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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."