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Drummers Tony Martin and DonCosta Seawell opened for the Metro Choir at Black History Month event at Metropolitan Water District. *Photos by Gayle Anderson*

Metro, MWD Events to Celebrate Black History Month

- Metro's African American Employees Association partners with Metropolitan Water District Black Employees Association to launch month-long celebration
- [Calendar:](#) Schedule of events

By LAURA KLOTH
myMetro.net

(Feb. 3, 2009) African "call" drums literally beckoned employees to the Metropolitan Water District's Board Room today to launch Black History Month 2009.

Metro employees Tony Martin and DonCosta Seawell performed on African drums for the opening act. The drumming served as a prelude to the Metro Choir performance of Gospel music.

This year, members of Metro's African American Employee Association (AAEA) joined forces with Metropolitan Water District's Black Employees Association (BEA) to plan more than a dozen



activities to be held at Metro and the MWD building.

The two organizations decided to coordinate their activities after holding the successful Juneteenth celebration in the MWD courtyard, said Susan Dove, senior contract administrator. "We had a few meetings. Everyone got together and figured out set events," she said.

At today's events, BEA President Judy Holland encouraged employees to take at least a few minutes at lunch or at break to enjoy the events.

"We are here to celebrate our rich history and applaud those who paved the way," Holland said, detailing some of the recent monumental achievements.

MWD organizer Benita Horn pointed out events on a large cardboard calendar, and noted she was "excited" that Metro was partnering with MWD this year, because she once worked for Metro.

"In order for this month to be a success, we need your participation. Please support as many events as possible," Horn told employees.

On Wednesday, a bake sale is planned from 7 to 9 a.m. in the MWD cafeteria.

At 10 a.m. on the same day, Venice Division 6 will sponsor a health seminar with speaker Dr. Bill Releford, founder of the Black Barbershop Health Outreach Program. Dr. Releford's topic will be "Health and Empowerment: Avoiding Risk Factors for Development of Diabetes, Hypertension about Cardiovascular Disease."

Dr. Releford is the founder of the Black Barbershop Health Outreach Program, which focuses on preventing amputations for diabetic patients.

MWD Black History Month committee chair Bonita Horn announces schedule of events at joint launch.

- Wed. Feb. 4, 7 a.m.: **Bake Sale**, MWD Cafeteria.
- Wed., Feb. 4, 10 a.m.: **Health seminar** at Venice Division 6 with speaker Dr. Bill Releford, founder of the Black Barbershop Health Outreach Program. Topic: "Health and Empowerment: Avoiding Risk Factors for Development of Diabetes, Hypertension about Cardiovascular Disease."
- Thurs., Feb. 5, noon - **"Best Life Series: -Money Talk"** with Jim Guarente in Room 1-102 at MWD.
- Tues., Feb. 10, noon – **Poet's Corner:** Poets recite their favorite works at the 4th floor Wilshire Conference Room. Those wishing to participate should contact Keith Hanson or Veronica Hargrove, Metro.
- Wed. Feb. 11, noon - **Game Day:** Bring your favorite board games to share and play at noon in the MWD Gallery.
- Fri., Feb. 13, 9 a.m. – **Flower sale** in the rotunda of the MWD building
- Mon., Feb. 16, 6 a.m. to noon –Division 10 Operator James Berry will present his unique collection of **Black History memorabilia** from 6 a.m. to noon at the Division training room.
- Tues., Feb. 17, noon – **Inauguration Experience** – Listen to accounts of employees who attended the historical U.S. Presidential Inauguration in the Wilshire Conference Room, 4th floor, Metro.
- Wed., Feb. 18, 10 a.m. – **Marketplace** – 35 vendors will set up shop in the MWD courtyard.
- Wed., Feb. 18, 11a.m. - **Barbeque** in the MWD courtyard.
- Monday Feb. 23, noon – **Black Jeopardy:** Participants will play at MWD, Room 1-102.
- Tues., Feb. 24, noon – **Men in Black Fish Fry** in the MWD courtyard.
- Wed., Feb. 25, noon – The **Metro Choir** will perform a full concert in the Metro Boardroom.

Manager Cheryl Brown said the topic is appropriate because it addresses diseases that affect employees in sedentary positions. "We're trying to let operators know how to take care of themselves," she said, indicating that she hopes at least a third of the 87 operators at the division will attend.

On Monday, Feb. 16, Division 10 Operator James Berry will present his unique collection of Black history memorabilia from 6 a.m. to noon at the Division training room. Berry takes vacation time in February to educate staff about African-American history, said Division 10 Asst. Transportation Manager Margo Ross.

- Thurs., Feb. 26, noon – **Los Angeles County Supervisor and new Metro Board Member Mark Ridley Thomas** will speak in the Gateway Plaza Room, 3rd floor, Metro.
- Thurs., Feb. 26, 4 p.m. – A **Mixer** will be held in the MWD cafeteria.
- Fri., Feb. 27, noon – Black History Month video will be screened in Room 1-102 at MWD.

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Metro Headquarters lights up the downtown skyline on Valentine's Day in 2008. Photo by Mark Clifford.

Volunteers Needed to Turn On Metro's Heart Lights on Thursday

- Metro's Headquarters light display pledged to promote the American Heart Association's annual campaign.
- To volunteer, send an e-mail to southwickj@metro.net.
- Volunteers will meet in the Design Studio conference room on the 19th floor at 3 p.m. Thursday.
- Important reminder for Thursday, Feb. 5: **All Gateway employees, please close your blinds by 3:30 p.m. If you are on floors 12-21, please leave ALL floor lights and office lights on. Our team of volunteers will do the rest.**

By GAYLE ANDERSON

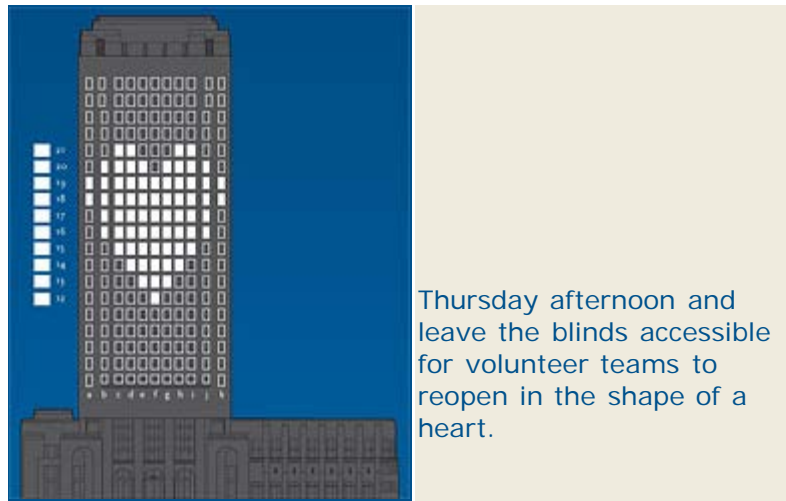
(Feb. 3, 2009) In a motion by Director Mike Antonovich approved Jan. 22, the Metro Board pledged to cast a heart-shaped glow from the Metro Headquarters building Feb. 5 to promote the American Heart Association's "Go Red for Women" campaign that encourages women to take care of their hearts.

The effort requires staff to arrange heart-shaped configurations of office lights and window blinds during the evening hours of Feb. 5.

Volunteers will be coordinated by Design Studio photographer Josh Southwick. To volunteer, send an e-mail to southwickj@metro.net.

At least 20 volunteers are required to accomplish the task, 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 nine-story hearts. Volunteers will close the blinds on all floors on



"We 're asking Metro employees who share or face a window to close the blinds by 3:30 p.m. on Thursday afternoon," said Southwick. "We're also asking employees to leave the blinds accessible for the "Go Red for Women" volunteers, who will come around to each floor and open certain blinds to create the heart shape."

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 light display 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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U.S. Congresswoman Grace F. Napolitano congratulates Metro's Bicycle Planning Manager Lynne Goldsmith at dedication of the Whittier Greenway Bike Trail Feb. 1.

Photos by Jennifer Gill

Metro Funds L.A. County's Newest Bike Trail

- Metro Cycling Club Joins Dedication of the Whittier Greenway Bike Trail

By DAVE SOTERO
Media Relations

(Feb. 3, 2009) Metro's Bicycle Club joined Bike Planning Manager Lynne Goldsmith Saturday in dedicating the Whittier Greenway Bike Trail, L.A. County's newest bicycle and pedestrian trail.

The four-and-a-half mile trail is the result of years of planning and collaboration among local, state and federal agencies, and is considered to be one of the best bikeway projects now within county limits.

Through Metro's Call for Projects, the agency programmed \$9 million in bikeway funding over a three-year period for the project. The substantial project contribution funded the acquisition of right-of-way and construction of the bicycle and pedestrian path.

Project coordination was facilitated through Sharad Mulchand, transportation

Scenes from the Greenway



City of Whittier officials present resolution to Bicycle Planning Manager Lynne Goldsmith in recognition of Metro's contribution to the bicycle and pedestrian trail project.

planning manager for the Metro Gateway Cities Area Team.

"Metro is committed to helping cities throughout L.A. County develop new projects that will create more bicycle-friendly communities," Goldsmith said at the dedication ceremony. "The Whittier Greenway Trail is a regionally significant project that provides bicycle access and mobility as well as access to transit stops in the area."

Whittier can now boast multi-modal transportation opportunities for residents who want to commute through a combination of bicycles and transit.

Combined with nearby work sites, schools and other destinations, this project provides the community with an excellent alternative to driving, and connects directly with local and regional bus systems such as Metro, Norwalk Transit, Montebello Bus Lines and Foothill Transit.

Metro Bike Club Ride

Metro's own Bicycle Club showed its support for the county's newest bike path by joining the dedication and participating in the ensuing group ride.

"I was very impressed with the grandness of the project," said Jennifer Gill, consultant for Metro's Regional Communications Department and a Metro Bike Club Member. "From a biker's perspective, the trail was beautiful. They had drought-resident vegetation that was very tastefully planned. The scenery was similar to that of the Orange Line. The trail (ran through) all different aspects, from industrial, residential and business. Everything was just really well done."



Complete with landscaping and



covered bridges, the new greenway



is ready for serious cycling.

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Handler Paul Orcutt challenges canine officer-in-training to find explosives stashed aboard a bus.
Photos by Gayle Anderson

Metro Security Stages K-9 Drill Training Exercise for Local Agencies

By LAURA KLOTH
myMetro.net

(Feb. 5, 2009) Though incidents involving explosives are rare on Metro's trains and buses, Transit Security officials know they can count on one handy resource, if necessary: trained canine companions.

Metro's four-footed assistants, who have achieved the rank of K-9 Officer, took part in a training exercise at Division 20 hosted by Metro Transit Security Jan. 20. Joining canines from other agencies, the Metro dogs sniffed and searched their way through luggage, buses, a building and a large shipyard container.

"I set up today's training so we can meet other agencies that we have in our area, and be able to count on their resources like they're able to count on our resources," said Senior Transit Security Officer Henry Solis.

"If anything were to happen at the Gateway building, we could actually get 20 dogs to come out and do a

Senior Transit Security Officer Henry Solis coordinated a multi-agency canine drill at Metro Red Line Division 20.



Here are some of the K-9 officers on the job:

search on the building because realistically we couldn't do it with three dogs," Solis said.

Metro currently has 16 dogs available, three that belong to Transit Security, and 13 that belong to Los Angeles Sheriff's Department deputies. And, if necessary, more dogs are available from agencies around the city and region, Solis said.

Solis works with a beautiful black 4-year-old male Labrador named Nakita, who has won trophies for his sniffing abilities.

"We try to set up (a training session) at least every four months," he said, noting it's a good way to evaluate strengths and share new techniques.

Participants included K-9 officers from the LAPD Bomb Squad, the FBI, Amtrak security, Riverside-San Bernardino and private agencies, including dog training guru Danny Lamasters, and Paul Orcutt, a dog handler who trains Disney's police hounds.

Metro's dogs are trained to find explosives or handguns and alert their handlers, explained Transit Security Officer Gus Lozano, who handles a Labrador aptly named Napoleon Dynamite.

During this training, a perky Labrador named Nitro takes only a few seconds to locate a small piece of cotton wedged inside a locker. The cotton contains a small amount of explosive.

Pointing to a list showing explosive materials used at the training, Solis said the dogs are trained to discover explosives from the size of a toothpick to a 1000-pound cache.



U.S. Marshals...



Western K-9 Consultants...



and the Palm Springs Police Department.



TSO Henry Solis points to hidden explosive in locker room. It takes Nitro only seconds to discover a matchstick-size explosive. TSO Gary Carney rewards Officer Nitro with a toy toss.

Nitro's handler, Transit Security Officer Gary Carney, responds by rewarding him with a rubber toy. Some dogs get food rewards but Metro's dogs get

toys, he said.

The dogs are drilled at least twice a week to keep their training fresh and familiarize them with various environments.

Officers also take the dogs through the trains and buses to conduct sweeps during peak periods, and familiarize patrons with them.

"We don't use the same training aides. Today it might be Palm Springs Police Department training aides. Tomorrow it might be Riverside's. We don't have the same spots," Lozano said.

Officers who handle the dogs train for three months with expert trainer Lamasters.

Carney said officers really bond with their dogs, and the dogs become a family pet during their working years and when they retire.



Handler Phil Clark puts Amtrak K-9 officer through the baggage inspection drill.

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The last Rail Operations graduation class of 2008 are certified Dec. 5. Front row, from left, Lauro Trejo, Frank Gonzalez, Kirsten Bell, Dane Millington and Keith Selico. Back row, from left, Eric Smith, Arlene Mills, Dawn Williams, Dhamendra Kellawan and Bruce Stamps. *Photos by Gayle Anderson.*

Rail Operations Graduates 10 of Metro's Finest

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(Feb. 5, 2009) The December 2008 graduating class of Rail Operations added three Rail Transit Operations Supervisors (RTOS) and seven train operators to the ranks of some 200 train operators who pilot the Metro Rail system through a countywide maze of tracks and tunnels to transport an average of 300,000 customers a day.

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

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

Along with a framed graduation certificate, Cannell handed out a poster of an illustration of a smiling Metro train carrying a globe of the world and smiling passengers on board framed by the slogan "Metro moves the world, with a smile."

It's a recurrent theme that Cannell uses to remind new graduates to make the trip on Metro Rail not only safe and courteous, but a very pleasant experience for Metro customers.

The training consists of an



Class of 2008 includes three new Transit Operations Supervisors: Lauro Trejo, Kirsten Bell and Frank Gonzalez.

overview of the rail system and concentrated instruction on rules and procedures followed by hands-on yard operation, mainline operation and procedures specific to operation of each rail line, said Linda Leone, rail instruction manager. In this class, the graduates trained specifically for the Metro Blue Line trains.

In making the transition from bus to train, the new train operators will be responsible for handling vehicles with more weight, with much faster speeds and many times more passengers.

The instructors encouraged the students to work as a team, helping each other learn standard operating procedures, rail safety, mainline and yard operation and vehicle troubleshooting.

Directed by Rail Instruction Manager Linda Leone, the class was conducted by rail training instructors Arnold Johnson, Gerald Harper, Willard Johnson, Frank Hooks, Esther Pippins, Luis Canel, Ricardo Perez, and Cris Medina.



Rail graduates bond with their instructors during the seven-week training course. Here, new train operators Dawn Williams and Keith Selico, right, celebrate with instructors Arnold Johnson, at left, and Willard Johnson, second from right.

The new operators are Dhamendra Kellawan, Dane Millington, Arlene Mills, Keith Selico, Eric Smith, Bruce Stamps and Dawn Williams.

Three of the graduates - Lauro Trejo, Frank Gonzalez, Kirsten Bell - take up duties as Transit Operations Supervisors.

New train operator Arlene Mills, a former Bus Operator out of West Hollywood Division, has been assigned to the Metro Blue Line. The remaining train operators from the class will rotate into Rail Operations from Bus Divisions when positions become available.



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[Metro Moments] The Inauguration Experience

VIDEO^ Click 'play' arrow to see the **slideshow movie** of employee's shared moments from the 56th Presidential Inauguration. You can adjust the **sound slider** on the right for music.
4:39 At home: [Adobe Flash® Player](#) plug-in required.

Employees share the Inauguration Experience

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(Feb. 10, 2009) Along about now, the rushed departure complicated by the potential two million other people, navigation, and what to bring along for 20 degree weather has melted away. What remains is a stunning adventure, full of history and profound experience, still spinning an aura of awe for those who are proud to say, "I was there."

Although it is unclear how many Metro employees attended the Inauguration of the 44th President Barack Obama, seven contributed their memories and photographs to *myMetro.net* so that they could share their moments with you.

Black History Month Special Event: Hear accounts of employees who attended the historical U.S. Presidential Inauguration in the Wilshire Conference Room, fourth floor, Metro. *Tuesday, Feb. 17, noon.*

Hussein Farah traveled to Washington D.C. with his family: Wife Faryad, and their three sons, Sahal, 14; Robleh, 13, and Leeban, 10. The family stayed with relatives in Alexandria and were up at 3:30 a.m. on Inauguration Day to catch the Metro



Hussein Farah
Facilities Maintenance
Manager

train to the National Mall. All went perfectly but the family's best moment may actually have occurred *after* they returned home. Their enterprising middle son, 13-year-old Robleh, an eighth-grader and honor student at Rancho Rico Junior High School, reported live from the Inauguration to his school paper "Hoofbeats," even sending photos from the historic event to the paper's editor from his Apple iPhone. The article was a front page story, of course, and was picked up by the [Santa Clarita Valley Signal](#), which previewed it on the front page along with a photo of the young reporter and printed the article in full on page A-9. [Click here](#) to read it now. But wait, there's more. Now the Santa Clarita Magazine wants to interview him. What's next -- Oprah? Stay tuned.



Dennis Lytton
Rail Transit Operations
Supervisor

I flew into D.C. with my Dad the Saturday before the inauguration and stayed at a friend's house in College Park, Maryland. We took Metro around the area as recommended by officials. The big-crowd pictures around the Washington Monument are of the kickoff concert in front of the Lincoln Memorial. The day before the inauguration are some pictures of me in the close-in standing room area of the Capitol. The next day for the inauguration I was much further back along the mall. That evening I attended the Western States Inaugural Ball. Biden and Obama showed up with their wives, spoke briefly, and danced. A most striking feature of my far off photos is the backs of every digital camera!



Herbert Lewis
MSSC Field Technician

After traveling by air on a red eye flight to Washington, DC the night before the inauguration, my anticipation was filled with knowing that I was about to witness history, more than ever in my life. As I stepped off the Metro train at the Presidential stop, there were thousands of folks walking together towards the mall; it was at least 20 degrees and no one seemed to care. I made my way to the Washington monument where it served as my viewing point. I began to take pictures of the crowd, excitement was on every face. It was a giant family reunion. We stood there watching the inauguration on jumbo screens. Aretha Franklin sang "America the Beautiful" as no one else could, tears began to fall from my eyes. Then, there he was, Barack Obama, being sworn in as our 44th President. Chills on top of chills ran toward my body and for me this was the greatest moment of all. History in the making, and I was there to bear witness. How great is that?



Nichole McIntyre
Senior Configurations
Management Analyst

I was blessed to be able to take part in this historical event! I received two tickets from Senator Feinstein's office, and needed to be in Washington to receive them. My husband and I waited in line to pick them up. We were there for President Obama taking his oath. It was AMAZING! Being among so many people sounds a little scary but it was awesome. Everyone was kind, snapping photos for one another, and just being in the moment was a bit overwhelming.

I made my reservations for the inauguration in late September because I was so sure that Obama would win. I had been following Obama since 2004 when he gave his speech at the Democratic Convention. I knew even then that he was



Joe O'Donnell
Senior Contract
Administrator

someone special. Never before had I watched an inauguration on television, nor had I ever been to Washington D.C. But I knew that being there this time would be special. What I didn't know was that the experience would be so much more than I imagined. People have asked me if being around those large crowds felt claustrophobic. But in the middle of it, it didn't feel like you were around a bunch of strangers. Everywhere you went in the city, you could turn to someone you had never met and start up a conversation like you had known them for years. And everyone had their story to tell. Many had endured much hardship to be there and I met people from all over the world. There were men and women in their 80s and 90s (some who could barely walk) who had arrived at the National Mall at 3 a.m. or 4 a.m. in that bitter cold. They wanted to be sure they wouldn't miss this. Most of them didn't have tickets, most were far away from the Capitol, and many couldn't even see one of the "JumboTrons". But none of this mattered. We would remember this for the rest of our lives and be able to say, "I was there."



Bill Douglas
Senior Risk Management
Analyst

Excerpts from my blog: "President Obama stepped up and again the crowd went crazy! I listened to his speech and I thought it was actually pretty good. People were so into this moment, truly, people who could get out on their cell phones were calling home saying they were there. Whole families were there with their children so they, too, could witness this moment. Considering there were tens of thousands (millions?) of people, all was silent when our President was speaking. Once the speeches were over, imagine a couple a million people all trying to leave at the same time. One word...Madhouse! We walked over to the Metro station for the drive back to Williamsburg, but the subway was swamped and it was going to take forever to get back to the car. I overheard someone say that if you walk five blocks you can catch the train at another station before the rest of the crowd, so we took off and hoofed five blocks uphill. My legs were rubber by now and my hands were frozen, it was so cold." Read all about it at billylen.blogspot.com.



Marisa Yeager
Government Relations
Administrator

As soon as the election returns were in and Barack Obama was declared the winner, Marisa Yeager got on the telephone to make airplane reservations for a trip to Washington D.C. for the 56th Presidential Inauguration. Earlier a delegate to the Democratic National Convention in Denver, Yeager knows her way around politics and the nation's capital. With a number of friends in the D.C. area, Yeager made the rounds, which included the concert on Sunday, some fundraisers, photo ops with friends and a close-up view of the parade on the Senate side by the Capitol. Nevermind that she had tickets in the purple section but was caught in the crowd with a million others and didn't get to the standing area until after the new President's speech, Yeager had more than one favorite moment. "It was the energy, the community feeling," she said. "Everyone was in a good mood. A great time. It was good."



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- [Metro hearts](#) glow in the Downtown skyline
- [Wedding bells](#) for Metro couple on Valentine's Day
- [Metro fans](#) can get primo Kings tickets for half price.



Photos by Peter Watkinson



AHA Campaign
'Go Red for Women'
a Glowing Success

Coordinator Josh Southwick, Creative Services photographer, credits the flawless teamwork to the volunteer spirit of Rachel Bird, Greg Ng, Maria White, Athena Thai, Sandra Perez, Ed Castillo, Mike Hamik, Jeff Neely, Rosa Gonzales, Veronica Hargrove, Michelle Bakkers, Fran Curbello, Fe Alcid-Little, Geri Brodie, Susan Phifer, Cosette Stark, Jimmy Paniagua, Ed Lamont, Robert Skarseth. Josh adds a special thanks to Cindy Chen and Carl Greenlund.

Just in case you missed it, here is a recap of the “Go Red for Women” heart campaign brought to you by Metro employees who helped turn on lights and close window blinds to make it happen.

Despite the rain and a little fog, the Metro Headquarters building presented a perfect heart-shaped design to passersby and commuters who looked up to the skies on the evening of Feb. 5.

The event followed a Jan. 22 motion made by Director Mike Antonovich to promote the American Heart Association's "Go Red for Women" campaign that encourages women to take care of their hearts. According to the American Heart Association, heart disease is the number

one killer of women in the U.S. and a woman dies of heart disease every minute.

Landmarks that featured spectacular lighting displays include Metro, LAX, the Metropolitan Water District headquarters, the Gas Company Tower, Bank of America Center, Ernst & Young Plaza, Figueroa at Wilshire Building, 5900 Wilshire, Huntington Hospital, Hollywood Presbyterian Medical Center, Angstrom Building and Fox Plaza.

— from Laura Kloth



Wedding Bells to Ring for Metro Couple on Valentine's Day

Metro employees Shannadoha Phelps and Gary Carney have chosen to make this Valentine's Day an unforgettable event. The couple plans to tie the knot Saturday at a quaint little wedding chapel in Las Vegas. The 2:30 p.m. ceremony will be attended by their families including Phelps' son, brother and sister, and Carney's parents and sisters. The couple met two years ago, and became engaged in July. The bride will be wearing a flowing white gown, and the groom will be dressed in a black suit. A small reception will follow the ceremony. The bride works as a lead custodian at Metro and the groom is a Transit Security Officer. — from Laura Kloth

Go Metro to the L.A. Kings - Primo seating is half-price for employees



Click on image to order your half-price primo tickets now!

Metro employees and transit fans who want to ditch their flat screens for a day to watch hockey being played live, will now get the chance.

Fans can see the LA Kings play live at Staples Center for a reduced price. The Kings will take on the Minnesota Wild on Saturday, March 7, at 1 p.m. and all tickets in the pricey 100 and 200 lower levels are half-off!

For more information or to order visit www.lakings.com/gometro and enter the password: TRAIN. — from Laura Kloth

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Metro Café Director Jeffery Olin welcomes back staff for re-opening on Tuesday.

Metro Café to resume full service on Tuesday

- Construction completes two weeks ahead of schedule

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(Feb. 12, 2009) Metro Café will offer full service Tuesday, when it re-opens after a six-week hiatus. A grand re-opening, complete with festivities and special menus, is planned for March 2.

Completed two weeks ahead of schedule, major reconstruction undertaken to waterproof floors in the kitchen area began Dec. 26 and constrained the Metro Café to limited food service and reduced hours of operation.

Aramark Food Services Director Jeffery Olin, who manages Metro Café, is excited to welcome Café patrons and his entire staff back to full service hours. "It's been amazing to me how the people at Metro have supported us through this construction period. Our services and variety of food has been very limited but a lot of you have come in every day. Now you can have fresh vegetables again!"

Although the construction furloughed 11 of the staff, while four remained on site, the entire crew, including Executive Chef Eddie Garcia, will be returning. "We're coming back strong!" said Olin.

The construction work was done to correct water leaks to the Customer Call Center one floor below. The runoff from a drain damaged electronic equipment, furniture and flooring, interrupting Call Center operation.

Now ahead of schedule and up to code, full service will resume on Tuesday. The Café also returns to full service hours: 6:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

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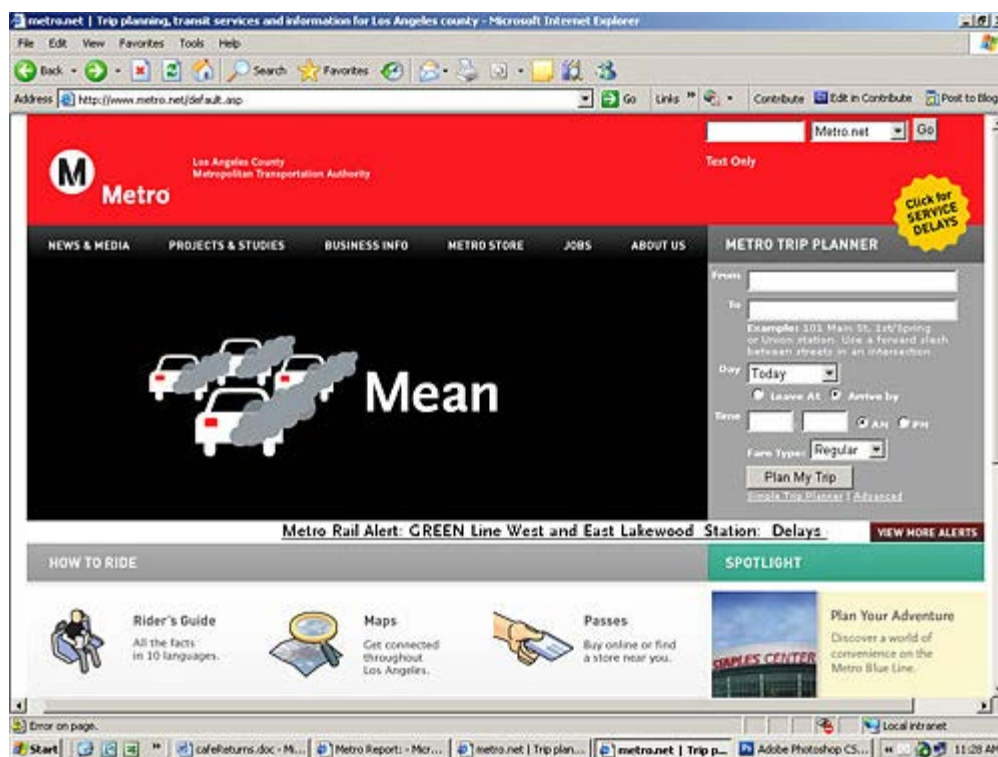
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New 'ticker' style alert in the center of the metro.net homepage notifies web, mobile users of service delays.

New Emergency Alert on metro.net Homepage

By VIVIAN L. TRAN

(Feb. 12, 2009) A new emergency service alert available on the metro.net homepage alerts passengers when major, unscheduled delays occur on Metro Rail.

When activated by Rail Operations, the emergency web service alert appears as a ticker on the homepage. The ticker provides timely information about impacts to service, bus bridge options and when service is restored.

The new web service alert was officially launched Jan. 27 and it couldn't be ready soon enough. Last week, Rail Operations activated the new web feature for the first time with extended delays on the Gold Line and Red Line.

"It was officially activated last week and it worked flawlessly," said Roman Alarcon, director of bus and rail operations control. "We're really excited about it. Now the public has a new vehicle to get up-to-the-second information about rail delays that they never had access to before."

The new web service alert is updated directly from Rail Operations when service delays reach 20 minutes or more. The ticker alert will display multiple alerts on different rail lines simultaneously, if necessary. Once posted, the alerts can be viewed by at least 5,000 different mobile devices

in addition to the website.

On Feb. 5 at 8:17 a.m., the Gold Line southbound train broke down due to mechanical failure between the Chinatown and Lincoln Heights stations.

"We were preparing to evacuate passengers, and we were delayed about 25 minutes before we were able to move the trains. Luckily, we were able to move the train and we didn't have to evacuate the passengers," said Hector A. Guerrero, rail transportation manager for ROC.

Later that evening at 8:09 p.m., the Red Line had mechanical trouble as it headed westbound between Hollywood and Western.

"We were single-tracking, or using one track, to transport the passengers along, and our service delays were at least 20 minutes," Guerrero said.

Guerrero said the new web service alert allows Metro Rail to better communicate urgent information to its riders.

"It offers quicker information to the patrons who can make a decision on whether to take alternate transportation, like a bus or drive," Guerrero said.

Before the emergency web service alert was implemented, passengers relied on the TPIS monitors that are available only at Metro Rail stations, Guerrero explained.

"So patrons have to come to the station mezzanine or platform itself to see if there's a service delay. The new alert allows patrons to see the delay before they get to the station," Guerrero said. "Now they can stay mobile and stay informed."

Rail Operations made previous attempts during the past five years to alert passengers about service delays in a timely way.

"I've tried using Twitter as an alert service and Metro's web alert service works much better and quicker," Guerrero said. "I love the new web alert system. It's efficient and an inexpensive way to keep our passengers informed while using Metro's own resources."

The new rail alert is the result of joint efforts from Rail Operations, ITS and Communications.

Members of the ITS team who provided the technical expertise were Bob Makuh, Bahram Chaudhry, David De La Ysla and Tom Tan. They created an application to capture the information from the ROC and automatically update it on the website.

Joe Simpson of Creative Services enabled the new web feature to meet ADA Compliance standards in two ways: It pauses when online users mouse over the message, and there is an alert link that customers can click on to view details of each emergency alert at a glance.

Emergencies from recent earthquakes, fires, floods and several rail-related accidents have made such a web service alert more pressing.

"This is a tremendous benefit to the public and our customers especially if we can expand it to the bus side," said Marc Littman, deputy executive officer of public relations. "It tells our passengers there's going to be a delay and gives a general reason why – to let them know if their train or

bus is going to be there when they expect it. That just goes hand-in-hand with good customer service. Now it's automatic, which we weren't able to do before, and it's much quicker."

- *Vivian L. Tran is the project manager for the emergency web service rail alert.*

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TSO sharpshooter nails top trophies in regional competition

By LAURA KLOTH

(Feb.12, 2009) At work, Metro Transit Security Officer Regino Atienza trains to draw his 9mm Beretta for protection. Away from his job, Atienza uses his weapon to compete as a "practical" shooter.

The medium-framed, quick-talking sportsman heads Team Metro, a five-man sharp-shooting team that participated in a "practical" shooting event over the summer.

Atienza brought home two trophies after defeating scores of participants in the event sponsored by the United States Practical Shooting Association (USPSA).

Atienza received a first place trophy in the Production Division (Class B) and the Law

Enforcement categories. He participated in one of three divisions and defeated shooters from the military, law enforcement and private sector. The match was held at the Raahauges Shooting Enterprises facility in Corona.

Practical shooters are timed for speed and accuracy as well as how they position their body when they fire their weapon. As part of the action-packed event, participants must react quickly when they fire at paper targets, moving metal plates, spinning Texas stars, sometimes aiming through obstacles like large barrels.

"You have to be concerned of where you're standing, and where you put the muzzle," Atienza said. He said participants are urged to use the same type of gun they use at work.

"I shoot six times a month. Most of the time at Norco, sometimes in San Diego, Chino or Sylmar," Atienza said, noting that he's been shooting as a sport for 23 years.



Transit Security Officer Regino Atienza with Training Sgt. John Davis at Metro.



Like any sport, "shooting is a skill that you lose if you don't practice enough," Atienza said.

Officer Atienza plans to compete in international events.

Team Metro consists of the 53-year-old sportsman along with co-workers Senior Security Officer Manuel Salcedo and Transit Security Officers Manrique Ramirez, Antonio Magisa and Lloyd Austin.

Transit Training Sgt. John W. Davis said he is proud of the trophies Atienza brought home, and pleased that all of his officers consistently train to be the best.

"We have a pretty good group of people. These guys shoot on their own four times a month. We shoot for the department every quarter," Davis said.

He noted that safety on and off the range is crucial for his 94 patrolling transit officers.



Team Metro works the shooting range at Norco.

"We haven't had any incidents involving shootings lately, for the last several years. We drew our weapons quite a bit — out in the field — but we haven't had any actual shootings," he said, adding that their safety record has remained positive for more nearly 12 years.

Team Metro is now practicing to take part in fall event slated for October, and Atienza is hoping the team will sign up for a competition in Greece.

"I'm trying to get sponsors and other teammates to join. That's one of my goals for 2011," Atienza says with a confident smile.



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Committees to Consider Impact of Federal Stimulus Package, Measure R Funding Proposals for Bus Improvement Plan

Items to Watch

- **Measure R Project Delivery Item 6:** Report on service sector proposals for Measure R Bus Improvement Plan
- **Planning and Programming Item 11:** 2009 Call for Projects
- **Planning and Programming Item 12:** Retrofit Soundwall Program along the I-210 freeway
- **Finance and Budget Items 18,19:** Reports on the status of the FY2009 budget and structural deficit.
- **EMAC Item 30:** Motion to prioritize Measure R 3% commuter rail funds for Metrolink safety improvements.
- **Construction Items 32, 33:** Award contracts for construction management and administration and for environmental consulting and engineering services in support of Board-adopted capital projects.
- **Operations Item 35:** Award contract for two 'bucket' trucks for facility maintenance and repairs.
- **Planning and Programming Item 44:** Establishing Los Angeles County Recovery Act funding approval deadlines

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(Feb. 17, 2009) Now that the federal stimulus package has been signed into law by President Barack Obama, the Planning and Programming Committee will study how the funding will be prioritized for Los Angeles County and determine approval deadlines for capital projects. The comprehensive review is Item 44 on the supplemental agenda that was distributed on Friday.

The Measure R Project Delivery Committee will convene for the first time on Wednesday. The new board committee was formed to manage the voter-approved funding that will begin on July 1.

Members will receive an oral report of the Measure R Implementation Plan, followed by a discussion of operating and infrastructure proposals for the Bus System Improvement Plan developed by the service sectors.

The committee, created by Board Chair and Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa at the January meeting, is chaired by Director Richard Katz, with Director Zev Yaroslavsky serving as vice chair. Also serving on the committee are directors Don Knabe, Ara Najarian and Pam O'Connor.

February Committee Meetings

Wednesday, Feb. 18

11:30 a.m. – Measure R Project Delivery Committee
1 p.m. – Planning and Programming
2:30 p.m. – Finance and Budget
3 p.m. – Ad-Hoc Congestion Pricing Committee

Thursday, Feb. 19

9:00 a.m. – Executive Management and Audit
10:30 a.m. – Construction
12 noon – Operations
Wednesday, Feb. 25
12:30 p.m. – Ad-Hoc Sustainability Committee

Thursday, Feb. 26

9:30 a.m. – Regular Board Meeting

The Finance and Budget Committee will receive an update on the status of the FY2009 budget and the structural deficit, which projects a \$2.4 billion operating deficit in light of the 10-year financial forecast.

A public hearing to determine conformance of local jurisdictions with the Los Angeles County Congestion Management Program will be held in advance of the Planning and Programming meeting set for 1 p.m. in the Board Room.



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Sheriff Nabs
Alleged Copper
Wire Thief

- Suspect
accused of
stripping
copper wire
from Metro
Green Line
tracks.

*From left, Metro Rail
General Manager Mike
Cannell, Sheriff's
Detective Frank
Richter and Capt.
John Witt.*

By LAURA KLOTH

(February 17, 2009) A trail of grease and some crafty detective work led to the arrest of a homeless man accused of stealing \$10,000 worth of copper wire from the Metro Green Line, said Los Angeles Sheriff's Detective Frank Richter.

The suspect, Ted Stewart, 46, who is known on the street as "Riverbed Ted" was arrested Nov. 5, and is now at Los Angeles County Jail.

On Feb. 6, Richter's efforts in leading the investigation were recognized by Metro Rail Operations General Manager Mike Cannell and Transit Services South Bureau Captain John Witt.

After accepting his award, Richter said he wanted to also recognize everyone who assisted in the investigation including the rail workers who helped by greasing the tracks to catch the suspect.



< Metro Green Line
train approaches rail
yard interface switch.
Copper wire runs
parallel to tracks prior
to switch areas where
trains cross over, said
Rail TOS Jaime Pulido
at the Metro Green
Line Yard Control.

*Photo: Gayle
Anderson*

Richter said investigators were baffled after the first theft occurred in August because they couldn't figure out how the suspect was making a clean getaway, after cutting the copper wire out of the tracks near the Green Line passenger station at Norwalk, Richter said.

"There wasn't a whole lot to go on," he said.

Then the suspect struck three more times, and that's when a couple of rail workers decided to smear grease on the copper wire to help investigators trail him, Richter explained.

Meanwhile, investigators began searching homeless encampments in the area, and interviewing witnesses. Fingers pointed to Stewart who is apparently the "self-proclaimed" mayor of one of the camps, and known to be a copper recycler.

Detectives literally followed a trail of grease to the suspect and discovered his bike and trailer were also full of grease.

Stewart was allegedly collecting copper from the rail site as well as other locations, and allegedly selling it for cash.

"It's very valuable and very pure. He was going to a metal recycling place and making money off of it," said Los Angeles Sheriff's Lt. Jenny Bethune.

Stewart was charged with eight felony counts including grand theft, petty theft and tampering with a railroad, Richter said. He is expected to appear in court on March 9.

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Metro's Deferred Compensation Committee and ICMA Retirement Corp. representatives collect two nationally-significant awards for customized campaign encouraging employees to enroll in Metro's retirement savings plans. From left: ICMA Director, Strategic Relations, Matthew Pruitt, Metro employees Donna Mills, Jan Olsen, Don Ott, and Ron Stamm, and ICMA Southern CA/NV Territory Manager, Shawn Baker. Not pictured: Committee members Terry Matsumoto and Margaret Merhoff.

Get on the [savings] bus!

- Awards for communications campaign serve as a reminder to save for the future

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(Feb. 18, 2009) Do the math.

If you contributed \$3 a day to your retirement savings, you would be saving \$1,095 a year. Better yet, reads a promotional brochure for Metro's 457 and 401(k) Plans, those savings could add up to \$15,859 in 10 years, \$47,793 in 20 years and an amazing \$112,095 after 30 years.

The savings message is the mainstay of the "Get on the Bus" campaign, a customized communication campaign geared toward encouraging employees to enroll in Metro's retirement savings plans: the 401 (k) Thrift Plan and/or the 457 Deferred Compensation Plan.

Metro's Deferred Compensation Committee partnered with the ICMA Retirement Corporation, the plan administrator, to develop the communications campaign in 2008. The message is delivered to employees in brochures and other printed material through direct mail and at the workplace.

The campaign drew national recognition and was awarded two significant communications awards for its timely message.

Time is Money: Check it out

Pick up enrollment kits at the Pension and Benefits Department on the 21st floor of Metro Headquarters or at Division offices.

Contact ICMA-RC Retirement Specialists:

Orlando Delgado 866.266.7312

Jennifer Sequeira 866.339.8795

Appointments at Metro Headquarters

Available Tues-Thurs: 922-7170

Employees interested in participating in the retirement savings plans — 401(K) Thrift Plan and/or the 457 Deferred Compensation Plan — can find enrollment kits at the Pension and Benefits Department on the 21st floor of Metro Headquarters or at Division offices.

Metro also has two full-time ICMA-RC Retirement Specialists available to guide you through the enrollment process: Orlando Delgado and Jennifer Sequeira.

Delgado and Sequeira schedule their time among the divisions and other locations on a rotating basis. Both maintain office hours at Metro Headquarters on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Considering the current volatility of the market, employees are encouraged to take advantage of this resource when planning for future retirement.

Additionally, the program offers the services of a Certified Financial Planner who can help you customize your savings plan to meet specific retirement goals. Call Cris Vega, 866.620.6063, to arrange an appointment.



Metro's Deferred Compensation Committee partnered with ICMA to earn two significant communication awards for the "Get on the Bus" promotional campaign:

- Award of Distinction from the 2008 Communicator Awards, an annual competition honoring the best in advertising, corporate communications, public relations and identity work for print, video, interactive and audio. The award is judged by the International Academy of the Visual Arts.
- Award of Excellence from the Silver Inkwell Awards, an annual competition created by the Washington, D.C. Chapter of the International Association of Business Communicators to recognize the business communications efforts by companies and organizations.

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Katie Talbert leads OD&T's comprehensive job search training for Metro interns in session held Feb. 6.

OD&T's in-service training sets Metro interns on career path

By LAURA KLOTH

(Feb. 19, 2009) Lessons about what not to say during a job interview and just how personality plays a role in the type of job to seek, were part of an in-service training provided to Metro's interns this month.

Due to the rainy conditions, interns completed the Feb. 6 in-service training indoors, but apparently didn't mind because many provided positive comments afterward, said Katie Talbert, a two-year intern in the Organizational Development and Training Department (OD&T), who organized the event.

Along with the mock interviews, Metro's 52 interns attended sessions on resume writing, business acumen, and speed networking where they crunched through each other's work histories, and shared Metro work experiences.

Emphasizing good eye contact and a firm handshake, Senior Human Resources Analyst Sandra Blanco-Sanchez conducted mock interviews where she pointedly told interns to



Intern Tawny Gestuvo, at right in checkered jacket, writes about her experience at the job search training seminar.

In-service training gives motivational vibe

By Tawny Gestuvo

answer questions honestly, and she gave them tips on tackling illegal subjects. Questions like, "Are you married?" and "How far do you live?" are not appropriate since they are not related to the position, she said.

"I would steer away from that question where you turn it around and say, 'Do you have a concern regarding that?' It's okay to stop and ask," Blanco-Sanchez said.

My experience as a Metro intern has been a boost of inspiration. It has helped me gauge my goals and visualize where I want to be one year from now and 10 years from now. It was definitely a great thing to see and know that interns have the support they need to make the transition into the workforce.

Despite current economic strains on the job market, OD&T stressed to interns that it is never too early to be prepared for opportunity to knock on your door.

With activities that tested various work environment skill sets to quality networking time among peers, the lessons learned at the OD&T intern in-service training will be tools I will remember, utilize and keep in practice.

This month's theme proved to be timely and appropriate for interns throughout the agency. OD&T had us all thinking about the next step in our careers.

Withstanding unpredictable weather, all of the scheduled outdoor activities were seamlessly brought indoors and the motivational vibe from the coordinating staff was something the rain couldn't wash away.

She also encouraged her audience to do their homework about the employer.

"A lot of times we get interviewees who say, 'Oh yeah, I've taken the Metrolink.' Metrolink is not part of Metro. So right away, I know that they didn't do their research. We own the right-of-way, but we don't run Metrolink. So those are the kind of pitfalls that may come up," she said.

Another mistake candidates make is to over-analyze questions by an employer. For example, if an employer asks how you handled a difficult job situation, they're not trying to trip you up, she noted.



Interns Rebecca Johnson, left, and Priscilla Jimenez, at right, pair up for three-minute speed networking session. Photos: Gayle Anderson

"Are you a problem solver? Are you going to melt under pressure? That's what they are trying to get at. They are trying to measure your personality and make sure you're going to be a good fit, and you're not going to be a stress case because nobody wants to deal with a stress case," she said.

Talbert told interns to consider their personality type before beginning a

job search and to study the work environment. She guided interns through the PACE personality test, which in the simplest terms, distinguishes personalities into four color categories: reds are adventurous; blues are harmonious; greens are curious, and yellows are structured preferring predictable job scenarios.



Emphasizing good eye contact and a firm handshake, Senior Human Resource Analyst Sandra Blanco-Sanchez conducted mock interviews.

"Would you rather work alone, or in a team? Are you a big picture thinker or do you excel in making sure all details of your job are complete?" Talbert said, sharing that sometimes they could fall into a couple of areas.

Senior Development & Training Specialist Cynthia Shavers led a business acumen workshop where interns spoke more about their current duties.

William Bolanos, an intern in the Policy and Research Department, said he helped to digitize and upload Metro's historical videos onto You Tube for access through the Metro Library website. "Organization is key in what I do," he said, adding that Metro's library is one of the largest available.

Camila Hashim spoke about her experience compiling reports in Service Performance Analysis Department. "I love it a lot," she told the class.

Shavers encouraged interns to absorb all they could to not only benefit their careers, but also to benefit the employer.

"When you like your job, you not only do your job better, but you actively look for ways to improve it," Shavers said.

"We make Metro look better when we take the extra mile, when we make sure we are responding appropriately on the phone, giving them the information that they need or taking the time to just listen. You know so that a person walks away satisfied. And that's one of our core values — satisfied customers," she added.

The training session couldn't have come at a better time for Metro Store Intern Ivan Moreno. Soon after the session, Moreno interviewed with the Los Angeles Police Department where he plans to begin work as an officer.

"It really helped me a lot. I used what I learned there. It was like perfect timing," Moreno said.

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Nathan Baird, a planning intern and Metro Cycling Club member, parks bikes at the Pasadena stop of the Amgen Tour of California. *Photo by Jennifer Gill*

Metro Volunteers Provide Bicycle Valet Parking Service, Information Booth at Amgen Tour of California

- Metro Cycling Club parks some 400 bikes during the day-long event
- [Volunteer Central](#): Credit roll

(Feb. 24, 2009) Metro Bike Program staff, Metro Cycling Club members and other Metro employees volunteered to provide secure bicycle parking and information tailored to cyclists at the Amgen Tour of California Cycling event at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena on Saturday.

Lynne Goldsmith, Metro Bike Planning Manager, estimated the valets parked nearly 400 bicycles. That's a nearly 100 percent increase from last year's event, when the volunteers parked an estimated 200 bikes.

Metro Bike
Planning
Manager
Lynne
Goldsmith
and intern
Nathan Baird
work the
Bicycle
Parking Valet
Service at the
Amgen event
held at the
Rose Bowl.



The Tour de France-style cycling road race featured the world's top professional cycling teams, including Lance Armstrong that competed along a demanding 750-mile course from Sacramento to Escondido. Several thousand bicycle enthusiasts from throughout Southern California and beyond attended this annual bicycling event, now in its third year.



Metro Blue Line Operator Arlene Mills helps potential Metro patron learn the bike rack.

Volunteers in the Metro transit booth, located near the bicycle parking valet, handed out stacks of Metro transit information and offered advice to bicycle riders, including how to load their bicycles onto the Metro Bus bike rack.

The Metro booth featured a replica of a bus bike rack, allowing Metro volunteers to show bicyclists how to attach and remove their bikes from the front of a Metro bus.

Metro Cycling Club member Tony Jusay,



at right, prepares to park one of 400 bikes at Amgen event.



The bicycle parking area went from zero to nearly 400 bikes in a matter of hours.

*Photos by
Jennifer Gill*

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," said Metro Blue Line Operator Arlene Mills, who helped staff the booth.

Goldsmith believes Metro's presence at the Pasadena marker of the Amgen Tour of California makes miles of smiles for the expanding communities of bicycle commuters and enthusiasts. "The Amgen event is a perfect match for Metro's promotion of bicycle use and helps to promote bicycles as a means of transportation," she said.

-- from Gayle Anderson

Volunteer Central



From left, Bike Valets Lynne Goldsmith, Cory Zelmer, Nathan Baird, Kathleen Sanchez.

Bicycle Parking Valet Service

Information Booth

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cory Zelmer - Countywide Planning• Dave Sotero - Media Relations• Lynne Goldsmith - Countywide Planning• Tony Jusay - Countywide Planning• Jennifer Gill - Community Relations• Nathan Baird - Countywide Planning intern;• Kathleen Sanchez - Countywide Planning - <i>and husband Dennis,</i>• Doreen Morrissey - Countywide Planning• Stuart Ondeck (retired) - Real Estate• Diego Ramirez - Countywide Planning - <i>and wife Elaine,</i>• Michelle Smith - Countywide Planning | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bob Thomas - Community Partner• Julie Ellis - Contract Administration• Evelina Del Castillo - Fleet Management and Support Services• Fe Alcid-Little - Procurement• Michael Staley, Arlene and Mel Mills and Elsa Edejer - Metro Rail• Tess Fitzpatrick - SFV Sector• Rey Coutts - Operations Central Instruction• Marie Tervalon - Customer Relations• Michelle Bakkers - Public Relations |
|--|--|

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'Meet the Primes' Mixer Draws Nearly 400 Small Business Firms



Chief Administrative Services Officer Lonnie Mitchell, and Deputy Executive Officer Linda B. Wright welcome more than 400 small business owners and officials to the first-ever "Meet the Primes" mixer. (Photo by Sherman Gay) Below, business owners meet with primes contractors in an exchange of resources.



- **Event is hailed as an economic boom town for contractors — big and small — seeking to do business with Metro**

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(Feb. 24, 2009) Fifteen top prime contractors and over 400 small business owners and officials filled the Metro Board Room for the first-ever "Meet the Primes" event, held in January.

Sponsored by the Transportation Business Advisory Council and the Diversity & Economic Opportunity Department, "Meet



Chief Administrative Services Officer Lonnie Mitchell, Rod Garcia of Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers, and Director Richard Katz discuss opportunities for contracting services. Below, small business owners visit information tables provided by 15 prime contractors.



Below, from left, Johnathan Hou of Axion, Rod Garcia, Deputy Executive Officer Linda B. Wright, Director Richard Katz and Bill Yang of Asian American Architects and Engineers Association.



The range of firms included construction firms, electricians, engineers, management consultants, communications, professional services, and accounting groups.

"These are services and products that prime contractors may need to fulfill

the Primes" is a unique opportunity for small businesses to build relationships with prime contractors and stay connected when sub-contracting opportunities arise.

Director Richard Katz, Chief Administrative Services Officer Lonnie Mitchell, and Deputy Executive Officer Linda B. Wright welcomed the group.

At the meeting, small business owners had the opportunity to introduce themselves and meet with a number of prime contractors. The small business owners shared their products or services, and professional experience, including a list of past and current projects and clients.

Small businesses brought a range of specialized resources to the tables staffed by prime contractors.

the obligations of a major contract," said Keith Compton, DEOD Outreach Manager.

"This is the first time we've brought small firms together with major firms for the purpose of partnering to bid on a Metro contract," said Sherman Gay, Sr. Diversity & Economic Representative who conducts monthly workshops to advise firms on how to do business with Metro and the certification programs.

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City Planning Commissioner Michael Woo leads a panel discussion at which researchers, urban planners and private individuals hashed out ideas.

Experts, public exchange ideas at Technology and Innovation Symposium

By LAURA KLOTH

(Feb. 24, 2009) The Technology and Innovation Symposium hosted by Metro served as the perfect setting for a "think tank" of panelists and guests to discuss the latest and most efficient methods of moving traffic and people from one place to another.

Robin Blair, director of countywide planning and development, said the event was extremely successful.

"We had more request to attend than we had space to seat people," he said.

The event was coordinated by Rufina Juarez, central area team project manager.

And the success was evident because people remained well after the discussion session ended.

The idea of TDM events is get people to call for new projects to assist in transportation improvements. Some of the ideas that began through TDM planning include HOV lanes and park and ride lots, he said.

"It means you constantly push the new ideas, and what sounds weird today may be here tomorrow."

Alternative Means

Exhibits at the Technology and Innovation Symposium provide a wide range of resources and solutions to environmental dilemmas.



Metro transportation planner James Rojas invites people to build sustainable model cities with plastic squares and found objects such as tiny boxes, wine corks, puzzle pieces, bottle caps and anything that passes for architectural elements.

The Feb. 5 event, hosted by Metro, drew more than 300 participants and also featured exhibits showcasing a hybrid car, electric and folding bicycles and even a miniature Los Angeles constructed out of recyclable materials.

City Planning Commissioner Michael Woo led a panel discussion at which researchers, urban planners and private individuals hashed out ideas.

Todd Litman, founder of the Victoria Transport Policy, led the effort to create more choices for consumers posing questions such as whether it is better to offer a \$1,000-a-month apartment with two free parking spaces or an apartment that costs \$800 a month with a \$100-a-month fee for each parking space.

Litman argued that the second option gives people a choice and “bundled” approaches do not work.

Curt Gibbs, of the Los Angeles Community Redevelopment Agency, said car insurance companies should consider more “pay per use” pricing. “I think we need to start pricing insurance on how it’s being used, which may encourage people to go out and buy the smart cars.”

That would be great news for exhibitor Pete Barsky of the Electric Car Co. in Signal Hill, who displayed brochures about his \$10,000 Zap vehicle.

Barsky said his cars have been selling well since gas prices peaked over the summer and because insurance companies price them like motorcycles. Electric cars will gain more momentum as municipalities install more general-use outlets for them, he added. More outlets exist for the RAV 4, the now-defunct EV-1 and a Honda model.

Judy Matsuda, transportation demand management planner for the city of Pasadena, thanked Metro for hosting the event before asking: “How do you convince an employer or tenant that paying for an employee’s parking is a benefit to their employee?”



Here is a electric bike rent, ride and park system under consideration by municipalities.



This beachcomber bike has a baby carrier for two on the front.



A hydrogen-fueled smart car prototype from Caltrans.

Litman suggested using positive phrasing such as telling employers that paying for their employees' parking "isn't a sacrifice, it's solving their problem."

Woo, a USC professor, encouraged panelists to rise to the challenge of the transportation demand management by seeing the crisis as an opportunity.

"Whether it's traffic congestion, air quality, the types of communities we're creating, what is our part of the solution to climate change? I think we have to come back to looking at the combination of all these factors rising up as being a potential crisis that could lead to catastrophe or could lead to changes in thinking and changes in behavior," he said.

Transit users and many children enjoyed seeing and playing with a miniature exhibit of the city, created by Metro Transportation Planning Manager James Rojas. Made of bottle caps, plastic squares and other recyclables, the miniature city includes the Metro Gateway building and other city landmarks.



RideTHISbike.com model folds up to the size of a skateboard for only \$200.


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Board Approves Swift Response to meet Deadlines for Federal Stimulus Funding

- [So noted:](#) Officials laud CEO Snoble for Measure R and other achievements



Metro Board of Directors debate American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 item on Thursday's board agenda.

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(Feb. 26, 2009) Item 44, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, which provides federal economic stimulus funding for Los Angeles County transportation capital projects, loomed large on the Metro Board agenda and took the lion's share of the discussion at the meeting held Feb. 26.

At issue was Action G, as it pertains to funding for phase 1 of the Exposition Light Rail Transit Project and the Metro Gold Line Foothill LRT extension.

The item was amended by Director Richard Katz, who noted the projects listed in Action G should not be considered as having priority for federal funding. In approving the item as amended, the board opted to revisit Action G pending guidelines to be determined for new starts and discretionary funding.

The directors voted unanimously to move item 44 forward so agencies can access vital stimulus funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 recently signed by the president. The board approval puts into motion directives for establishing an economic stimulus funding priority for Los Angeles County and determining approval deadlines for capital projects.

Los Angeles County Supervisor Don Knabe, who made the motion to approve item 44, which was seconded by Director Zev Yaroslavsky, praised staff for organizing the complicated categories of allocations and obligations

in a brief period in order to meet strict and short federal deadlines.

The board's action was in response to the federal economic stimulus funding to be provided to Los Angeles County to preserve and create jobs.

As a result of the swift response, Metro is establishing a 75-day grant approval/obligation deadline for the 89 Los Angeles County jurisdictions for all highway and transit project submittals. The motion was amended by Director Ara Najarian to allow a 135-day deadline for Metro and other Los Angeles County transit operators. The deadlines are structured to ensure that Los Angeles County does not relinquish Recovery Act funds to other regions or states. The deadline time frame begins on the day that the applicable federal agency officially apportions the funds, which is expected to start March 3.

Directors also approved item 12 to retrofit a soundwall program to fund the design of Soundwall Package 11 along portions of the SR-170 and I-405 in the San Fernando Valley and to transfer the construction of Soundwall Package 4 along the I-210 freeway. The Soundwall Package 11 project requires an additional \$4.6 million in Proposition C 25 percent funds.

Items on the consent calendar approved without further discussion include:

- Item 11: 2009 Call for Projects Application Package
- Item 30: Motion to prioritize Measure R 3% commuter rail funds for Metrolink safety improvements.
- Items 32, 33: Award contracts for construction management and administration and for environmental consulting and engineering services in support of Board-adopted capital projects.
- Item 35: Award contract for two 'bucket' trucks for facility maintenance and repairs.



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CEO Snoble is recognized by State, County leaders

(Feb. 26, 2009) CEO Roger Snoble has added two notable plaques to the considerable collection that fills nearly three walls of his office.

Los Angeles County Supervisor and Metro Board Member Zev Yaroslavsky personally delivered a tribute to CEO Snoble on Thursday.



So noted: "It couldn't have been done without you."

Snoble smiled as he displayed a framed page of the Measure R item on the Nov. 4 General Election ballot with a handwritten inscription from Yaroslavsky that reads: "Thanks for your indispensable role in getting Measure R on the ballot and passed by the voters. It couldn't have been done without you."

At Thursday's Board meeting, Aaron Miller, transportation deputy for state Sen. Fran Pavley, D-Agoura Hills, presented a large glass-encased plaque as he read a proclamation.

"Thanks to the leadership of Roger Snoble, over the last seven years Metro is now one of the top transit agencies in the country," Miller read.

He said Snoble was instrumental in equipping Metro with a fleet of 2,500 compressed natural gas buses, and pushing for the solar-powered bus facility in El Monte.

"Metro has established an eco-friendly system and has gotten people out of their own vehicles and onto buses and trains. Under Roger's stewardship, Metro built the Orange Line in the Valley, is expanding the Gold Line to East L.A., and is constructing light rail from downtown to Culver City as we speak.

"And Roger was heavily involved in getting Measure R passed in November, which means when my 2-year-old daughter has her own children, hopefully by that time they'll be riding the subway to the sea, and also some kind of train from the Westside to the Valley and back.

"On behalf of Senator Pavley, Assemblywoman Julia Brownley (D-Santa Monica) and Assemblyman Mike Feuer (D-Los Angeles), it's my honor to present Roger Snoble with this resolution from the California Legislature in recognition for everything he's done for Metro and the people of LA County. And we wish you a happy and healthy retirement," Miller concluded as the board and audience applauded.

— from *Laura Kloth*