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Friday, December 26

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**Tuesday, December 2**

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## Reconstruction project to limit Metro Café menu for two months

- Kitchen and dish room will close — Café will offer limited menu.
- Work scheduled to begin Dec. 26 and end March 1.

Executive Chef Eddie Garcia must plan a limited menu for breakfast and lunch. Health laws do not allow on-site food preparation during construction.

*Photo by Gayle Anderson*



By NED RACINE

(Dec. 2, 2008) A project to better waterproof some floors in the Metro Café will crimp its menu this winter but will prevent "rain" from falling on the Metro Information Call Center, even on sunny days.

When a Metro Café drain clogs or overflows, water leaks to the Call Center one floor below. Besides interrupting staff training and Call Center operation, the runoff has damaged electronic equipment, furniture and flooring, many times requiring a contractor to remove the water and repair its destruction.

With funding now available, a contractor will be hired to demolish the floors in two work areas of the Metro Café and add a waterproof membrane to the rebuilt floors. Construction is scheduled to begin Dec. 26 and end March 1. During that time, Metro Café hours will be open from 6:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Building Services and Aramark, the cafeteria provider, will ensure that food service will be offered in the Metro Café during the project, but the variety of the food will shrink.

Metro Cafe workers, including Oscar Reyes (left) and executive



chef Eddie Garcia, will lose the use of the kitchen while equipment is removed and the kitchen floor is replaced. Food options from Metro Café will be reduced from Dec. 26 through March 1.

*Photo by Ned Racine*

To complete the work, the Metro Café kitchen and dish room (where plates, flatware and cooking utensils are cleaned) will be inoperative for approximately two months. Consequently, although the dining room and serving area will still be used, no food will be prepared on site.

County health laws prohibit food preparation in the 1,327-square-foot kitchen when the dish room cannot be used.

Still, Aramark will provide a limited menu for breakfast and lunch. Because the grill will be closed, breakfast foods will consist of muffins, sweet rolls, cold cereal, coffee, bottled juice and sodas. Lunch will consist of grab-and-go sandwiches, salads, deserts and a single hot entree.

To reduce the project's effect on Metro operations, the contractor must perform demolition between 7 p.m. and 6:20 a.m. weekdays and 4:45 p.m. and 8 a.m. weekends.


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## Services to be Planned for Michael Davidson, Metro Rail Maintenance Specialist

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(Dec. 2, 2008) Michael Davidson, an experienced rail technician who joined Metro Rail in March 2001, was found dead in his Lancaster home by a concerned co-worker on Nov. 26. He was 57 years old.

"His sudden passing comes as a shock to everyone here at the Red Line," said ATU Local 1277 Shop Steward and fellow maintenance specialist Rafaele Mastrangelo Jr. "He will truly be missed by all of us."

A former employee of the company that manufactured the Breda cars now in service on the Metro Red Line, Davidson brought special expertise needed for the maintenance of the cars, said Mastrangelo Jr.

"I knew Mike for 5 years," he said. "He was an outstanding worker who was very knowledgeable about the Red Line cars. He was a man well-liked by everyone. He was a kind, and considerate person . . . a man of wit and humor. I always enjoyed being in his presence."

Michael traveled around the country when he worked for Breda, said brother Andy Davidson who traveled here from Iowa, along with brother Tom, to tend to his brother's affairs.

Davidson, a Air Force veteran who served in Vietnam, was awarded an Air Force Commendation Medal for his service, said Andy.

"He learned electronics in the Air Force and went on to get his Bachelor of Science degree. I always said he was the equivalent of an electrical engineer - an electrical engineer without the degree!"

At the time of his death, he was living in a new town home in Lancaster that he had recently purchased.

"He'd rented for years," said Andy Davidson. "This was a brand new home - his first home. Michael had moved into the new town home just this October. The garage was full of tools. We had to rent a truck to move them out," said Andy.

Davidson was born Feb. 14, 1951, in Anderson, Indiana. He is survived by brothers Andy Davidson and wife Lea of Urbandale, Iowa, and Tom Davidson and wife Suzie of Pittsboro, Indiana.

Condolences may be sent to Andy Davidson, 14323 Greenbelt Dr, Urbandale Iowa, 50323 or e-mail Andy at [adavidson@dc-grimes.k12.ia.us](mailto:adavidson@dc-grimes.k12.ia.us).

In lieu of flowers, family and friends may donate remembrances to the



Michael Davidson

Davidson Brothers Scholarship, which awards a graduating senior every year from Greenwood High School. The brothers attended the hometown high school while growing up in Greenwood, Indiana, and continue to support it.

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Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa leads news conference Nov. 5 to celebrate an early, if unofficial, victory of the passage of Measure R by Los Angeles voters. The Los Angeles County Registrar has now confirmed that Measure R has been approved by a 67.93 percent majority. *Photo by Gayle Anderson*

## Passage of Measure R Puts County Transportation Projects on Fast Track

- Metro committed to using funds to speed transportation improvements throughout L.A. County

By DAVE SOTERO

(Dec.2, 2008): The results are in. The Los Angeles County Registrar has announced that Measure R, the half-cent sales tax increase for comprehensive county transportation improvements, has officially passed with more than a two-thirds majority vote following the Registrar's final vote count.

Approved by more than 2 million votes, a 67.93 percent majority, Measure R is expected to bring in \$40 billion over 30 years to fund critically needed transit and highway projects and support transit operations throughout the Los Angeles County.

Metro officials today hailed the final vote as a major milestone that puts the region back on track to address many dire transportation problems the county faces and vowed to put funds to work quickly and help create construction jobs that will stimulate the local economy.

"This is a new day for the future of transportation in Los Angeles," said Los Angeles Mayor and Metro Board Chair Antonio Villaraigosa. "Measure R's victory is a victory for the commuters of all of Los Angeles County. It will enable us to put our vision for greater mobility on the fast track and make a major difference in reducing congestion on our roads and expanding the public transit system while creating jobs and reducing air pollution."

Measure R sales taxes will start being collected July 1, 2009. During the first full year, it is projected that over \$650 million will be collected and that revenue stream will grow as the economy expands. According to the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC), Measure R will cost residents an average of \$25 per person each year.

Metro CEO Roger Snoble is planning to go before the Metro Board of Directors in January to present a comprehensive financial plan that will lay out a strategy for delivering projects. It is projected by the LAEDC that Measure R will create at least 210,000 new jobs and generate \$32 billion in new economic activity over a 30-year period..

"The public has given us a clear mandate to implement a comprehensive traffic relief plan for Los Angeles County that is controlled locally," said Snoble. He said that improvements in Metro's customer services from deploying new Metro Rapid buses and building the highly successful Metro Orange Line to launching a new vanpool program and staying on budget and ahead of schedule for next summer's opening of the Metro Gold Line extension to East Los Angeles plus new pass programs and other customer improvements helped pave the way for passage of Measure R, but the Metro CEO underscored that Metro must continue to push forward.

Some of the most immediate benefits from Measure R will be for cities. Metro's expenditure plan ensures that all 88 cities will receive a 15 percent local return of taxpayer funds based on yearly city population figures. In the first full year, local jurisdictions are expected to collectively receive over \$100 million for their transportation needs. Over the 30-year sales tax period, the local return is anticipated to be almost \$6 billion. These funds may be used by cities to directly fund their own projects such as pothole repairs, bikeways, major street resurfacing, left-turn signals, pedestrian improvements, streetscapes, traffic signal synchronization and local transit services.

The remaining 85 percent of funding will be divided among critical new transit and highway projects and for transit operations countywide. Many new transit projects will receive funding including the Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension in the San Gabriel Valley, Regional Light Rail Connector in Downtown LA, Metro Green Line extension to LAX and the South Bay, and the Westside subway extension. Projects already in development will be accelerated including Expo Light Rail Line Phase 2 from Culver City to Santa Monica, Metro Orange Line Chatsworth Extension, and the Crenshaw Transit Corridor, a transit project to improve public transit service and mobility in the Crenshaw Corridor.

Measure R also provides Metro with matching funds that can be leveraged to obtain federal funding for projects such as the Westside subway extension and the Regional Connector. "We're now able to show the federal government that we can construct and operate projects they would participate in on a cost-sharing basis," said Snoble. "Prior to Measure R, we certainly wouldn't have been able to do that, and this also puts us in a favorable position to secure federal funds when a new infrastructure stimulus bill is passed by Congress."

Measure R also will delay a general Metro fare increase for one year and will freeze fares at current levels for disabled persons, senior citizens, students and Medicare recipients for five years.

Metro soon will be updating the *metro.net* website to give the public steady updates on the progress in implementing Measure R.





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National real estate developers and city and county officials celebrate a "Topping Off" ceremony for the "1600 Vine" joint development atop the Metro Rail Hollywood/Vine Station. *Photos: Dave Sotero*

### Officials hold topping off ceremony for '1600 Vine' residential and retail complex atop Hollywood/Vine Station

- \$600 million development one of the crown jewels of Metro's Joint Development Program

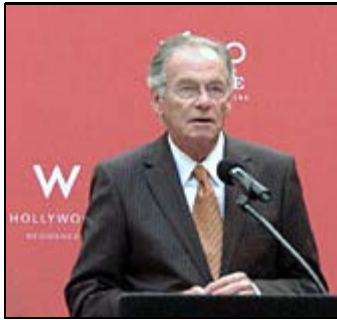
BY DAVE SOTERO

(Dec. 4, 2008) Today Metro joined national real estate developers and city and county officials to celebrate a "Topping Off" ceremony for the "1600 Vine" joint development, one of the largest, most ambitious mixed-use, transit-oriented development projects now under construction in Los Angeles.



On top of 'W': from left, Los Angeles City Council President Eric Garcetti, television personality Jimmy Kimmel, Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, and '1600 Vine' developers from Legacy Partners.  
*Photo: Gayle Anderson*

The \$600 million development project called 1600 Vine will include a new 305-room W Hotel, 143 W residences, 375 luxury apartments (including 78 affordable units), about 50,000 square feet of retail space and transit plaza improvements at the Hollywood/Vine Metro Red Line Station.



Roger Moliere, above, praises transit housing. Below, late night television talk show host Jimmy Kimmel, who tapes his show nearby, took on the emcee duties.



Below, acrobats' daredevil descent down the banners of the 15-story building 'top off' the ceremony.

The Metro station is located at the northeastern corner of the project site.

The star-studded event was emceed by entertainment personality Jimmy Kimmel and included acrobats who descended from the top floor of the building on ropes.

The project is scheduled for completion in Fall 2009 and is one of the most prominent within Metro's Joint Development Program. The program works closely with public and private partners to encourage high-quality, transit-oriented development around Metro station sites and along transit corridors. Its goal is to help reduce auto trips and relieve congestion through transit-linked development. Over the last 15 years, Metro has been involved in billions of dollars in joint development projects and it is continuing to expand the program.

Roger Moliere, Chief of Real Property Planning & Development, represented Metro at the event. "This project's dynamic architecture and mixture of first-class hotel, residential and retail uses directly atop a Metro Red Line station makes the Hollywood & Vine project one of the crown jewels of Metro's Joint Development Program," Moliere said. "We look forward to adding Hollywood & Vine to Metro's long list of successful mixed-use, joint developments within Los Angeles County."

The project team includes Gatehouse Capital



Corporation, Legacy Partners. The development is a result of years of planning, negotiation and collaboration with Metro, Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles (CRA/LA), Los Angeles City Council and the Hollywood community.



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Sam Singer's office at RTD's Central Maintenance Facility, now the Metro Support Services Center, overlooked the Los Angeles skyline.

### Services will be held Saturday for Retired Maintenance Superintendent Sam J. Singer Jr., 42-year RTD Veteran

- The Singer family spans 118 years in transportation careers: Singer's father was hired as a streetcar conductor in 1922 and retired as a Bus Operator at Division 10; son Michael is a 33-year Metro employee.
- Services are planned for 11 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 6, at Sunset Hills Memorial Park, located at 24000 Waalew Road, Apple Valley, CA 92307 Information: (760) 247-0155.

By JOHN ROBERTS & HAROLD TORRES  
Special to myMetro.net

(Dec. 4, 2008) Sam J. Singer Jr. passed away at his home in El Monte last Wednesday, Nov. 26. The Los Angeles native was born April 1925 and served in the Navy during World War II. He was 83 years old.

Following his Navy tour, Singer was hired as a mechanic "C" in June 1946 by the Los Angeles Transit Lines. Rising through the ranks in various posts and responsibilities, he retired from RTD 42 years later, in July 1988, as a maintenance superintendent.

Sam followed in the footsteps of his father, Sam Singer, Sr., who was hired in 1922 as a streetcar conductor by the Los Angeles Railway and retired 43 years later as a bus operator out of Division 10.

Sam's son, Michael Singer,  
currently the maintenance



Mike Singer, left, shares grill duties with dad Sam at one of the many Metro Bus Rodeos where Sam cheerily volunteered.

manager in the Central Maintenance Shops, is a 33-year Metro employee.

A long time resident of El Monte, Sam was frequently seen at Metro's yearly Bus Rodeos cooking and serving lunch for the hundreds of Rodeo participants, including judges, competitors and guest.

Even after retirement, this was something he enjoyed doing and everybody looked forward to seeing him, said Harold Torres, assistant equipment maintenance manager who worked with Singer.

"I have had the privilege and honor to work with both Sam and his son Mike over many years," Richard Hunt, Metro San Fernando Valley General Manager. "They

both have given much to the RTD and Metro efforts. The Singer family's dedication and commitment to public transportation of over 118 years was and remains truly remarkable. Everyone who worked with Sam was touched by his kindness, his concern and caring spirit. Sam left his impact on our company, and it will never be replaced. He was a true friend and we will miss him very much."

Diane Crum, senior secretary in Maintenance Administration, remembers Sam as always with a smile and ready with a kind word.

Mike Stange, equipment maintenance superintendent, remembers Sam as a mentor, successful company man, strong Operations Department leader and friend. "He was brutally direct in business and in life, wise as Solomon and fatherly as Mr. Rogers. He expected no less than hard work, promoted company loyalty and was always available to the "younger person" in the company for good advice."

Said Harold Torres: "When it came to business, Sam was tough, direct and expected results. He had all the qualities that made him a great superintendent. For those of us that had the privilege of knowing him on a personal level, he was a man of heart and compassion who you enjoyed being around. What I will miss most is his spirit and friendship, they do not make them like him anymore."

Alex DiNuzzo, maintenance manager at Division 5, gives thanks to Sam for giving him the opportunity of becoming an equipment maintenance supervisor in 1982. "Sam was passionate about his job, was a great person to work for and understood how hard we all worked. He really looked out for all of us. You can say he was our Dad! Always with a big smile on him no matter how tough times were."

Sam Singer Jr. is survived by his wife, Gloria, of 58 years, his son, Michael, his daughter, Linda, four grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.



Services will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 6, 2008, at Sunset Hills Memorial Park, located at 24000 Waalew Road, Apple Valley, CA 92307.  
Information: (760) 247-0155.

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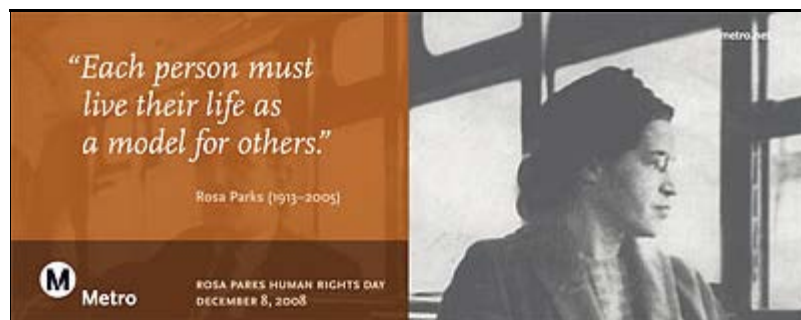
Members of Metro's African American Employees Association, from left, Keith Hanson, Edith Goff-Youngblood, Sherman Gay, Susan Dove and Keith Compton meet at Imperial/Wilmington/Rosa Parks Metro Rail Station to pass out posters and smiles commemorating Rosa Parks Human Rights Day on Dec. 1. *Photos by Juan Ocampo*

## Metro Honors Rosa Parks with First Annual Rosa Parks Human Rights Day on 53rd Anniversary of Her Civil Rights Protest

By KIM UPTON

(Dec. 4, 2008) It wasn't a bus that started it but a bus was certainly the setting, so it is fitting, then, that Metro Board has declared today -- the date Rosa Parks refused to surrender her bus seat to a white male passenger -- Rosa Parks Human Rights Day.

Metro salutes her by placing beautiful art posters commemorating her courage on buses as a reminder of who she was and what she represents. The posters were also distributed during a ceremony at the Imperial/Wilmington/Rosa Parks Metro Rail Station.



The posters – designed by Metro Creative Director Michael Lejeune – display a photo of Rosa Parks along with her words.

"With one quiet and dignified act, Rosa Parks propelled a movement. It's a lesson to us all to remain strong in support of what we believe" said Linda Wright, Metro Deputy Executive Officer for Diversity and Economic Opportunity.

The poster installation on Metro buses began Nov. 15 and will continue through Mid-December.

The posters – designed by Metro Creative Director Michael Lejeune – display a photo of Rosa Parks along with her words:

"Each person must live their life as a model for others."

This is not Metro's first salute to Parks. On March 20, 1998, the Imperial/Wilmington Metro Rail station was dedicated to her to mark her contribution to modern civil rights.



The posters give passengers pause as they board a modern-day bus and, for a moment, wonder what it was like to say no to arrogance, just this once.

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## BOARD REVIEW



### In the face of budget deficits, Board initiates hiring freeze; considers impact, direction of Measure R funding

In this report:

- [Item 6: Bicycle Locker Rental Program](#)
- [Items 7, 8: Programming recommendations for State Proposition 1B](#)
- [Item 35: Metro Red Line Station Canopies contract modification](#)
- [Item 44: Contract modifications for the Pomona/Atlantic Parking Structure](#)
- [Item 46: Bus System Improvement Plan](#)
- [Item 51: Hiring and promotion freeze](#)

By GAYLE ANDERSON

Working through a lengthy agenda at its November meeting held Dec. 4, the Metro Board approved motions that took steps to develop a "Bus Service Improvement Plan" that would serve as a guideline for Measure R funding and initiated an immediate hiring and promotion freeze as well as banning new consulting contracts.

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

#### Item 6: Bicycle Locker Rental Program

The Board approved a staff recommendation to increase bicycle locker rental fees and delegate to the CEO the authority to raise bicycle locker rates by the rate of inflation. At issue is utilization of lockers at locations where the lockers may be fully leased, but also remain empty when commuters use other means of transportation. Higher pricing and shorter lease terms may help to encourage greater use of lockers now at premium demand due to increased rail ridership and the need for more secure bicycle parking.

#### Items 7, 8: Programming recommendations for State Proposition 1B

It is anticipated that Los Angeles County will receive \$275.5 million for eligible regional transportation projects from the voter-approved Proposition 1B State and Local Partnership Program (SLTPP). The Board adopted the Planning and Programming Committee recommendations directing \$130 million for highway capital projects, \$145.5 million for transit capital and safety projects, including the San Fernando Valley Canoga Project, various bus and rail projects, proposed Metrolink safety improvements, and the 2009 Countywide Call for Projects.

Also approved were programming recommendations for \$90.2 million in State Proposition 1B Transit Modernization Funds for miscellaneous transit

projects, including purchase of buses, rebuilding buses and rail rehabilitation. The authorization implements bus and rail priorities already identified as necessary to maintain equipment and facilities for regional transit services in a state of good repair.

**Item 35: Metro Red Line Station Canopies contract modification**

The Board authorized construction of 14 new canopies over exposed escalators and stairs and entrances to Metro Red/Purple Line subway stations. The action increases the current contract modification included in the FY09 budget by \$804,364. The modifications adhere to the established goals of the Entrance Canopy Program and include design, lighting, drainage and weather protection criteria.

**Item 44: Contract modifications for the Pomona/Atlantic Parking Structure**

The Metro Board of Directors today approved spending an additional \$8.7 million for a three-story parking garage that will serve the Atlantic terminus station on the Metro Gold Line to East Los Angeles.

The new three-story garage will have 286 parking spaces. It is scheduled to be completed six months after the new light rail line opens next summer. It was initially planned to have 127 surface parking spaces at the Atlantic Boulevard and Pomona Street location.

Altogether, Metro has budgeted \$13 million for the parking garage.

**Item 46: Bus System Improvement Plan**

Also approved as amended was a motion by Board Chair Villaraigosa to document by Feb. 9 the type of bus service improvements recommended by the public and to determine a "Bus System Improvement Plan" for Measure R funding. The directive asked CEO Roger Snoble to report the findings to the Board at the March 2009 meeting. The Measure R funding considers purchases of new clean fuel buses, a fare reduction or freeze, added bus lines, more frequent service and longer hours of operation. An amendment by Director Mike Antonovich asked the CEO to try and close the operating deficit by 2011 without using Measure R funding if possible.

**Item 51: Hiring and promotion freeze**

The motion by Director Ara Najarian and Board Chair Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa initiates a freeze on hiring new employees, promotions and any other form of compensation increase (except as required by Board-ratified MOUs) and bans new consulting contracts except those related to safety, Measure R implementation, legal support services, congestion pricing, Homeland Security grants and Proposition 1B funding directives. The motion is effective immediately as of Dec. 4.



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The policy that eschews gifts from outside vendors and contractors is valid throughout the year but never more so than during the holiday season, when glad tidings from contractors, vendors and business associates attempt to make their way down Metro's chimney. Above, Chief Ethics Officer Karen Gorman reminds us that these gifts make the holidays a little brighter for someone in need: Gifts ranging in value from \$10 to about \$150 or more are bundled up and distributed to various charities each week.

## The Gifts That Keep on Giving

**Ethics Department rebundles gifts from outside vendors and contractors for local A-rated human services charities.**

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(Dec. 9, 2008) Chief Ethics Officer Karen Gorman encourages any employee who receives a gift from an outside company to avoid the appearance of conflict of interest by turning it over to the Ethics Office.

Under the law a gift from a contractor and those doing business with a public agency such as Metro must be returned or donated to a charity. In such instances, the Ethics Department can collect the gifts from

employees and donate the items to charity, and provide the employees with records of the transaction.

"We do this as a service to our employees to make it easier for them to comply with the law, to do something nice for a person in need, and help maintain Metro's credibility with the public," said Gorman.

"When employees learn how happy these gifts makes someone in need, it's a very rewarding experience worth far more than the gift itself," said Gorman.

The gift policy is in effect the whole year round.

The [Employee Code of Conduct](#), which can be accessed on the Ethics & Lobbyist web pages from the "Select a Department"



drop-down menu on the myMetro.net homepage, includes a description of the gift rules in Section 5-15-130.

The purpose of the rule on gifts, according to the Code, is "to assure the public that public employees are not influenced to show favoritism to a contractor based on receiving gifts or for being rewarded for doing his or her job in a way that will benefit the giver of the gift."

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## Metro Craft Fair kicks off the shopping season



Ralph Carapia, labor/employee relations manager, joins wife Julie's innovative holiday decorations booth during the craft fair display Dec. 2. Julie partnered with daughter, Robin, at left, for the festive display.



Left, Jason Sewell brings his paintings of his native Jamaica to the fair. Above, Sandra Sandoval and Avis Brame showcase the Metro Crocheters and Knitters Club works.



Above, Rose Ann Sanchez with a bounty of handmade jewelry. Below, the HoHo Girls booth of handmade cards and gifts is supported by Theresa Valenzuela. The wares are the creations of Marylou Rasmussen, Noemi Miller and Sandra Lomeli.





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From left, back row, Judy Nguyen, Gail Harvey, Alonzo Williams, Lizette Garcia, Matt Raymond and, foreground, Barbara Thomasson, Oscar Ayala and Marco Garcia.

## Customer Relations Fills Santa's Bags with 226 Gifts for Skid Row Families

- **UPDATE:** Gift-giving presentation is moved to Wednesday!
- Deadline for gift donations looms: New and unwrapped gifts must be delivered to the Diversity & Economic Opportunity Department (DEOD), thirteenth floor (follow the signs), by 4 p.m. on Thursday. Metro will present all donated gifts to the Fred Jordan Mission on Wednesday at 10 a.m. during a short program on the Transit Plaza. Employees are welcome to come hear Metro Choir as volunteers load Metro buses with bags of toys and other donations for delivery to the Mission.

By GAIL HARVEY  
Special to myMetro.net

(Dec. 10, 2008) Customer Relations again accepted the challenge of supporting the overall effort of the Metro Gift-Giving Drive's goal of 5,000 gifts for the Fred Jordan Mission. The department surpassed the original goal of 200 gifts to contribute 226 gifts this year.

Gift coordinators invited the Metro Gift-Giving Drive committee to the Call Center on the second floor to pick up an array of gifts for kids, teens and adults. Coordinators Marie Tervalon, Joja Jones, Tatiana Martinez, Karla Cooper, Nubia Lorenao-Mateo and Pamela Luna had arranged a cheery display of donated gifts, including ladies skirts, men's pant suits, perfumes and colognes, blankets, sleeping bags, dolls, toy trucks and cars and even a skate board.

"This has been a difficult year for everyone, but our staff found it in their hearts to step up and graciously give to others less fortunate," said Gail

Harvey, director, Customer Relations. "It is truly a good feeling to be involved with this project," she said, noting that some 12 employees plan to volunteer for the party at the Fred Jordan Mission Dec. 21 when the gifts are distributed to Skid row families.

Among the gift-givers was Matt Raymond, Chief Communications Officer, who donated a Play-Doh art set and congratulated the Customer Relations staff on the "fantastic accomplishment."



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You know it's a very Metro holiday when ...



The Metro Choir bursts into holiday song ...

Sing along at noon in the third floor lobby at Metro Headquarters: Dec. 16, 17, 18. Don't miss the Metro Holiday Concert in the Plaza lobby at noon to 12:30 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 19.



The 'Meals on Wheels' volunteers pack gift bags for homebound seniors ... [more>](#)





The Customer Service Call Center stockpiles gifts for the Metro Gift-giving Drive ... [more>](#)



The Metro Craft Fair fills the third floor lobby with holiday cheer ... [more photos >](#)

*Photos by Gayle Anderson*

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Volunteers donate their lunch hour to help assemble gift bags for "Operation Holiday Stocking," a program of the St. Vincent Senior Citizen Nutrition Program, popularly known as "Meals on Wheels."



## Heart-warmers: Volunteers Assemble Holiday Gift Bags for Homebound Seniors

- [Credit Roll](#): 35 volunteers get and give that holiday feeling
- [Goody bags](#): What's in them?

(Dec. 10, 2008) A number of Metro staff donated their lunch hour on Dec. 2, cheerfully stuffing 150 gift bags for Operation Holiday Stocking, a holiday gift program for elderly clients served by the St. Vincent "Meals on Wheels" program.



Gift bag coordinator Tess Fitzpatrick and Sister Alice Marie Quinn, St. Vincent Senior Citizen Nutrition Center program director, take stock of 100 gift bags collected by volunteers for delivery to homebound seniors on Christmas Day.

"The holiday season is the loneliest time of the year for the city's poorest seniors, many of whom are homebound without the means or capability to



get around," said Tess Fitzpatrick, a senior administrative analyst at Metro San Gabriel Valley service sector offices.



Sister Alice Marie Quinn, St. Vincent Senior Citizen Nutrition Center program director: "One hundred and fifty seniors will be receiving these bags on Christmas day and this may be the only Christmas present that they will receive!"

"We've put together 150 gift bags for the seniors, and those who are otherwise confined to their living quarters. The items included new socks, toothbrushes, tree ornaments, soap, combs, Q-tips, candies, shampoo, lotion, Christmas mugs and several other useful items," said Fitzpatrick.

New this year are cashmere scarves and gloves, said Fitzpatrick. Plus, the number of volunteers increased along with the interest in the program. "We were able to make 150 bags this year. We've always done 100 bags in previous years. We're up 50 percent!"

Fitzpatrick knows first-hand the joys a hot meal and warm greetings can bring to the forgotten elders. She and her sister, Fe Alcid-Little, and co-workers Debbie Bishop and Regina Lim are among the volunteer runners for the St. Vincent "Meals on Wheels" program. Runners deliver hot meals to homebound seniors on selected, scheduled

weekends.

She and other Metro volunteers have been collecting useful items for the goodie bags that will be delivered to seniors along with their holiday meal on Christmas Day.

"Without the volunteers, it would not be possible," said Fitzpatrick. "They were all coordinating it, buying things that we needed for the bags and sorting the donations. They sacrificed their lunch hours and after-work hours to put it together."

St. Vincent Meals on Wheels is privately funded, serving an average of 2,500 meals a day, including some 1,500 meals delivered directly to each home.

CREDIT ROLL

**Volunteers:** Anne Adelman \* Avis Brame \* Barbara Olson-Bonk \* Beverly Davenport-Waldon \* Carlos Valdez \* Carol Silver \* Carol Holben \* Dana Williams \* Debbie Bishop \* Diana Estrada \* Edina Pagadora \* Evelina del Castillo \* Fe Alcid-Little \* Gloria Shen \* Helen Cosner \* Julianne Fowler \* Julie Ellis \* Juliet Glindro \* Liz Campos \* Lorna Vargas \* Lynn Ong \* Mary Nugent \* Maria Mariano \* Mila Asuncion \* Nancy Untalan \* Nela De Castro \* Ralph Carapia \* Regina Lim \* Renita Anderson \* Richard Christie \* Susan Carias-Ginsberg \* Tommy Williams \* Robert Vasquez \* Monique Pe \* Nancy Wong

**What's in the goody bags:** \* Mugs \* Pens \* Pencils \* Christmas ornaments \* Lotions \* Soaps \* Razors \* Q-tips \* Raisins \* Post sticks \* Socks \* Hard candy \* Candy canes \* Band aids \* Shampoo/conditioner \* Gloves \* Scarves \* Toothbrushes



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**Imagine this!** "Our idea to cut costs and increase efficiencies helped reduce the structural deficit!" [Photo credit](#)

## Heads up! Hands on!

### CEO wants your help to 'defeat the deficit'

- What's your solution?
- Fast track: Submit your idea by Jan. 5 to [DefeatTheDeficit@metro.net](mailto:DefeatTheDeficit@metro.net)

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(Dec. 12, 2008) Facing a 10-year financial forecast that puts the Metro operating shortfall at \$2.4 billion, Metro is determined to 'defeat the deficit'. In that light, CEO Roger Snoble is turning to employees to tap into their collective creative energy and come up with ways to save money, cut costs, and boost production in new, efficient ways.



#### CEO Roger Snoble:

"We want to defeat the deficit. We can do that by finding more efficient ways to work and better ways to stretch

"It can be done," said Snoble. "Employees on the front line know how to turn efficiencies into solid budget dollars and should have a hand in helping to defeat the deficit."

In advance of the January Board Meeting, when the Board must take a hard look at the quandary posed by high expectations for traffic improvement against the reality of budgetary shortfalls, Snoble is convinced employees can come up with ideas to cut costs and increase efficiencies enough to help reduce the structural deficit.

State Budget cuts have resulted in funding shortfalls to the FY09 budget totaling \$136.3 million. Current State budget proposals under consideration may increase the shortfall by \$60 million to a total shortfall of \$196 million.

dollars."

Even though Measure R passed and will provide money for new transit and highway programs, the Metro Board has made it clear they don't wish to use Measure R monies to plug the structural deficit.

"We want to improve our services," said Snoble. "We can do that by finding more efficient ways to work and better ways to stretch dollars."

Contribute your ideas by Jan. 5 to [DefeatTheDeficit@metro.net](mailto:DefeatTheDeficit@metro.net). Your ideas will be evaluated by the Office of Management and Budget in time to go to review by Board Committees, which will convene beginning Jan. 12. If your idea is developed and implemented, you will be acknowledged and commended in the CEO's personal recognition program.

The 'think tank' concept came out of a recent roundtable discussion in the Financial Services staff meeting last week. "Look," said Shawn Lowe, financial services manager, "I don't know how to save \$100,000 in another department, but I bet someone in that department knows how! Let's ask them!"

To get the gearbox cranking, the CEO is asking employees to "Look around your department and think about ways that you could do your job better and that may save the agency a few dollars."

"No idea is too small," said Michelle Caldwell, Executive Officer, Management & Budget, "every single idea submitted will be reviewed and evaluated."

For example, an idea where 100 people could save the agency \$5 a day — by turning off their computer every night or reducing office supplies — is equal to an idea that saves a department \$5,000 a month, she said. "It all works."

"We must go beyond the standard hard measures that are usually applied," said Snoble. "We don't want to cancel essential functions. We want to develop a budget that we can live with."

Noting the recession and actions by the State seriously impair Metro's ability to provide the best transportation system in the nation, the CEO is asking employees to contribute their ideas to reduce Metro's structural deficit.

"We need every Metro employee's help in overcoming the deficit," said Snoble.

- *Photo of Equipment Maintenance Specialists Toshi Manaka, Ronnie Burt and Eric Czintos used in this illustration was taken by photographer Deniz Durmus after the Metro Rail team took first place at the 2007 APTA International competition in Toronto.*





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## Metro to Increase Employee Subsidy for Monthly Transit Passes

- Transit subsidy benefit increases \$5

(Dec. 12, 2008) Beginning January 1, some Metro employees will pay \$5 less toward the cost of the monthly transit passes they use to commute to work each day.



More than half of the 1,600 employees participating in the agency's transit subsidy program take Metrolink to work.

That's because the agency will increase its contributions to the transit subsidy program from \$115 to \$120 per participating employee. More than 1,600 Metro employees currently participate in the agency's transit subsidy program.

For those whose transit passes cost more than \$120, the amount deducted from their paychecks will drop by \$5, beginning with the Dec. 19 paychecks. An employee who purchases a \$160 Metrolink pass, for example, will have \$40 deducted from his or her paycheck, while Metro will pay \$120.

The payroll adjustment will take effect automatically, without the need to submit a change form. Employees whose transit passes cost less than \$120 will not be affected by the adjustment in the subsidy.

Metro automatically links the amount of the transit subsidy benefit to the maximum allowed under the federal IRS code.

Of the 1,600 employees enrolled in the Metro Rideshare Program, more than half ride Metrolink, some 400 belong to a vanpool, while others ride municipal transit buses, purchase the EZ Pass or have a city subsidy.

Employees can enroll in Metro's Rideshare Program by calling the Rideshare Hotline at 922-4863 or by completing the Transportation Subsidy Application found on *myMetro.net* under [Human Resources](#) forms.

Enrollments must be completed by the fifth workday of a month to be effective the following month, said Employee Transportation Coordinator Terree Holman.

-- from Gayle Anderson

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Portions of the Metro Orange Line route, which began service in October 2005, were repaved to improve the strength and durability of the 14-mile transitway, where a fleet of 30 Metroliners transport an estimated 25,500 passengers on an average weekday.  
*Photo by Juan Ocampo - 2005.*

## Metro Finishes Repaving Work on the Metro Orange Line; Service Now Back to Normal Operation

By RICK JAGER

(Dec. 12, 2009) Metro contractors have finished work on repaving a portion of the Metro Orange Line transitway between the intersections of Topham Street/Victory Boulevard and Balboa/Victory Boulevard.

The first phase of repaving began in October and was completed earlier this month. The second phase of repaving west of Balboa, which began Dec. 3, is now completed.

Metro Orange Line buses have now resumed normal operation.

Repaving work was needed to improve strength and durability of the transitway.

Operations required demolition of existing pavement, grinding, scraping, removal of material, placement of new material, compacting of soils and asphalt and re-striping of the transitway, pedestrian crossings and re-installation of traffic signal detector loops.

The repaving project was completed within the estimated timeframe of 10 weeks.

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Santa Crane's helpers: From left, Mr. Crane Manager Denny Querantes, Metro Facilities Maintenance Supervisor Phyllis Meng, Prologis engineer Steve Noonan and Metrolink flagman Joe Ortiz. *Photos/video by Gayle Anderson*

## Santa Crane delivers 800-lb. hot water storage tank to Metro Café rooftop

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(Dec. 16, 2008) On a misty, overcast Saturday morning, Dec. 13, facilities systems technicians were all over the fourth-floor roof making way for a brand, new 200-gallon water heater. The new water heater was to replace the original one in place since the cafeteria opened in 1996.

The original A.O. Smith storage tank was rapidly aging, and Facilities Maintenance Supervisor Phyllis Meng didn't want to chance it. "The original water heater was leaking and needed to be replaced right away before it went out completely. It's time to replace it with a new one," she said.

Easier said than done. There is no easy access to the fourth floor roof, which spans the length and width of the cafeteria below. A fire ladder leads to a four-foot square opening, not quite the size an 800-pound, seven-foot tall water heater could squeeze through easily.

Enter Mr. Crane. A good-looking 100-ton hydraulic crane, packing 105,600 pounds of muscle and an operator cab with 155-foot boom, was perfect for the job. Perched between the Metrolink tracks and the west patio, the crane operation, coordinated by Glen Dimson of Building Services, was good to go on Saturday morning.

First, the crew had to retrieve the old water heater, also seven feet tall and weighing 800 pounds. Almost effortlessly, or so it seemed, the boom went to the mark and brought the retiring water heater back to the roped-off safety zone on the concrete below. Next, under the watchful eyes of Meng, Steve Noonan, the building engineer for Prologis, and Joe Ortiz, a flagman for Metrolink, the crew strapped the shiny new tank into the crane's grasp for its poetic ascent to the fourth floor rooftop.



Glen Dimson prepares 200-gal water heater for lift to the fourth floor.

Now in place and fully operational, the new water heater advances the reconstruction project in the cafeteria, which is scheduled to begin Dec. 26 and end March 1. A contractor will demolish the floors in two work areas of the Metro Café and add a waterproof membrane to the rebuilt floors.

During that time, Metro Café will open at 6:30 a.m. and close at 2 p.m.



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## Mayor TAPs into 21st Century with Launch of New Reusable Transit Fare Card

- Check it out:  
[TAP online](#) at *myMetro.net*

<Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa demonstrates using the new TAP card to board the Metro Red Line at Union Station.

*Photos by Gary Leonard*

By KIM UPTON

(December 16, 2008) Los Angeles Mayor and Metro Board Chairman Antonio Villaraigosa demonstrated Metro's new fare card at a news conference held near the entrance of the Metro Red and Purple Lines at Union Station. The Mayor's sneak preview of TAP was designed to introduce the new tool Metro has developed to make paying for travel easier.

TAP, or Transit Access Pass, is the revolutionary new electronic fare payment system that will eventually unify all of Los Angeles County's transit operators through a single, reusable payment card.





Metro Board Director John Fasana, left, and Roger Moliere, Real Property and Development Chief, right, flank Los Angeles Mayor and Metro Board Chairman Antonio Villaraigosa at news conference held Monday to introduce Metro's TAP fare card.

The goal is for transit patrons to pay for rides on Metro Rail and buses and local municipal buses with a single, rechargeable card. The region's Metrolink commuter rail riders can transfer to connecting Metro and local municipal operators using the same TAP card.

By late January, the more than 400 retail outlets and Metro Customer Service Centers, Foothill Transit Stores and the LADOT Transit Store that sell weekly and monthly Metro paper passes will sell only electronic TAP cards.

While all regular passengers will be required to make the switch to TAP in January, recipients of senior, disabled and student discounted passes will be eased into it by June, 2009. Cash fares will continue to be accepted on both bus and rail.

"TAP is revolutionary because it's more than just a fare payment card," said Mayor Villaraigosa. "It's a system that will make transit easier and better for our riders through a long list of benefits."

Among the benefits:

- Both money and passes can be added to TAP cards via the Internet, as well as at ticket vending machines in all Metro Rail stations, so that customers can avoid standing in line at pass sales outlets. TAP cards also can be auto loaded each month, if customers set up the service by calling 1.866.TAPTOGO or on line at [www.TAPTOGO.net](http://www.TAPTOGO.net).
- TAP offers "balance protection," so losing a card doesn't mean losing all of the money or a pass that is on the card. Since TAP cards can be registered, whatever the value of the card the moment it is reported missing is the value the card holder will get back on the replacement card. Because this is an electronic card, stolen or lost cards can be quickly disabled. This reduces fraud in a way not possible with paper passes.
- TAP technology makes it possible for Metro to partner with companies to reward riders with special discounts, incentives and

tickets to entertainment and sporting venues throughout Los Angeles. Among the first to participate in such a partnership is L.A. LIVE, the brand new entertainment center in downtown Los Angeles, which is sponsoring a sweepstakes in conjunction with the TAP launch, using a special, commemorative co-branded TAP card available only at select downtown pass outlets.

"L.A. LIVE is proud of the partnership we have developed with Metro, showing people that downtown is a destination where transportation works," said Lisa Herzlich, Senior Vice President & Managing Director of L.A. LIVE.

Other TAP benefits include:

- TAP riders can receive benefits directly from Metro with future loyalty programs, such as "frequent riders" status — a program to recognize customers who are dependent on public transit for their daily commutes.
- TAP can be used to collect ridership data so that transit service can better accommodate changing travel patterns.
- TAP will soon allow seamless travel throughout the region on Metro, municipal operators and local transit service systems, since riders will only need one type of payment for all systems.
- TAP is "green" because the same pass can be used month after month, unlike paper passes that are discarded after weekly or monthly expiration.

Phasing in of TAP cards coincides with implementation of a gating system for Metro Rail. The agency currently relies on a proof of payment system and fare inspectors to ensure that patrons pay their way. Metro estimates that TAP, coupled with the gating system, will help it recoup most of the nearly \$5 million lost yearly to fare evasion.

New fare gates will free up fare inspection personnel so that there can be more focus on keeping customers and the system safe as they travel on Metro Rail.

The 18-month program to design and install the fare gates in Metro Rail stations will launch next summer, with the opening of the Gold Line Eastside Extension at the two underground Mariachi Plaza and Soto stations. Installation on the Metro Red Line will follow, along with the Metro Green Line and strategic Blue and Gold Line stations.

Roughly 250,000 TAP cards are currently in circulation, according to Jane Matsumoto, Metro's Deputy Executive Officer responsible for the Regional Universal Fare System and TAP.

"TAP will bring Metro into the 21st century," Matsumoto said. "It's similar to the high-tech fare collection systems used by Washington D.C., New York, San Francisco, Chicago and other large transit properties. Unlike those properties, in Los Angeles we're implementing a regional system that links together transit agencies, both small and large. We're confident that once we make the transition to TAP, our customers will enjoy the many benefits."

TAP is part of an \$89 million upgrade of Metro's obsolete bus fare boxes and Metro Rail ticket vending machines.



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First in a series of articles By Scott Norwood on emergency preparedness and resources available to Metro employees. Future articles will address ICS training for employees; personal emergency preparedness at home.



**On the job** - Transit Security Officers, from left, José Ortiz, Sgt. Yi Pu, German Poblano are among the Transit Security force whose scope includes Metro employees, facilities and patrons in the line of duty. *Photos: Gayle Anderson*

## Metro's Security Transit at the Frontline of Emergency Preparedness

By SCOTT R. NORWOOD

*Emergency & Homeland Security Preparedness Manager*

(Dec. 16, 2008) In light of national concern for preparedness in the face of natural disasters and the threat of terrorism, the Department of Homeland Security is increasing efforts to fully inform the public and private sectors in all levels of emergency preparedness.

Metro's Transit Security, a dedicated force of some 80 trained security personnel assigned to Metro facilities, is on the frontline of emergency operations within the agency.

Living up to its motto -- "Safety, Security, and Service" -- the force is undergoing intensive emergency preparedness training in order to serve and protect the employees, facilities and patrons served by the second largest transit system in the nation.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) requires that all first responders be trained in Incident Command Systems (ICS).

The Incident Command System originated in California out of the FireScope program created by local fire agencies, and has been adopted by FEMA as



the system which will be used in every emergency response.

Last July, under a directive from DEO, Safety and Security Jack Eckles, the Security staff began training in ICS courses. These initial courses provide the first level of training required for first responders. All of Metro's Transit Security Officers have now completed the training.

The initial courses, an option now being offered to all Metro employees through OD&T, are as follows:

- **ICS 100**, Introduction to the Incident Command System, introduces the Incident Command System (ICS) and provides the foundation for higher level ICS training. This course describes the history, features and principles, and organizational structure of the Incident Command System. It also explains the relationship between ICS and the National Incident Management System (NIMS).
- **ICS-200**, Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents is designed to enable personnel to operate efficiently during an incident or event within the Incident Command System (ICS). ICS-200 provides training on and resources for personnel who are likely to assume a supervisory position within the ICS.
- **ICS-700**, Introduction to National Incident Management System (NIMS) explains the purpose, principles, key components and benefits of NIMS. The course also contains "Planning Activity" screens to complete some planning tasks during this course.
- **ICS-800**, Introduction to National Response Framework introduces participants to the concepts and principles of the National Response Framework. This course is intended for government executives, private-sector and nongovernmental organization (NGO) leaders, and emergency management practitioners.

In preparing for their role in emergencies, the Transit Security force trains for situations that may involve one individual or many.

For example, a Metro customer was ejected from his wheelchair recently when one of his wheels jammed into a crack in the roadway. Seeing the man's distress, Transit Security Officer Willie Miles went to his assistance, protecting the man from potential oncoming traffic while returning him to his wheelchair. The grateful customer later wrote a letter to the department commending Officer Miles and noted: "We live in a crazy world and the mere presence of your security officers makes me feel safe and secure here in the workplace, but it is especially nice to know that I can count on their help in other ways."



Transit Security Officer Willie Miles

Officer Miles responded simply and to the point: "This is what we do."

Officer Miles is typical of the ongoing commitment of Metro Security to the welfare of Metro employees, patrons, and contractors. In the field or behind the security desk or on patrol, this is what they do.



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## Defeating the Deficit

### Employees respond to CEO's call to action

Deficit-defeating TIP OF THE DAY from ITS Chief Information Officer Elizabeth Bennett:

Taking some time off for the holidays? Pick up a 'green' habit and help 'defeat the deficit' by turning off your computer when you leave the office.



- Send your idea to [DefeatTheDeficit@metro.net](mailto:DefeatTheDeficit@metro.net).

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(Dec. 18, 2008) One week into CEO Roger Snoble's call to action to 'Defeat the Deficit,' suggestions are pouring in to the monitoring e-mail box of the Office of Management and Budget.

"The ideas are really great!" said Shawn Lowe, financial services manager who's coordinating the project. "They are really very well thought out; some are already complete with cost analysis," she said. "And many can be implemented at no or very low cost."

The ideas traverse a healthy range of savings from million-dollar ideas to simple savings per workstation that can add up depending on how many employees participate.



At the busy ITS Help Desk, analysts never forget to turn their monitor and CPUs off overnight and on the weekends and while away for longer periods, such as vacations.

One suggestion that costs nothing to implement but can amount to an overall savings in the range of \$150,000 to \$250,000 a year, is this:

Turn your computer, monitor, and peripherals off every night.

"That's right," said Elizabeth Bennett, ITS chief information officer. "Turning off PCs during periods of inactivity can save companies a substantial sum. In fact, Energy Star, a company that rates computer energy consumption, estimates organizations can save up to \$75 per workstation (\$30 for the monitor and \$45 for the CPU) per year."

Multiply that by 2,000 work stations turned off overnight and you come up with a savings equal to a low-ball estimate of \$150,000 a year. Make it 3,000 work stations, and the savings rises to \$250,000 a year.

Leaving your computer on does more than generate energy bills. It may also cost you loss of information, such as the system updates ITS routinely installs during the off hours.

Leaving your electronics running may not be causing a technology problem, said Bennett, "but it is a consumption one. In this age of 'green,' managers may want to remind staff to turn off equipment and lights when not in use to save energy and money."

In addition, Bennett noted, if you are in the habit of always leaving your computer on at home, you need to know that it's connected to the Internet without adequate security protection and therefore is an open invitation for hackers to use your computer as a 'bot.' (A 'bot' is a type of malware that allows an attacker to gain complete control over the affected computer. There are literally tens of thousands of computers on the Internet which are infected with some type of 'bot' whose owners do not even realize it.)

The holiday season is a good time to start a new habit, said Bennett, especially if you are taking some time off. Going on vacation? Please turn off your computer and monitor and, don't forget your printer!

"Keep those cards and letters coming," said Lowe. In advance of the January Board Meeting, when the Board must take a hard look at the quandary posed by high expectations for traffic improvement against the reality of budgetary shortfalls, CEO Snoble is convinced employees can come up with ideas to cut costs and increase efficiencies enough to help reduce the structural deficit.

Contribute your ideas by Jan. 5 to [DefeatThedeficit@metro.net](mailto:DefeatThedeficit@metro.net). Your ideas will be evaluated by the Office of Management and Budget in time to go to review by Board Committees, which will convene beginning Jan. 12. If your idea is developed and implemented, you will be acknowledged and commended in the CEO's personal recognition program.



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12.17.08

## CEO Roger Snoble announces plans to retire in message to employees



CEO Roger Snoble, pictured here on board a new 65-foot Metroliner, can reflect on seven years of achievement while at the helm of Metro. *Photo: Gayle Anderson*

- [CEO Message to Employees](#)

- Media Relations issued a news release immediately following the announcement to employees at 12:15 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 17. [News release](#)

**Quotables** CEO Snoble was praised by local elected officials including Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and Los Angeles County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, who both serve on the Metro Board of Directors.

"Roger Snoble is a dedicated public servant who has provided solid leadership and a steady hand in restoring the credibility of the MTA while improving public transportation for millions of Los Angeles County residents and commuters."

*Los Angeles Mayor and Metro Board Chairman Antonio Villaraigosa*



"Roger Snoble has led Metro to new heights in the delivery of expanded, quality public transportation to the citizens of Los Angeles County. What was a troubled and moribund agency more than 10 years ago is now recognized as one of the highest performing bus systems in the nation. On his watch the Orange Line, Eastside Gold Line and Exposition light rail line have been or are being built. With the passage of Measure R last month, Metro is poised to build the integrated public transit network that this region so desperately needs."

*Los Angeles County Supervisor and Metro Board Member Zev Yaroslavsky*

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**Sock away more money in 401(k) and 457 Plans in 2009 and other words to the wise as tax time fast approaches.**



### Your tax-time check list:

[401\(k\)](#) Thrift Plan

[457](#) Deferred Compensation Plan

[Social Security and SDI](#) Taxes Going Up

[W-2](#) Forms

[Tax Preparation](#) Service

[Reminders:](#) Address Change, Form W-4, W-5

By DAVE WAKELING  
*Accounting Manager*

(Dec. 23, 2009) The Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001 continues to offer increased tax relief in 2009.

### 401(k) Thrift Plan

As of January 1, 2009, you will be allowed to defer up to \$16,500 annually from your salary into the 401(k) Thrift Plan. A special provision in the law allows you to defer an additional \$5,500 in to the 401(k) Thrift Plan if you are a "Baby Boomer" (age 50 or greater by Dec. 31, 2009).

### 457 Deferred Compensation Plan:

As of January 1, 2009, you will be allowed to defer up to \$16,500 annually from your salary. A special provision in the law also allows an additional \$5,500 if you are a "Baby Boomer."

If you are eligible for retirement within three years, you also are eligible for 457 Plan's pre-retirement "catch-up" provision. Your total deferral may increase to \$33,000 effective Jan. 1, 2009. "Catch-Up Provision" packets are available in the Pension and Benefits Office.

### Both Plans

You may contribute to **both** the 401(k) Thrift Plan and the 457 Deferred Compensation Plan for a total deferral of \$33,000. If you are age 50 or greater by Dec. 31, 2009, you may defer up to a total of \$44,000 in both plans.

If you are in "catch-up" and *less than 50 years of age*, you may defer a total of \$49,500. That is \$33,000 to the 457 Deferred Compensation Plan, plus \$16,500 to 401(k). If you are in "catch-up" and *age 50 or older*, you may defer a total of \$55,000. That is \$33,000 to 457 plus \$22,000 to 401(k).

Contributions are deducted each pay period for a total of 26 per year.

To obtain forms for enrollment or contribution changes, employees may contact the Pension and Benefits Office at 922-7184. Investment information is available from Jessica Sequeira at ICMA-RC 866-339-8795, Orlando Delgado at ICMA-RC 866-266-7312 or from ICMA-RC Investor Services 1-800-669-7400.

**Social Security and SDI Taxes Going Up**

As of Jan. 1, 2009, the wage base for Social Security will increase from \$102,000 to \$106,800. This means that some employees will experience an increase in Social Security taxes, even though the tax rate percentage will remain the same.

At a tax rate of 6.2 percent, this is an increase of \$297.60 in the maximum amount of Social Security tax that can be withheld from an employee's paycheck. Deductions for Medicare remain unchanged.

The wage base for State Disability Insurance (SDI) will increase to \$90,669. At a tax rate of 1.1 percent, this is an increase of \$303.78 in the maximum amount of SDI that can be withheld in 2009.

**W-2 Forms**

Metro is in the process of finalizing the Form W-2 Wage and Tax Statements. They will be mailed to employees' homes in January.

If you need a replacement copy of your Form W-2, you must complete a replacement form. You can obtain the form from Forms Online on myMetro.net or by contacting Payroll at 922-6819 and requesting that a form be sent to you.

Once the form has been received by Payroll, it may take up to a five working days to process.

**TurboTax Online**

Metro will offer again online tax preparation service, available Jan. 31, 2009, for those employees who use or are interested in using TurboTax 2008 to prepare their Federal and state income tax returns.

This means that you can download your W-2 information directly into TurboTax, and a good part of your tax filing will be completed for you. The web site will be included on your 2008 Form W-2. Additional information can be obtained at <http://westnsc.adp.com/turbotax>.

**Reminders:**

**Address Change**

You should verify the address shown on your pay stub. If you have a change in your mailing address, please notify your Department/Division Manager so that the change can be updated in the Human Resources system before **noon** on Friday, Dec. 26.

If your Social Security number is not correct, contact Gwen Keene in Human Resources immediately at 922-7148.

**Form W-4, Employee's Withholding Allowance**

Now is the time to check your Federal and State tax withholding allowances. Did you marry or divorce, gain or lose a dependent, or have major changes in your family income? If you answered "yes," you may need to file a new 2009 Form W-4 Employee's Withholding Allowance



Certificate.

If you are currently claiming “exempt” from tax withholding, you *must* submit a new Form W-4 by Feb. 15, 2009, if you wish to retain your exempt status. If a new form is not filed and submitted to the Human Resources Department, withholding for Federal and State taxes will automatically default to “Single” with zero (0) withholding allowances.

**Form W-5, Earned Income Credit Advance Payment**

If you are currently receiving Advance Earned Income Credit, a new Form W-5 *Earned Income Credit Advance Payment Certificate* must be filed with Payroll no later than January 1, 2009.



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[ Metro Moments ]

Holidays '08: It's a Wrap!

Metro employees went all out this season. Here's a look at just some of the holiday spirit distributed throughout the region by Metro employees.

[MORE>](#) The Rich Morallo Holiday Film Festival



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## Services pending for Alpha Goodall-Marshall, Retired Train Operator and 28-year Metro Veteran

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(Dec. 26, 2008) Services are pending for Alpha Goodall-Marshall, a train operator and Metro veteran who retired in February from the Metro Green Line.

Alpha Goodall-Marshall, who died Dec. 21 from kidney failure, was 52.

The Metro veteran was hired as a bus operator at Arthur Winston Division 5 in July 1980. She became a train operator on the Blue Line in February 1999 and joined the Green Line shortly thereafter, where she remained until her retirement in February 2008.

Alpha Goodall-Marshall was a active member of the Eastern Star and the treasurer and enthusiastic member of the California Corvette Club, where she enjoyed showing off her sleek, red Corvette. She loved her dog Brownie, whom she rescued as a stray from nearby the tracks of the Metro Green Line in 2001.

Close friend and fellow train operator Mollie Avinger remembers Alpha as an expert in her profession who was always willing to help newcomers.

"She was always very helpful with anybody that came in new," said Avinger, "She'd show them the ropes.

"Alpha was good at whatever she did," said Avinger. "She knew every little thing. There was nothing you could ask her about the train - the Green Line's P2000



**Alpha Goodall-Marshall**  
1956 - 2008



Alpha adopted Chihuahua 'Brownie' after rescuing him from nearby the Green Line tracks.



Alpha Goodall-Marshall, left, with close friend



or the Blue Line's P200 - that she didn't know."

and fellow operator, Mollie Avinger.

Alphia is survived by her niece, Vanessa, whom she raised as a daughter, and Vanessa's eight-year-old son. Her beloved Chihuahua, Brownie, died last May, said Avinger.

Photos courtesy of Mollie Avinger

Born Feb. 18, 1956, Alphia Goodall-Marshall lived in Central Los Angeles.

Services are pending.



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[ Metro Moments ]

The Rich Morallo 2008 Holiday Film Festival:

(Dec. 26, 2008) Community Relations Manager and volunteer coordinator Rich Morallo captures Holiday moments from Metro Divisions and Metro Headquarters as employees and community partners dig deep into their hearts and pockets to share the spirit of the season with the region's neediest families.

- Click 'play' buttons on and off to view. (The play button is at far left on each movie's control bar.) [Adobe Flash® Player](#) plug-in required

**Double Feature:** West Hollywood Division 7 partners with students from Hamilton High to decorate a holiday bus. Gateway Division 10 mechanics deliver a busload of toys to families served by MacLaren Hall.

[Click movie's Play button]

**SGV Tradition:** San Gabriel Valley Division 9 transportation employees and Sheriff's deputies - joined by famed soccer player Kwame - deliver a busload of toys and 30 soccer balls to the El Monte Boys & Girls Club.

[\[Play on new page\]](#)



**Live Radio Broadcast:** Metro South Bay Operator Jimi Greene organizes the 13th annual gift drive for the Stevie Wonder House Full of Toys program. The delivery was broadcast live in the studio of KJLH-FM 102.3.

[\[Play on new page\]](#)



**Metro's 13th Annual Gift-giving drive for the Fred Jordan Mission:** Festive presentation fills the lobby at Metro Headquarters with song, gifts, children and cheer as organizers fill

two busloads of gifts cheered on by Willie Jordan and children from the Gateway Child Care Center.

[\[Play on new page\]](#)



**Fred Jordan Mission Christmas Celebration on Skid Row:** Some 35 employees volunteered to help distribute food, toys and blankets collected by churches, synagogues, corporations, Metro and other groups to help bring Christmas joy to thousands of needy families.

[\[Play on new page\]](#)



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Backed by the Metro Choir, Metro Rail General Manager Mike Cannell and Metro Board Member Doug Failing meet up with 2009 Tournament of Roses Queen and Royal Court at the Metro Gold Line Del Mar Station to encourage parade-goers and Rosebowl fans to "Go Metro" to New Year's festivities in Pasadena.

## Metro perfect match for Tournament of Roses Parade and Rose Bowl Patrons

By LAURA KLOTH  
*myMetro.net*

It's official. There's just no excuse for driving to this year's Tournament of Roses Parade or Rose Bowl game.

Mike Cannell, General Manager, Rail Operations, couldn't predict the outcome of Thursday's game between USC and Penn State, but he could guarantee traffic on the 210 and 110 freeways will be a nightmare.

Cannell joined the Rose Queen and other Metro officials and personnel Monday to encourage event patrons to ride the Metro Gold Line.

Stepping off from the Del Mar Station in Pasadena the group boarded the train and stopped off at a couple of local stops where Metro will provide special event services this year including a shuttle for the game.

Indicating that Los Angeles is officially the most congested city in the U.S., Cannell encouraged parade and game patrons to take Metro.

"It's not only smart, simple and secure. It's very cheap," Cannell said during the press conference. Cannell, who rides the Gold Line every day, encouraged riders who planned to park at the stations to get there early before the lots fill up.



Photo op: TAP card sets off media frenzy when Rose Queen Courtney Lee and the Royal Court attempt to board the Metro Gold Line.



As she boarded the train, Rose Queen Courtney Lee admitted this would be her first ride ever. However, Lee, an Arcadia High School student, said she planned to use public transportation when she attends USC.

"I don't find traffic and waiting entertaining at all," said the Arcadia resident who beat out more than 1,100 other girls to reign over the 120<sup>th</sup> Rose Parade.

To accommodate the additional Gold Line users, Metro will run three car trains carrying up to 600 passengers every seven to eight minutes at peak riding periods Thursday.

As a public service, Metro bus and rail will be free from 9 p.m. Dec. 31 until 2 a.m. on Jan. 1, 2009. Fares go into effect again at 2 a.m. on New Year's Day with \$5 for a Metro Day Pass.

Game patrons will be happy to know that they can ride the Gold Line to the Memorial Park Station where they can catch a free game shuttle just a short walk from their stop.

Monday's event also included members of Metro's Choir headed by Renee Willis. The choir carried on the holiday spirit by singing Christmas carols onboard the Gold Line train complete with a "Rose Bowl Special" headsign.



This year's Rose Parade theme is "Hats Off to Entertainment" and will feature the 46 highly anticipated floral floats including a float dedicated to organ donors. This is the sixth year the Metro Gold Line provides services to the event.

- Communications welcomes writer and reporter Laura Kloth to the staff of *myMetro.net*.

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## Now online: Library digitizes 50 years of employee newsmagazines

- Check it out: [Employee Newsmagazines](#) at the Dorothy Peyton Gray Transportation Library and Archive

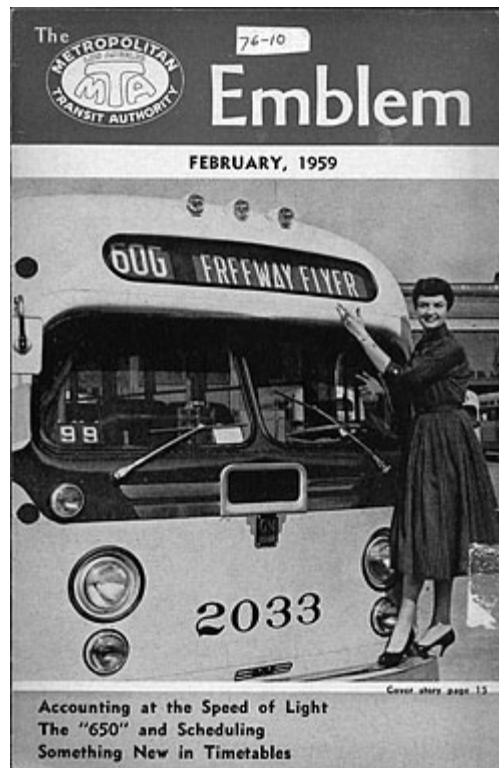
By Kenn Bicknell  
*Librarian*

In recognition of 50 years of publicly owned and operated transit service and the employees who made it happen, the Dorothy Peyton Gray Transportation Library and Archive has digitized its employee newsmagazine collection to make it more accessible to employees, retirees, historians, and anyone who wishes to revisit the last half-century of public transportation in the Los Angeles area.

The digitized collection includes issues from the first Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA 1958-1964), the Southern California Rapid Transit District (SCRTD 1964-1993), Los Angeles County Transportation Commission (LACTC 1976-1993), as well as the pre-intranet years of Metro.

The tradition of transit employee newsmagazines in Los Angeles dates back to 1920.

The publications of Pacific Electric, Los Angeles Railway and other transit company predecessors have helped employees understand one another's job functions, provided recognition for everyone's hard work over the years, and have given insight into the direction of company leadership.



### Just a click away: 50 years of history

You can find the links to the past 50 years of employee newsmagazines like the Emblem, Headway, Inside Moves, and Metro Family, among others, on myMetro.net's [Employee Newsmagazines](#) page.

Many of these documents are also hosted on the Library's Scribd site at <http://www.scribd.com/people/view/4077018>, where the individual newsmagazine titles have their own folders to browse.

The November, 1982 issue of the RTD Headway reports on the prestigious film awards won by "Starting Under," a documentary about the Metro Rail project that was years away from completion.

The Library also provides access to the film itself via its [You Tube](#) channel. The 18-minute film can be found in two parts, Part I: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sKHRHikfV5Q>, and Part II: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y9ZHOacqi84>

The employee newsmagazines also document our employees' dedicated and heroic work performed in the aftermath of extraordinary circumstances, such as: The 1978 [floods](#), the

The digitization and archival project took about a year to complete:

- Library staff had the publications digitized for preservation purposes.
- Each publication was optimized for web viewing and tagged with metadata so that keyword searching would locate relevant issues on *myMetro.net*.
- The newsletters were rendered compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. (Section 508 requires that digital documents are as accessible as possible to people using alternative methods to view, read or listen to them.)

These resources are not only a valuable record of Los Angeles Metro and its predecessor agencies, but probably the best sources of historical information about the various departments and the operating divisions over the years.

You can read about the first computer used at the Metropolitan Transit Authority in the February 1959 issue of *The Emblem*. The upcoming 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of "accounting at the speed of light" by large data processing machines using punch cards helps us all realize how far we have come in using computerized processes for everyday work.

Said Library Administrator Matthew Barrett: "At some point in the future, when resources are available, the library will be working with the Orange Empire Railway Museum to ensure both Metro and the Museum have complete runs and digitally accessible collections of Pacific Electric Magazine and Los Angeles Railway's *Two Bells* magazine."

1994 [Northridge earthquake](#), the response to the 1992 riots from the [District's Headway](#) and the Commission's [Inside Moves](#)

