to employee clubs, Shavit can incorporate the blissful routine into her workday.

After a round of inquiries to gauge the interest of others, Shavit, and co-worker Nicole Casalino put together a noontime class for club members and invited Jillian Szafranski, a certified Yoga instructor astute in all things asana, to teach the class.

Szafranski has designed an hour-long class of Yoga poses that feature stretching and energizing breathing techniques that simultaneously increase energy levels while reducing the effects of stress. "Breath work provides the tools to handle workday stress," she advises. "Being active is an important part of being healthy."

Suitable for all levels and open to all employees, the class meets at noon every Tuesday in the Windsor Room on the 15th floor of Metro Headquarters. Yogis are advised to bring comfortable clothing. Mats are provided if needed. The fee is \$10.

For more information, call or e-mail Metro Yoga organizers Avital Shavit, Programming and Policy Analysis, or Nicole Casalino, Transportation Development and Implementation.

-- from Gayle Anderson


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Poor Choice for Parking Becomes an Expensive Mistake

By JIMMY STROUP

(Feb. 8, 2008) When Gene Franklin stopped his car in a Pasadena bus zone the afternoon of Jan. 25, he probably didn't think anyone would notice. Someone did.

Transit Services Bureau Deputy Jim Eggers pulled up to a silver Honda Civic stopped illegally in a bus zone on Colorado Boulevard. Eggers asked for Franklin's driver's license, intending to cite the driver for his illegal parking job.

When Franklin had no license and said the car belonged to a friend, Eggers became more interested in the driver. Franklin gave Eggers his name and recited his driver's license number.

After running Franklin's name and driver's license on his patrol car's computer, Eggers found that Franklin had an active \$50,000 warrant out for his arrest on a contempt of court violation.

Eggers placed Franklin under arrest and began searching the Honda, having established probable cause. It was during this search that Eggers reported finding a plastic bag filled with what turned out to be \$25,000 cash.

Franklin said the money belonged to him, according to Eggers. At first he told Eggers that the money was going to be used to buy a boat. Then Franklin said the money was to pay his attorney and his bondsman – and to make a *payment* on his boat.

More TSB deputies arrived on the scene for back-up and eventually the Glendale Police Department responded with a narcotics dog to search the car for drugs.

The drug dog hit on a scent in the center console – where the \$25,000 had been – and on the money itself. The money and the dog's behavior solidified deputies' suspicions that the situation was drug-related, Eggers reported.

According to Eggers, Franklin was now further charged under a California Health and Safety Code statute that makes it illegal to possess more than \$25,000, when that money appears to be drug-related.

TSB deputies confiscated the money and impounded the silver Honda for future forfeiture proceedings.

All this because Franklin chose to park his car in a bus zone.



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Metro Maintenance Specialist Succumbs to Cancer after a Long Fight

(Feb. 8, 2008) Raul Quintana, a 10-year Metro veteran who worked on the Red Line, passed away last week. He was 56.

Quintana had been out on a medical leave for more than a year as he battled cancer. Rafael Mastrangelo, Quintana's co-worker and fellow maintenance specialist, said he was a "great guy and a great employee."

"When I first started at the Red Line, I was new coming into the field," Mastrangelo said. "He was one of the first guys to show me how to work on the trains – and he was like that for everyone."

"He was one of those guys who was just outstanding in every way," Mastrangelo continued. "He always had a kind word and a helping hand. He was the kind of guy that you're really sorry to see something bad happen to."

At his own request, there will be no services for Quintana. He asked that any type collection taken to honor his passing be donated to the American Cancer Society, which the Red Line employees plan to do.

Quintana leaves behind a wife and three daughters.



Raul Quintana


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Sumei Goldsmith, a Seven-Year Metro Employee, Dies After Cancer Battle

By NED RACINE, Editor

(Feb. 8, 2008) Sumei Goldsmith, a former senior accountant, has died.

Goldsmith, who died on February 6, retired from Metro in May 2006 to battle cancer. She began her Metro career as an as-needed accountant in Oct. 1995 and jointed Metro as a senior accountant in March 1999.

Goldsmith is survived by her husband Alan.

"I miss her tremendously," said Bill Hesser, assistant manager transportation for Division 8. Hesser worked in Payroll with Goldsmith for more than eight years.

Hesser said he will remember Goldsmith's love for work and her coworkers. "Even after she medically retired she came to our Accounting Department picnics," he recalled. "She always remembered people's birthdays."

"A feisty, happy outlook is what I'll remember about Sumei," Hesser said.

In an email to her former co-workers, Goldsmith's husband wrote she "enjoyed riding the Red Line to work every day and having pancakes and oatmeal in the cafeteria."

A viewing will be held at 9 a.m., Saturday, Feb. 16, at Rose Hills, 3888 S. Workman Mill Road, Whittier, 90601 (562.699.0921). A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. at the same location.



Alan and Sumei Goldsmith at an Accounting Department picnic. Photo courtesy of Cory Uy

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Tapping into technology: Blue TAP cards get the green light at Metro Customer Service Centers.



TAP Cards Go Public at Metro Customer Service Centers

- MILESTONE: Blue TAP cards are replacing paper monthly, weekly and Zones 1, 2 Metro passes.
- [Cake Art](#) - Blue TAP card is inspiration for Bus Operator Erica Boyd's custom-designed confectionary masterpiece.

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(Feb. 8, 2007) With a smile and a handy "how-to" brochure, customer service agents handed out the Transit Access Pass (TAP) cards to customers lining up at Metro Customer Service Centers to buy February passes.

The transition of paper monthly, weekly, and Zones 1 and 2 passes to the plastic blue TAP card on sale to the general public marks another milestone in the progression of the Universal Fare System (UFS), said Jane Matsumoto, deputy executive officer, who directs the UFS transition.

The TAP card enables a customer to travel the Metro system, switching seamlessly between rail and bus and ultimately other transit systems. After purchasing the Metro pass, the only thing a patron must do to "Go Metro" is tap the TAP card on the stand-alone validators (SAVs), ticket vending machines (TVMs) or bus fareboxes carrying



Customer Service Agent Jackie Fields hands customers a blue TAP card when they ask for a monthly or weekly pass.

the blue circular Transit Access Pass smart card reader.

Valid on Metro Rail and Metro buses, TAP is a regional program to be implemented for all participating operators, which now includes Antelope Valley, Culver City, Foothill Transit, Gardena, LADOT, Long Beach, Montebello, Norwalk, Santa Clarita, Torrance Transit, and Metrolink commuter rail.

Reaching another major milestone, Culver City Bus will introduce TAP cards on Feb. 11, making regional “seamless” travel possible. For example, a customer who boards the Culver City Line 6 to the Metro Green Line and beyond will be able to TAP all the way to his or her destination.

When employee badges were enabled with TAP capabilities in late 2005, employees became the first to test the system. Next on board came UCLA, a successful pilot program where some 600 motivated faculty members, students and employees were issued I-TAP passes. Currently, I-TAP pass holders at UCLA number around 1,600.



Joe Bruin shows off his I-TAP pass Oct. 6, 2005, as Metro and UCLA Transportation Services announce a partnership to offer discounted transit passes to UCLA students, staff and faculty.

Following UCLA’s lead, the sale of Metro’s employer annual passes now surpasses \$1 million in revenue sales, said David Sutton, Metro Commute Services director.

“Over 5,600 employees at 225 worksites in Los Angeles County are enjoying the commute more now by going Metro,” he said. Participating businesses include: the American Lung Association, Boeing, Center Theatre Group, El Cholo Restaurants, Erewhon Natural Foods, McDonalds, Mondrian Hotel, Omni Hotel, Raytheon and Westlake Financial Services. The program began in August of 2005 and is growing rapidly now with about 15-20 new accounts added monthly, said Sutton.

In the pilot program launched last October, Metro monthly pass users opted to try TAP cards when buying regular paper passes, adding some 1,000 TAP cardholders to the system.

The gradual transition from paper passes to TAP cards has provided valuable lessons to ease the growing pains of UFS.

Lessons learned, said Matsumoto, include advancing detailed information for many Metro departments, including the Customer Center personnel, BOC, ROC, and bus operators. Lessons on card replacement for lost, stolen, broken cards and how to anticipate and address questions from customers

are many of the details associated with introducing a new, automated fare media.



Customers line up for new TAP card passes at Wilshire Customer Center. February passes went on sale Jan. 25.

Customer comments, for the most part, have been very complimentary," said Matsumoto. "They really like the convenience and novelty of the technology."

With all five Foothill Transit stores, LADOT Transit store and four Metro Customer Service Centers now selling TAP card Metro passes, the TAP staff is doubling efforts to reinforce TAP information for bus operators at Metro divisions as well as municipalities.

Ultimately, the TAP system will relieve bus operators from the need to visually inspect each pass "flashed" by patrons to determine fare – a task that the on-board equipment can handily track, said Matsumoto.

Employees remain as role models in the progression to seamless travel.

"It's not a test run anymore for employee badges," said Matsumoto. Metro requires employees to tap ID badges to establish fare validity on both bus and rail systems. Soon, LASD Fare Inspectors will be enabled with hand-held validators that can read the card's data to account for valid passage.

The stepped-up program will be evaluated in the next few months before some 600 vendors can be equipped with the new technology to sell the TAP cards to an anticipated 350,000 pass holders.

Until then, the Universal Fare System is progressing towards full regional implementation and a future when seamless travel is as simple as tapping a card.



CAKE ART - The giant blue TAP card with



raspberry filling looked good enough to eat and it was! South Bay Division Bus Operator Erica Boyd, at left, a cake maker extraordinaire, was tapped by TAP Operations Manager Vanessa Smith to make a confectionary reward for the hard-working TAP team. The team had traversed the Metro bus divisions to present information on the TAP program to bus operators who were bracing for a new surge of first-time TAP users. "TAP will definitely make my job easier," said Boyd, echoing the voices of many operators who joined forces in multipurpose rooms across the system to learn about TAP operations. The TAP representatives who toured the divisions in the information campaign are Everett Wilson, David Coffey, Michael Lopez, Augusto Lopez, Mark Simpson of the Metro Revenue department, and Vanessa Smith and Mauro Arteaga of TAP Operations.

Photos by Augusto Lopez



Those who had their cake and got to eat it, too, are pictured here: from left, Augusto Lopez, Erica Boyd, Michael Lopez, Vanessa Smith, Regina Chan, Kelly Hines and Cynthia Chin-Pak. Foreground: Alicia Carnero and Jane Matsumoto.

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Renee Willis directs the Metro Choir in Black History Month Celebration set for Feb. 27 in the lobby of Metro Headquarters.



Noontime Events Celebrate Black History Month

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(Feb. 12, 2008) Black History Month is an American tradition, a time set aside to commemorate and celebrate the contributions to the nation made by people of African descent.

American historian Carter G. Woodson established Black History Week in 1926. For many years, the second week of February was set aside for this celebration to coincide with the birthdays of abolitionist/editor Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln.

In 1976, as part of the nation's bicentennial, the week was expanded into Black History Month. In 2000, President Bill Clinton proclaimed February as National African American History Month.

Metro's African American Employees Association (AAEA) and the celebrated Metro Choir carry on the tradition at Metro Headquarters, offering a series of musical, literary and social events for the entire agency to partake.

The program for 2008 includes:

Thursday, Feb. 14: *Poet's Corner.*



Metro employees will present famous speeches and personal poems in celebration of Black History Month, including Bill Satterfield's inspired delivery of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech. 12:15 to 1:15 p.m at the Union Station Room, 3rd floor. Refreshments.

Wednesday, Feb. 27: *This is Why.* Metro Choir Black History Month Celebration program features great performances of spirituals and gospel music interspersed with Spoken Word presentations honoring Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall and U.S. Senator Barack Obama. Special tribute to Metro's own, George B. Parks, Esq. 12:15 to 1:15 p.m. in the Plaza level of Metro Headquarters.



Bill Satterfield headlines Poet's Corner on Thursday.



Author and actress Denise Nicholas discusses her debut novel *Freshwater Road* at AAEA program Feb. 28.

More Around Town> [Check it out](#)

Thursday, Feb. 28: *Literary Event.* Author and actress Denise Nicholas discusses her debut novel *Freshwater Road*. Nicholas is best known as the pioneering actress who starred in the TV series *Room 222* and *In the Heat of the Night* (for which she also wrote several episodes), as well as a great many other TV shows and films. Published in 2005, *Freshwater Road* is the story of one young woman's journey into adulthood via the political and social upheavals of the civil rights movement. Noon to 1 p.m. in the Union Station Room, 3rd floor. Refreshments.

All events are free and open to the public.

More Around Town!

Saturday, Feb. 23> African American Living Legends. The 29th annual Black History Month celebration at the AC Bilbrew Library is a joint effort of Supervisor Yvonne Burke and the County of Los Angeles Public Library. Honorees this year are Angela Bassett, Della Reese, Alfre Woodard and Sheryl Lee Ralph with William Allen Young as the Master of Ceremonies. The program begins at 11 a.m. A signing and refreshments follow the program. AC Bilbrew Library is located at 150 E. El Segundo Blvd., Los Angeles. More > <http://www.colapublib.org/bhm/>

Continuing Thru Feb. 18> The 16th Annual Pan African Film & Arts Festival (PAFF) is underway at the AMC Magic Johnson Crenshaw 15 Theaters. The complete list of films is available at www.PAFF.org.

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Sheriff's Reserve Deputy Lou Ferrigno lent his screen presence to a public service announcement reminding pedestrians about the importance of safety around trains.



Photos: Jimmy Stroup

'Green' Superhero Asks Pedestrians to Pay Attention to Trains

By JIMMY STROUP

(Feb. 12, 2008) The Transit Services Bureau (TSB) spent Saturday making a public service announcement (PSA) emphasizing the importance of pedestrian safety around trains. TSB called on a former green television star to make its point.

Sheriff's Reserve Deputy Lou Ferrigno – best known for his portrayal of the *Incredible Hulk* on the popular television series in the 1970s and for his bodybuilding titles – was the voice of the PSA. Metro Rail Safety Education staff members hope to use the PSA to increase safety.

"This PSA is basically about saving people's lives," Ferrigno said. "To make them more aware of the railroad and the transit system and to make them more attentive." In the PSA he warned that no superhero could stop a train from hurting those who fail to pay



Lou Ferrigno, a former Mr. Universe and a star of the 1970s television show *The Incredible Hulk*, has been an LASD Reserve deputy for two years.

attention when trains are around.

“The last two fatalities we had on the Blue Line were pedestrians,” said TSB Lt. Jenny Bethune, who watched the photography of the

PSA. “People in a hurry, not paying attention. Hopefully this will help them remember to slow down and look around.”

Ferrigno became an LASD Reserve deputy in 2005. His father was a police lieutenant in New York. His involvement with the Sheriff’s Department is the fulfillment of a lifetime ambition, he said.

“It’s made me a better person,” he said. “It’s made me reach out to help other people, and that’s a terrific feeling, let me tell you.”

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The Feb. 8 Metro Speaks training class included (from left) Shantelle Brown, Alex Kalamarcos, Gene Hargreaves, Mike Kalustian, Agnes Jose-Eguaras, Bill Hesser, Dianne Sirisut, Elizabeth Streegan, Michele Smith, Maria Reynolds and Helen Ortiz-Gilstrap.



Photos: Ned Racine

Metro Speaks Class Hears Communication Tips from Smooth Operator

(Feb. 12, 2008) When the Metro Speaks speakers bureau wanted to help its volunteers communicate better with the public, it only had to look to West Valley Division 8.

Mike Kalustian, who works on the Metro Rapid 750 line along Ventura Blvd, has the experience to train communicators—he does it several nights a week in the Speech Communication department of Los Angeles Valley College.

Kalustian, who graduated from California State University Los Angeles in 2004, teaches Critical Thinking, Rhetoric and Public Speaking.



Mike Kalustian, West Valley Division 8 bus operator, draws on his academic training to suggest how Metro Speaks volunteers can better communicate with the public.

He was eager to train the Metro Speaks volunteers. "It's something I believe in," he said. "I saw it as a way to use my academic experience to help Metro."

Kalustian, who was one of the original 30 operators who helped create the Metro Rapid System, came away believing his audience was eager to give better presentations.

Kalustian, who has worked for Metro for

more than 17 years, wanted his audience to realize "they are the most important message Metro [communicates], to show the public what talented, hard-working employees Metro has."

"I took a page and a half of notes," said Helen Ortiz-Gilstrap, Metro Speaks coordinator, of Kalustian's presentation.

If you are interested in joining the Metro Speaks program or know an organization that would like to receive a presentation on a Metro-related subject, please contact Metro Speaks at 213-922-7575 or metrospeaks@metro.net. --From Ned Racine

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Metro Red Line Hollywood/Highland Station Will Be Bypassed During Academy Awards

- Metro bus service along Hollywood Blvd. also detoured Feb. 24

(Feb. 13, 2008) Due to an increase in security measures being implemented for the 80th Annual Academy Awards show, Sunday, Feb. 24, at the Kodak Theater at the Hollywood and Highland complex in Hollywood, Metro Red Line subway trains will not stop at the Hollywood/Highland station that day.

Metro Red Line trains will operate on a regular schedule but will simply pass through the Hollywood/Highland Station without stopping on Sunday, Feb. 24, only. Nor will there be public access to the Hollywood/Highland Metro Red Line Station.

With the start of regular service on Monday, Feb. 25, all Metro Red Line trains will resume stops at the Hollywood/Highland Station in Hollywood.

Due to street closures in the Hollywood Area, including the closure of Hollywood Boulevard, Metro Bus Lines 163, 210, 212, 217 and 780 will be detoured through Feb. 25.

On Sunday, Feb. 24, Metro Bus Line 156 along Highland Ave. will be detoured. Service should be resumed by 6 a.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 26.



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Mark Clifford's spectacular photograph captured Metro's first Valentine's Day message on Feb. 14, 2005. Metro Headquarters will again light up the downtown skyline again on Thursday night.



Photography by Mark Clifford 2005

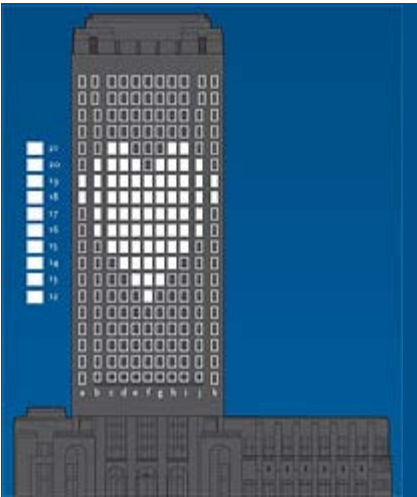
Employees will turn on the Heart Light on Valentine's Day.

- Employees are asked to help make Metro's Valentine to Los Angeles shine brightly in the skyline - that means leaving the blinds accessible to the team of volunteers that canvas the building to align the configuration.

By GAYLE ANDERSON
(Feb. 13, 2008) Metro will cast a romantic glow on downtown Los Angeles Thursday as a 10-story heart light shines from all four sides of the Metro Headquarters building in Metro's fourth annual Valentine's Day message.

A team of employee volunteers, organized by Design Studio's Michele Moore, will work with General Services to arrange heart-shaped configurations of office lights and window blinds during the late afternoon hours of Valentine's Day.

But it will take the whole building to do it.



How it works: Blueprint outlines configuration of office lights and window blinds that creates the 10-story hearts. Employees will close the blinds on all floors on Thursday afternoon and leave the blinds accessible for the Valentine's Day team to reopen in the shape of a heart.

Metro employees who share or face a window are asked to start closing the blinds around 3:30 p.m. on Thursday afternoon. "We're also asking employees to leave the blinds accessible for the Valentine's Day team, who will come around to each floor and open certain blinds to create the heart shape," said Moore.

The light display will become visible at sunset and end at 10 p.m. when the building's office lights automatically shut off for the night.

As the skyscraper sparkles in the downtown skyline, the Heart Lights will be visible throughout the region and cast a glow on traffic along three freeways – I-5, I-10 and I-101.

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TSB Deputies Rise Early to Bring Down a Tagger

By JIMMY STROUP

(Feb. 13, 2008) Beginning at 6 a.m., 25 Transit Services Bureau (TSB) deputies and three California Highway Patrol officers prepared to serve a warrant in South Los Angeles, today, targeting a tagger who had damaged three Metro divisions.

By 7 a.m., the tagger "Guser" was arrested under a warrant served in connection with 72 individual instances of vandalism on the Metro system. Gustavo Romero – "Guser's" given name – is a 23-year-old who has two prior arrests for vandalism.

Romero is suspected of causing \$108,000 in damage to various Metro divisions, including Central City Division 1, Crossroads Depot Division 2 and Arthur Winston Division 5.

"This guy is into etching, which costs us a lot of money to fix," said TSB Deputy Albert Zambrano, who along with Devin Vanderlaan was responsible for building the case against "Guser."

"This is the ninth guy we've taking down from UPN," Zambrano said. "We wanted to go after this guy because he was big."

UPN is a tagging crew known as "Under Pigs Noses" or "UR Property Next." The crew has made Metro their favorite canvas so, in turn, TSB has made the crew their favorite target.

"We've gotten a lot of their major guys in the last year or so," said Vanderlaan, who indicated that UPN has been cut by a third thanks to the TSB's attention.

Informant made the difference

The case against "Guser" was made by using information from another UPN member who had talked to deputies in hopes of gaining leniency in his punishment.



"Guser" tags are seen throughout his neighborhood. This tag is thrown up in front of his house. Below, board found in the backyard of "Guser's" house was used to practice tags.

Photos by Jimmy Stroup



“Guser” wasn’t all that difficult to find after that helping hand: he was fond of tagging his own neighborhood, according to deputies. The curb in front of his own house carried his moniker.

After searching his house, deputies reported finding two methamphetamine pipes and piles of paper with practice tags. TSB Sgt. Augie Pando said the evidence found in the house indicates that “Guser” is no longer satisfied with simply tagging.

“This guy’s definitely into gang activity based on the symbols we found in the house,” Pando said.

Sgt. Mike Estrada said there was evidence that “Guser” had made some attempts to conceal the evidence of his tagging, but that the sheer volume of paper and paraphernalia made that a futile gesture.

TSB deputies figure the damage to the Metro system caused by just the UPN crew members already arrested is in excess of \$700,000.



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[Hot off the Web]

(Feb. 14, 2008) In a city as far-flung as Los Angeles, it can be reassuring to know the Metro System speaks your language—even if you speak 10 of them.

The [Multi-Language Pocket Guides](#) offer essential tips for riding Metro buses and rail, including fare information and hours of operation. Just the kind of facts you would like your visitor from Vietnam to know.

The pocket guides are available in

- Armenian
- Cambodian
- Chinese
- Japanese
- Korean
- Russian
- Spanish
- Tagalog
- Thai
- Vietnamese





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Happy Valentine's Day at Metro | Photos by Ned Racine

(Feb. 14, 2008) Flowers, balloons and candy are the most traditional ways to express affection for the holiday, named for the Catholic St. Valentine who was martyred. A feast in his honor was first celebrated in 496 and is the earliest incarnation of what's now known as Valentine's Day.



Rubi DePompa (left), executive secretary to the CEO, and Diana Estrada, transportation planning manager, pose before flowers from an ardent DePompa admirer.



The Metro Accounting department staff splits into teams to decorate for holidays and special events. Team 2, pictured here, decorated for Valentine's Day this year.

Team 2 is composed of Melissa Sotelo, Lily Chavez, Jessica Smith, Alcira Godoy, Arif Motiwala, Marina Chong, Sonny Cabrales, Carmelita Malonzo, Peter Serrano, Danny Santos and Huey Leung.



Organizational Development and Training (OD&T) used the coincidence of Valentine's Day and their move into new quarters to offer goodies, treats and prizes for the drop-in guests.

Crysten Vonk, a CCTV observer at Rail Transportation Control, dropped by Gateway to personally deliver flowers to her mother Gabriela Higueros, a transit operations supervisor who works in Bus Operations Control.



Metro Security Officer Leon Daglian began his afternoon shift just as these flowers were delivered to the building. Daglian looks for the location of the recipient of these flowers.

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Bling! went the strings of the Metro hearts

- Operation 'Metro Love' etched a Valentine's Day message onto the L.A. skyline
- [\[LINK\]](#) Postcards from L.A. > Creative Services photographer Peter Watkinson in Downtown

Photographed by Mark Clifford



(Feb. 15, 2008) Metro's iconic lighting of the Headquarters building on Valentine's Day inspired Los Angeles photographer Mark Clifford to capture the Metro heart as it sparkled in the Los Angeles skyline on the romantic evening of Valentine's Day.

Thanks to clear skies swept clean after a morning drizzle by northwest winds in the early evening hours, the heart-shaped light configuration on all four sides of the Metro Headquarters shone crisp and clear throughout the night.

Three local network television stations -- KABC 7, KCAL 9, and KCOP 13 -- broadcasted fly-over shots during the 11 o'clock news.

The volunteer effort to stage the massive light show went off nearly without a hitch, said organizer Michele Moore, a designer in Creative Services. Moore thanked the volunteers for their "tireless efforts" that involved checking the window blinds on all 25 floors, at least twice, and patching errant windows reported out-of-alignment by volunteers stationed on the ground.

"I was impressed at what we accomplished despite the locked doors, dead cell phones, and pressing engagements," she said in a thank-you e-mail to volunteers the morning after.

"Great job!" said Maya Emsden, DEO, Creative Services, who likened the effort to corralling cats. "And, what cool cats!"

The 20-some cadre of energetic volunteers, often aided on the spot by helping hands from various cubicles, began their prowl at 4 p.m. and continued until the lights became visible in the evening sky.

-- from Gayle Anderson

Let's Thank Those Who Make It Possible Dept. > * Michele Moore * Cosette Stark * Elizabeth Bain
* Ronny Poon * Janice Lee * Cindy Chen * Jeffrey Mohr * Angelene Campuzano * Susana Valdez * Anne Karna *
Sarah Winfrey * Sang Park * Josh Southwick * Peter Watkinson * Tiffany Barber * Ivan Moreno
* Paula Carvajal.



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Bling '08: Postcards from L.A.

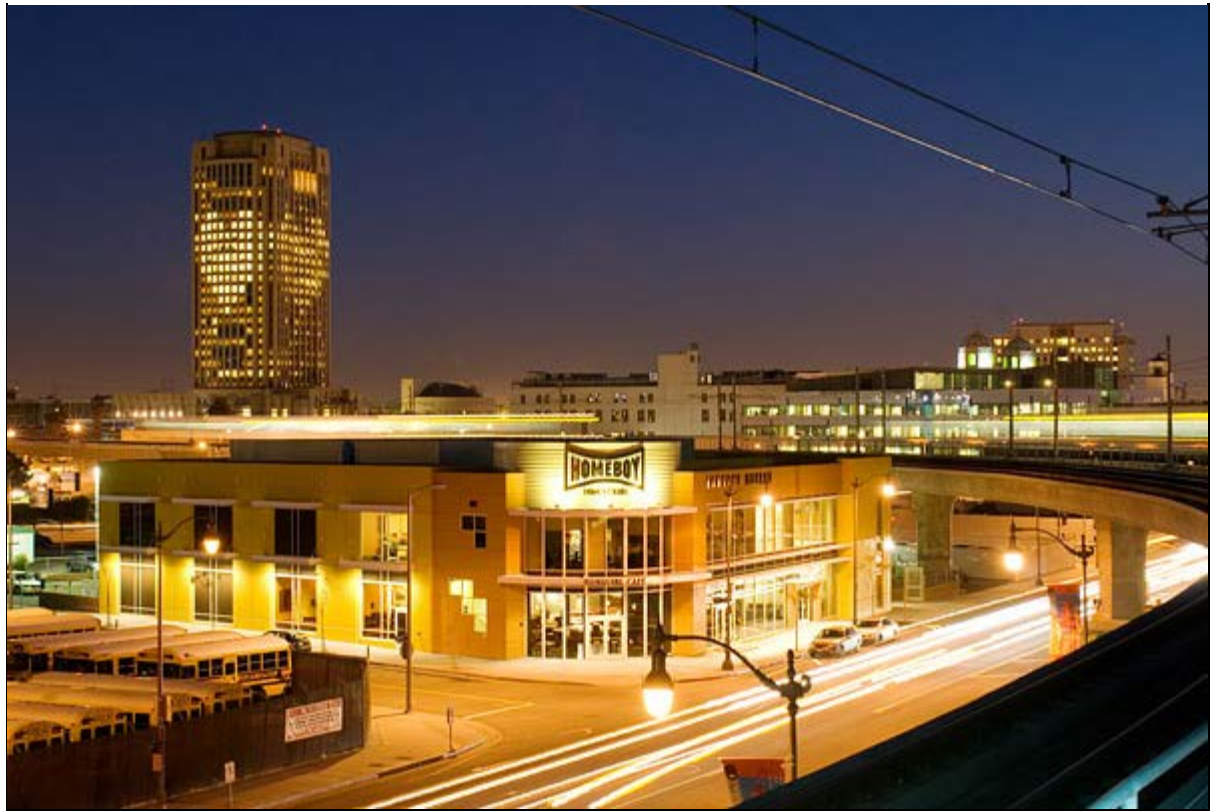
Photographed by Peter Watkinson



The view from Mission Street Bridge by Peter Watkinson.

(Feb. 15, 2008) Aiming to stake out the perfect spot at the California State Park formerly known as the Cornfields in Chinatown, photographer Peter Watkinson arrived there just as the guard was closing the gates. Undaunted, he climbed to the Metro Gold Line Chinatown Station platform and found an even better location to take the perfect shot. But not yet. Four windows on the north side were dark. With a cell phone in one hand and a camera in the other, Watkinson contacted Michele Moore at the command post in Creative Services and, before he could count to 150, the problem was solved. He waited for the train. He got the shot. From there he made his way to the Mission Street bridge, from where the view of the eastside heart was especially bountiful. Perched on the north side of the bridge, framed by two imposing historic pylons and an endless stream of traffic, he found the perfect spot. He got the shot.

-- from Gayle Anderson



The view from the Metro Gold Line Chinatown Station by Peter Watkinson.

[MORE>](#) *Bling!* went the strings of the Metro hearts as photographed by Mark Clifford.

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Metro Senior Public Arts Officer Alan Nakagawa (left) performed at the grand opening of the Broad Contemporary Art Museum, Feb. 16-18. Nakagawa assembled various sound artists to perform for the crowds. Here Nakagawa performs with Steve Rodin, who Nakagawa classified as an "ambient sound" artist.



Photos: Jimmy Stroup

Metro Arts Officer Performs at LACMA Grand Opening

By JIMMY STROUP

(Feb. 19, 2008) By day, Alan Nakagawa, a mild-mannered senior public arts officer, works with artists the agency selects to bring art to bus and rail stations.

Come nightfall and during the weekends, Nakagawa trades in his day job for a guitar and a drum kit, changing into Super Contemporary Music Performer Man!

For 20 years, Nakagawa has created his own brand of music. His talent prompted the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) to request he perform for the masses of people who attended the grand opening of the Broad Contemporary Art Museum (BCAM) this past weekend.

"At first we didn't know what we were going to do, but they said 'propose something,'" Nakagawa said. "So I decided it would be fun to call up my friends, people I



LACMA was bustling with all sorts of activities to please the young and old who came for the grand opening of the Broad Contemporary Art Museum. This giant swan was a favorite of the

admire, and some people I've never children.
worked with before to see if we
could all get together and perform for this three-day event."

That idea turned into "Found Sound," a collection of sound artists whose music is as contemporary as is BCAM's artistic selections. In other words, Nakagawa and his friends don't play pop music. Think Philip Glass or Brian Eno. "Found Sound" lays down some completely new sounds.

'Experimental sound'

"It's eclectic," Nakagawa said. "We'll do stuff that's hip-hop oriented and then the next one will be experimental sound, for lack of a better description."

Of the eight acts that compose "Found Sound," none performs the same style of music.

"We have ambient pieces and a video piece that I do the soundtrack to live," he said. "That one's actually about oil development in Los Angeles, which is a big part of the roots of modern Los Angeles."

Nakagawa plays the drums mostly, but he is also a connoisseur of all things percussion. He played the guitar and the mandolin for the "Found Sound" performances at the BCAM.

He said that music has been a part of his life for a long time and that he was grateful to have been able to be a part of the LACMA free weekend to celebrate the opening of BCAM.

"We're getting paid to do this, so I guess it's not a hobby," he said. "I'd call it a passion. That's what music is for me. It keeps me sane from Metro – print that!"

OK, Super Contemporary Music Performer Man.


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From this screen Metro employees are able to create their own MyAPTA account. Click on image to visit [myAPTA](#) welcome page.



New APTA Website Offers Multiple Features for Metro Employees

- Member-only services include access to APTA Membership Directory

By NED RACINE, Editor

(Feb. 19, 2008) If you work with the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), its member organizations or their employees, a new feature of APTA's website can make it easier to find someone.

After a brief registration, Metro employees can create their own "MyAPTA" page, which offers access to several member-only services. This is possible because Metro is an APTA member organization.

Perhaps the most valuable member-only service is access to the APTA Membership Directory of members and member organizations. Through their MyAPTA page, members can also:

- Edit contact information
- Sign up for a conference or workshop
- Search and view APTA committee rosters
- Order APTA publications

Through their MyAPTA account, Metro employees can also access APTA's Electronic News Service, procurement pages and safety standards.

APTA is eager to maintain the accuracy of its Membership Directory, so if you find yourself listed in the directory, check that your information is correct.

Creating an account begins by visiting

<https://www.aptagateway.com/eweb/> . More information on the MyAPTA account is available by email at Membership-eweb@apta.com

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Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa spoke on the present and future benefits of finding city residents jobs that pay a "living wage." Metro has pledged to work with City workforce agencies to fill 350 bus operator positions by June 2010.



Photos: Jimmy Stroup

Metro Teams with City to Match People with Career Opportunities

By JIMMY STROUP

(Feb. 21, 2008) As part of the city's Economic Action Plan, Metro has teamed with the City of Los Angeles to reduce regional joblessness and fill some of its bus operator vacancies.

And the agency's dedication to paying competitive wages fits with Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa's requirements that the jobs pay enough so workers can live without needing a second job or government assistance.

The agency lived up to its end of the agreement, placing 198 bus operators into jobs in 2007 through the workforce development program. Metro Executive Officer of Administration Don Ott said the program is working out well for the agency as it strives to fill vacancies.

"Filling ... 300 vacant bus operator positions costs us \$4.5 million in overtime each year – so getting people into those jobs benefits us as much as it does the new operators," Ott said.

"We end up hiring almost everyone who goes through the workforce program because [the workforce development agencies] have already done the preliminary background check and told people who won't meet our qualifications that they aren't suited for Metro," he said. "It saves us a lot of time and gets us candidates we can hire without reservation."



Alphonso Chavez (left), a bus operator at Central City Division 1, came to the agency through the City's workforce development strategy. Don Ott (right), Metro's executive officer of administration, said the job creation program helps Metro fill vacancies and helps people into jobs that pay well and have good benefits.

'My future, my career'

Alphonso Chavez, a bus operator at Central City Division 1, typifies the success of the workforce program.

Hired more than a year ago, Chavez said he was bouncing from job to job until an advertisement for Metro at the workforce center at Wilshire Boulevard and Normandie Avenue made him reconsider his future.

"I was doing all kinds of jobs: handyman, private driver, landscaping," Chavez said. "But when I took the Metro training, I knew this wasn't going to be just another job. This was going to be my future, my career, so I took it as seriously as I could."

Metro has committed to filling another 150 bus operator positions by Villaraigosa's 2010 deadline of filling 100,000 jobs, which would be a total of 350 hired.

"It's all part of an economic action plan to help aid families in a tough economy," Villaraigosa said. "There's a connection between lowering the crime in the city and getting people a good job. Their self-esteem goes up, their kids do better in school because things are stable at home thanks to a good paying job, and their lives are improved in every way. This is all connected."

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From left, James Cook, John Bayless, Ed Luevano, Nancy Iwata, Rivers Jacques, Roy Parker, Vance Bjorklund, Jack Eckles and Pat Jordan were some of the officers attending the memorial service for Edward E. Reed. *Photos by Ned Racine*



Officers have held an annual memorial service for Edward E. Reed since 2004.

Officers Continue Tradition of Remembering Fallen Officer

By NED RACINE, Editor

(Feb. 21, 2008) Overcast skies were a fitting backdrop for a brief memorial service today marking the death of Edward E. Reed, the only Metro Transit Police officer killed in the line of duty.

Reed was killed on Feb. 21, 1993. A drunk driver broad-sided Reed's patrol car and killed him instantly.

"It's important to recognize the service of others," said Jack Eckles, deputy executive officer, System Safety & Security. "Particularly the supreme sacrifice."

Approximately 30 Metro Security, Transit Services Bureau and Los

Angeles Police Department officers joined the memorial service in the Gateway Transit Plaza. Annual services marking Reed's death began in 2004.

Transit Security Lt. James Cook, who spoke briefly at the event, said he attends the memorial because "it's a connection to the officer and a connection to what he served on and gave his life for."

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Senator Barbara Boxer and other public officials spoke at the construction site of the Gold Line Eastside Extension, Feb. 20, after inspecting the \$898.8 million light rail project. Boxer complimented the schedule, budget and future traffic congestion relief the project will bring.



Photos: Jimmy Stroup

Senator Boxer Visits the Eastside Extension, Speaks on the Necessity of Future Funding into Public Transportation

By JIMMY STROUP

(Feb. 21, 2008) California Senator Barbara Boxer inspected the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension, Feb. 20, to see how the agency was faring in completing the nearly \$900 million project that adds six miles and eight stations to the Metro System.

"I'm here to view some of the progress and happy to be part of the process of getting the Eastside Extension built," she said. "The people of Los Angeles know gridlock, traffic congestion and poor air quality all too well."



Metro CEO Roger Snoble, sporting one of the newly redesigned reflective safety vests, points out a potentially hazardous footing obstacle to the press and the dignitaries who came to the Eastside Extension construction site, Feb. 20.

Boxer was joined by U.S. Representative Lucille Roybal-Allard, Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, Metro Board members Gloria Molina, Yvonne Braithwaite Burke and Zev Yaroslavsky, and Metro CEO Roger Snoble.

Roybal-Allard said the Eastside Extension was an example of "sound federal investment into the city," and cited the historic irony of using rail lines in Los Angeles – which was once criss-crossed with commuter rail lines in the early to mid 20th century – to clear the City's clogged transportation arteries.

"This long-awaited light rail line will connect East Los Angeles to the rest of the county's light rail system," Supervisor Gloria Molina said. "What's more, it will relieve traffic congestion considerably by getting thousands of people out of their cars and into Metro's mass transit network."



A Metro construction worker smooths newly poured concrete between the rails of what will eventually be the westbound track of the Gold Line Eastside Extension. Senator Barbara Boxer noted that 30 percent of workers employed on the project live within five miles of the project.

Boxer also noted the project's positive environment effects, saying the \$460 million in federal funding was well spent on a project that promised to ease the burden of fossil fuel dependence and lower the contribution of Los Angeles pollution to global warming.

"I want to commend Metro for taking so many steps to make sure its system is as green as it can be," Boxer said. "Every step we take makes a huge difference."

The Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension is expected to be completed in July 2009. The project is presently building over the Los Angeles River at the 1st Street Bridge heading east toward the I-10 freeway.

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Elaine Anderson, Carson Division 18 Bus Operator, Dies Suddenly

(Feb. 22, 2008) Elaine Anderson, a Bus Operator at Carson Division 18, has died suddenly. Anderson was 48.

The date of Anderson's death and the cause of death remains unknown. Her body was discovered February 13.

Tomorrow a service will be held in her honor at 1 p.m. at Working Crew for Christ, 11250 S. Avalon Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90061.

Anderson began working for Metro in July 1999 and became a full-time bus operator in April 2000.

Anderson is survived by her son Frederick.

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Thousands of spectators braved the rain to watch the 93-mile final stage of the Tour of California. Riders finished with six five-mile laps around the Rose Bowl.



Photos by Ned Racine

Metro Sponsors Bicycle Valet Parking at Damp Final Stage of Tour de California

- Metro volunteers partner with Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition

By NED RACINE, Editor

(Feb. 26, 2008) Undeterred by intermittent rain, Metro volunteers partnered with the Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition last Sunday to provide secure bicycle parking and information tailored to travelers who use two wheels rather than four.

Metro sponsored a Bike Valet, where attentive volunteers and a secured area allowed riders to safely park their bicycles. Lynne Goldsmith, Metro Bike planning manager, estimated the valets parked 200 bicycles.



Staffing her position in the Metro transit booth, Fe Alcid-Little, a secretary in Contract Administration, Operations, handed out stacks of Metro bicycle maps. Metro volunteers also showed bicyclists, such as this damp rider, how to mount their bicycles on Metro bus bicycle racks.

Cory Zelmer, a transportation planner and president of the Metro Cycle Club, volunteered at the Bike Valet, as did Tony Jusay, a transportation planner; Kathleen McCune, transportation planning manager; Kathleen Sanchez, transportation planner manager, with husband Dennis, and Doreen Morrissey, transportation manager.

With Fanny Ortiz, a customer service agent, and Juanita Le Roux, a custodian, Fe Alcid-Little staffed the Metro transit booth, located across from the bicycle parking valet. Alcid-Little, a secretary in Contract Administration, Operations, volunteered because she wanted to "promote bus and bike, so people will be aware that we have a good bus and rail system."



Susie Laio, a Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition volunteer, checks a rider's bicycle into the Metro-sponsored Bike Valet parking. The volunteer valets parked 200 bicycles.

Alcid-Little handed out stacks of Metro Bike Maps and offered Metro System advice to bicycle riders, including someone who wanted to visit the Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach. She described how to reach Long Beach via Metro Rail. "Why park?" she asked the visitor to the booth.

In addition to handing out patch kits and safety blinkers, the Metro booth featured a replica of a bus bike rack, allowing Metro volunteers to show bicyclists how to attach and unattach their bikes from a Metro bus.



Besides helping cyclists on Sunday, Metro also advertised the 14th annual Bike to Work Day on Thursday, May 15.

Rey Coutts, a transit operations supervisor in Central Instruction, Operations, delivered and retrieved the displayed bus bike rack. "The rack really attracted people to the booth," Goldsmith said.

Goldsmith believes Metro's presence at the last leg of the Amgen Tour of California fit "with our promotion of bicycle use, to promote bicycles as a form of transportation."

She was philosophical about the precipitation. "Cyclists don't stay indoors because of the rain," said Goldsmith, who spent much of the day in a yellow raincoat.

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Metro Transportation Manager Sharad Mulchand has served on the ABC Unified School District's Finance and Audit Committee for eight years.

Photo by Jimmy Stroup



Mulchand Too Good a Volunteer for ABC School District

- Finance and Audit Committee can't seem to live without him

By JIMMY STROUP

(Feb. 26, 2008) Metro Transportation Planning Manager Sharad Mulchand is simply too good a volunteer.

Mulchand was recently invited to continue his tenure with the ABC Unified School District's ([ABCUSD](#)) Finance and Audit Committee.

"After the board member who appointed me lost the last election, I thought I might be able to stop doing this," he said. "But the new member asked me to continue on. They won't let me go."

What began eight years ago as a way for Mulchand to stay involved with his children's schooling has turned into a habit. Attending the committee's monthly meetings are second-nature to him now.

The Finance and Audit Committee functions to keep the ABCUSD on the right path, according to Mulchand, by making certain its financial dealings are legal and above board.

"It's like any public body, the school board, and we're the people trying to make sure that things are on the up and up," Mulchand said. "It's a complicated system with hundreds of millions of dollars and earmarks and budgets. We make sure it's all going where it ought to."

Mulchand's children went to Whitney High School within the ABC district,

but they've since moved onto their adult lives.

This most recent appointment will have Mulchand serving 12 years when it ends in 2012.

"Still, it's an honor," he said. "They trust me."

About ABCUSD: In 1965 Artesia, Bloomfield, and Carmenita School Districts unified and became known as the ABC Unified School District. The ABC Unified School District is representative of urban school districts throughout the United States. The community served by ABC Unified School District includes the cities of Artesia, Cerritos, Hawaiian Gardens, as well as portions of Lakewood, Long Beach, and Norwalk.

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Photos by Jimmy Stroup



Dept. Jeff Heier was recently awarded a 2008 Centurion Award for Excellence by the Peace Officers Association of LA County for his work in traffic enforcement.

TSB Deputy Awarded for Excellence in Traffic Enforcement

- Dept. Jeff Heier wrote nearly 2,500 traffic citations in 2007

By JIMMY STROUP

(Feb. 12, 2008) Transit Services Bureau Deputy Jeff Heier writes a lot of tickets in an eight-hour shift. He writes so many tickets, in fact, that the Peace Officers Association of LA County recently awarded him the Centurion Award for excellence in traffic enforcement.

Heier focuses his attention on unsafe or illegal driving activities that could create problems for the Metro system. He said the bus operators have a hard enough job driving through the streets of Los Angeles. He hopes his contributions by clearing out the bus zones make life easier for the operators.

In his career in law enforcement, Heier figures he's written at least 20,000 citations. It all stems from his simple rule about writing tickets: "If I see it, I write it."

Dept. Heier wrote more than 2,400 citations in 2007. Most of the tickets were classified as "hazardous," such as a car parked or stopped illegally in the bus zone

– a \$255
mistake.



This number is even more impressive when compared against the number of times his tickets have been thrown out in court, which is less than 10.

“When people fight their tickets, it’s no big deal,” he said. “I actually kind of enjoy it. I’m prepared. I’ve got all the evidence to back myself up. I’m not writing citations that aren’t solid, so I don’t get many thrown out.”

Originally from Minnesota, Heier’s been a TSB deputy since 2001. He’d been a Community College officer in Los Angeles before that.

Heier came to law enforcement later in life than most deputies, joining at 30. But he seems to have made up for the delayed entrance. Heier seems born for the job.

From Gateway to the Westside

Heier’s day starts at Gateway and moves north toward Wilshire Boulevard. Though his area of enforcement doesn’t start until he’s west of La Cienega Boulevard, Heier is writing tickets all the way.

Heier is responsible for anything west of La Cienega Boulevard and all the way to the beach. He writes most of his tickets in Santa Monica.

For Heier, writing tickets isn’t about making money for the Sheriff’s Department or for Metro. It’s about what he called “quality of life.” If he can teach the dangerous drivers an expensive lesson, he believes the regular drivers are less likely to be placed into a dangerous situation.

“Traffic enforcement is primarily about safety, though,” he said. “When people drive carelessly and recklessly, you’re going to have a collision and someone could get hurt. I can help deter the behavior and avoid the collisions altogether.”

Heier’s philosophy is simple on writing tickets for violations – especially for cars parked in the bus zones:



"If I see it, I write it."

'As nice as he can'

When Heier pulls an offender over for a moving violation or tickets a car that's sitting in a red lane, he said he tries to be as nice as he can, though most of the time people aren't very happy to see him.

"These tickets are expensive as it is," he said. "I try to be as nice to those people out there as I can. They're just trying to get through their day, same as I am. There's no need for me to be a jerk."

How Expensive?

At \$255 for a bus zone violation, the tickets that Heier writes aren't cheap. In a two-hour period on Feb. 7, Heier wrote three bus zone violations (\$765), an unsafe lane change violation (\$159), a routine red zone citation (\$55) and a \$10 fix-it ticket for covered taillights.

From 2 to 4 p.m. on a Thursday afternoon, Heier wrote \$989 worth of violations. And he hadn't even made it to La Cienega Boulevard yet.

Most of the money recovered for those violations will be returned to Metro.

Keeping it safe

Heier said he hopes to spend the rest of his career on the motorcycle, out in traffic. He enjoys the freedom of the duty and thinks his citations remind people to drive safe all the time.

"Sometimes I'll have a spot where I'm writing tickets every day and all of a sudden it's totally dried up," he said. "It's then that I know I've done my job. The people I ticketed told their friends and enough people saw me citing the area that they learned to obey the law."

"At least, in that one spot they're obeying the law," he laughed.

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Division 9 "Green" Building Given Project Achievement Award

- The Los Angeles Council of Engineers and Scientists acknowledged Orange Line in 2006.

By JIMMY STROUP

(Feb. 28, 2008) Metro's environmentally-friendly transportation building at San Gabriel Valley Division 9 was given the Project Achievement award by the Los Angeles Council of Engineers and Scientists (LACES), Feb. 22.

This is the second time since 2006 that LACES has acknowledged Metro's work in engineering and design.

Project Manager Tim Lindholm said the award is indicative of what can happen when the design-build concept is used to its best purposes. The award was presented at the LACES banquet at the John C. Argue Swim Stadium near Exposition Park.

"When we applied for the award, we focused on the fact that it was a very small footprint for the amount of stuff we had to fit into the building," Lindholm said. "That it was complicated, but also architecturally pleasing and green."

The yearly LACES banquet awards buildings and construction efforts in LA County that exemplify engineering achievement. Metro was one of 10 Project Achievement award recipients for 2007. The award didn't come with a cash prize, but does give the agency bragging rights.

"We get satisfaction. And a plaque," said Lindholm, with a little smile. "The plaque will be hung in the Division 9 building alongside the future, as yet unrewarded award plaques this project will be given later."

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Just feet northwest of the corner of the Figueroa Street/Exposition Boulevard intersection, a worker climbs from an excavation dug to bury a 61-inch-diameter water main. The water main was moved from 13 to 42 feet below the surface so it would rest four feet below the future Expo Light Rail Line trains.



Photos by Ned Racine

Expo Light Rail Line Construction Proceeds Above and Below Ground

By NED RACINE, Editor

(Feb. 28, 2008) One doesn't need to be a construction expert to see the Expo Light Rail Line is under construction. Traveling along Flower Street or Exposition Boulevard or National Boulevard reveals the signs.



Workers clear asphalt from a future parking area at Washington and National boulevards. The planned terminus of Phase I of the Expo Light Rail Line is at Washington/National.

A future parking area is being cleared at National and Washington

boulevards, the planned terminus for Phase I of the project. A 61-inch-diameter water main has been snugly buried 42 feet below the ground near the Figueroa Street/Exposition Boulevard intersection so future trains can travel four feet above it as they swing west past the University of Southern California.

With their back towards National Boulevard, workers remove freight train rail from the future alignment of the Expo Light Rail Line. Phase I of Expo will be approximately 8.6 miles in length and will connect Downtown Los Angeles and Culver City.



Rail and ties are being removed along the route, as is foliage.

The light rail line, scheduled to open in 2010, will connect Downtown Los Angeles and Culver City, traveling along Metro's Exposition right-of-way. Approximately 8.6-miles long, the line will feature nine new stations, with an estimated travel time under 30 minutes.



Several blocks west of La Brea Avenue, workers remove foliage from the Expo Light Rail Line route. Phase 1 of the Expo Line is scheduled to open in the summer of 2010.

The Expo Line runs parallel and south of the heavily used I-10 freeway.

These photos were taken February 19.



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Metro Board Approves Barrier Gates for Subway and Some Light Rail

By DAVE SOTERO

The Metro Board today approved a 10-year, \$46 million lease contract with Cubic Transportation Systems, Inc. to install barrier gates on the Metro Red Line, Metro Purple Line and selected light rail stations.

The move is an effort to prevent fare evasion, provide for seamless travel and improve transit station security. Installation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant system should take 18 to 24 months.

At the direction of the Board, Metro also will seek ways to offset gating costs through various state bond monies and Department of Homeland Security funding.

Currently, Metro operates a barrier-free "honor system." The agency loses \$5.5 million per year due to fare evasion. Overall, Metro has found a 5 percent fare evasion rate across its rail lines.

The new gating system could recover \$3-6 million annually to offset these losses as well as realize significant annual savings on fare inspector costs. Based on current forecasts, the savings enabled by the system will begin to pay for itself in the fourth year of full system operation.

Barrier gates part of TAP

Barrier gates are also a key component of Metro's emerging regional Transit Access Pass, or TAP program. TAP is an automated, electronic regional fare collection system that will create a multi-modal, multi-operator fare system for L.A. County transit riders.

"Gates are a natural evolution of Los Angeles County's maturing Metro Rail system," said Pam O'Connor, Santa Monica City Councilmember and Metro Board Chair. "They will help us keep pace with the demands of our fast growing rail ridership while ushering in the newest improvements in universal fare technology to streamline travel for our customers."

A total of 379 fare gates will be installed on all subway and selected light rail stations, including the yet-to-be-completed Mariachi, Soto and Atlantic stations on the Metro Gold Line Eastside extension.

"Metro remains the only subway operator in the country to operate a barrier-free system," said Yvonne B. Burke, Los Angeles County Supervisor and Metro Board member. "That freedom has come at a significant cost to the agency's bottom line as a result of fare scofflaws. This initiative will pay for itself, makes TAP possible, and further hardens our system to potential security threats."

Security will be augmented

Security at stations will be augmented as part of the program. Additional

video surveillance cameras will be installed at all gate entrances, and attendants will be on-hand to respond to situations or assist patrons where needed.

Once in place, the gates are expected to reduce the need for civilian fare inspectors, allowing the agency to flexibly make needed personnel redeployments when and where necessary. Metro could potentially save as much as \$7 million per year in contracted fare inspector costs replaced in part with more cost-effective Metro Transit Security personnel. Sworn law enforcement would also be freed of fare checking responsibilities at gated stations, allowing them to focus primarily on station security.

Gates will accommodate disabled patrons, children and patron-operated devices such as wheelchairs, strollers, walkers and bicycles, as well as emergency egress and access for fire-life safety devices.



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Services Scheduled for Alberto Garcia, Division 1 Operator

(Feb. 29, 2008) Central City Division 1 Bus Operator Alberto Garcia died from natural causes, Feb. 26, while beginning his shift. He was 65.

Garcia started in 1976 and was a full-time operator until he retired in 1999. Garcia came back to Metro and worked a part-time morning shift from 4 to 8 a.m. His combined service was 32 years.

"After he retired he missed it, basically, and liked the work and the people," said Robert Chavez, assistant transportation manager at Division 1. "He loved his work here."

Nicknamed "El Cubano" by his co-workers because of his Cuban heritage, Garcia was in early every day to get the coffee brewing for his friends at the division.

Services will be on Tuesday, March 4 from 4 p.m. to midnight (the Rosary will be at 7 p.m.) at "Funeraria del Angel" Mirabel Mortuary, 4677 E. Gage Ave., Bell, Calif. 323.560.2216.

Mass will follow on Wednesday, March 5 at 9 a.m. at St. Rose of Lima, 4422 E. 60th St., Maywood, Calif., with burial services following at Rose Hills Memorial Park, 3888 Workman Mill Rd., Whittier, Calif.

"It has hit a lot of people and had us all kind of down" Chavez said. "He was a fixture around here. It'll be strange to come to work and not have him here."

In a letter written to Garcia's friends at Division 1 by his daughter, Deborah Canosa, she said the love and support of his co-workers meant a great deal to her father and family.

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[Hot off the Web]



New web pages offer plenty of key information. Check it out: Click on image or select "Key Shop" from "Select a Department" drop-down menu on *myMetro.net* homepage.

(Feb. 29, 2008) The wizards of keys from the [Metro Key Shop](#) can now be reached at their new web pages on *myMetro.net*. Key information there includes the Key Shop's hours of operation, contact information and all the forms you'll need to solve a key emergency.

In addition to servicing the agency's bus and rail locking hardware, the Key Shop also has keys for employees, contractors and third-party organizations. They are responsible for solving key problems throughout Metro.

The Key Shop is located at the Metro Service Support Center, 900 Lyon St., Los Angeles, 90012, a short distance east of the intersection of Cesar E. Chavez Avenue and North Vignes Street.

If you are visiting the Key Shop, the locksmiths ask you to call ahead: sometimes they are out answering service calls or providing other emergency service.

Their new web pages are always open for business.





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Black History Month 2008 Pays Tribute to Mentors, Martyrs and the Muse



This Is Why: The Metro Choir fills the rafters with remembrance, inspiration and celebration in a musical program of Gospel Music and Spirituals punctuated with spoken word remembrances of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall (Richard Chastang, Esq.) Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (DonCosta Seawell) and Malcolm X (Keith Hanson) and a spirited tribute to the presidential candidacy of U.S. Senator Barack Obama (Tahir Davis).



The literary salon presented by the African American Employees Association (AAEA) on Feb. 28 featured actress and author Denise Nicholas and honoree Yvonne Burke. The author led the applause when Supervisor Burke entered the room and later presented her with a copy of her first novel, "Freshwater Road."



Metro Board Member Supervisor Yvonne Burke dashed in from the board meeting down the hall to say hello and delivered an inspirational message to a grateful gathering. AAEA charter member and co-founder Rick Owens presented Supervisor Burke with an artful orchid plant, signifying her unending support and participation in AAEA activities. AAEA was founded in 1993.



George B. Parks, Esq., took top honors at the Metro Choir celebration Feb. 27. The semi-retired jurist has been an active member of the Metro Choir since 2003. In the courthouse and on the basketball court, George Parks is a living legend who played against an all-white Duke School of Medicine team as a starter for the North Carolina College for Negroes basketball team in the first integrated intercollegiate game played in American history. The year was 1944. Pictured are, from left, Choir Director Renee Willis, Edith Goff-Youngblood, Mr. Parks, Pat Clark and Choir Director DonCosta Seawell.



AAEA members all: From left, Keith Hanson, Susan Dove, Veronica Hargrove, Supervisor Yvonne Burke and Rick Owens. The group also hosted "Poet's Corner" on Feb. 14, in which eight poets and/or dramatists delivered their own work or interpretations of the written word.

Text and photos by Gayle Anderson