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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.