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Glendale City Councilman Ara Najarian is chairman of the Board of Directors as of July 1.

Glendale City Councilman Ara Najarian Becomes New Board Chair

By Rick Jager
Media Relations

(July 2, 2009) Glendale City Councilman Ara Najarian takes over as chairman of the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority's Board of Directors effective today, July 1. He replaces outgoing Board Chairman, Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa.

"As the new Board Chair, I look forward to providing the leadership necessary to enhance transportation options throughout the region," said Najarian. "This next year will be both challenging and rewarding as we move the agency through difficult financial

times, while, at the same time, begin implementing transportation improvement projects voted by the public with the passage of Measure R, the half-cent sales tax initiative."

Najarian was elected to the Glendale City Council in 2005 and served as Mayor from 2007 to 2008. He is currently Chair of the Glendale Housing Authority and previously served as Chair of the Glendale Redevelopment Agency. He also served on the Glendale Community College Board of Trustees from 2003 to 2005 and was Chair of the Glendale Transportation and Parking Commission. Najarian has served as a director since 2006 and also currently serves on Metrolink's Board of Directors.

Najarian has been an attorney in private practice in Glendale for 20 years and attended Occidental College where he received a BA degree in Economics and later earned his JD from USC School of Law.



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OBITUARIES

Deborah Harrell, Sr. Auditor, Remembered as Mentor and Friend

- Services will be held at 9 a.m. on Tuesday, July 7, in the Memorial Chapel of [Forest Lawn in Long Beach](#), located at 1500 East San Antonio Dr.(90807), near the intersection of Del Amo Blvd. and Cherry Ave. Attendees are asked to park in the parking lot and follow signs for Memorial Chapel. Internment will follow the memorial service. Information: 562-424-1631
- A Repast will be held at the [Long Beach Marriott Hotel](#) at 11 a.m., located on the corner of Spring and Lakewood Blvd. Reservation are requested by the family. RSVP by Monday to Dee Roberts robertsd@metro.net.
- [Remembering Deborah Harrell](#). Friends and co-workers pay tribute to the memory of beloved auditor.

(July 2, 2009) Sr. Auditor Deborah Harrell, a longtime and beloved employee who first joined RTD in 1988, is being remembered today as a first-rate professional, caring friend and encouraging mentor with an unforgettable smile.

A collection of office photographs of Deborah Harrell at work and at play in Management Audit Systems Department, on display in a hallway on the 21st floor, reveals the high regard and great affection her co-workers and friends hold for her.

Ms. Harrell, 55, died June 30 at her home in Long Beach following a lingering illness. She had been on medical leave since February.



Deborah Harrell

Born in LaGrange, Georgia, on March 3, 1954, Ms. Harrell relocated to Los Angeles in the late 1980s and accepted a position with RTD, left briefly, and returned permanently in April 1990 as a senior auditor, a position she held for her entire career.

"There is a lot of grieving going on here," said Ruthe Holden, Chief Auditor. "Deborah was well-liked, a great person. She loved auditing, loved doing both internal and operational performance audits. This team has great camaraderie, and she was a big part of that. Hard-working and loyal, she had a great sense of humor. She really will be missed."

Ms. Harrell's boss, Beni Warshawsky, Director of Auditing, had worked with Ms. Harrell for 20 years. "We all owe Deborah a great debt of gratitude," he said. "As a result of her work, things are safer, operations are improved, compliance is diligent. She really, really cared about the safety of the customers and the safety of the employees."

Ms. Harrell was an active member of the [Los Angeles Civic Center Chapter of the Association of Governmental Accountants \(AGA\)](#) and served as the chapter's president in 2003. She and fellow auditor Claudia Casasola won a

national award for the chapter newsletter they co-edited in 2004. A great supporter of the organization's mission to provide vocational classes for auditors and accountants, Ms. Harrell advocated for continuing professional education in the field, said Casasola.

Longtime friend and co-worker Dee Roberts remembers Ms. Harrell as a mentor who encouraged Roberts to return to school and then insisted that she do well. "I had six math classes going back-to-back, and Deborah would say 'You can do it!' She never held her tongue, regardless if she was telling me 'right' or 'wrong.' But, she'd always tell me I could do it."

Ms. Harrell is survived by friends and family members.

--from Gayle Anderson



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Right-click and select play to replay slideshow.

Communications Arts Photography Annual picks
Metro photographer's winning entry in
national and prestigious competition

(July 7, 2009) One of Metro's nine photos submitted by the Creative Services photographers to the prestigious Communication Arts Photography Annual was selected as a winner among nearly 9,000 entries in a competition generally ranked highest in commercial art standards.

The selected photo, by Metro photographer Josh Southwick, is a visual trip underground to the Mariachi Plaza Station platform during construction of the Metro Gold Line Extension to East Los Angeles. Southwick captured an eerily lit scene that recalls a movie memory of a deserted space ship. Construction lighting, reflected in plastic coated walls, reveal an odd interior inhabited only by a single stretch of pipe, tubing that snakes along the wall, a spike of rebar and a fragile looking wooden frame over a mysterious shaft.

"It's quite a feat to be selected for this photography annual," said Maya Emsden, DEO, Creative Services. "It really demonstrates the quality of our photography team. They are a young crew who have really come together in a short period of time."

Metro photographers improvise a studio environment in conference rooms, the 3rd floor balcony and beyond. Barely pictured here are, from left in top photo, Peter Watkinson, Carl Greenlund, and, behind the lens, Josh Southwick.



Not only is the publication a permanent addition to most advertising agencies and design studio libraries for reference and sourcing, the photography annual sets the standard for commercial art, said Carolynne Clifford, Creative Services production manager whose husband, Mark, is a noted commercial photographer.

"When Mark's entry took a top category spot in 1993, he received inquiries on that image for the next 6 years. It's an excellent thing to have on your resume!" she said.

(See [Image](#): 'Christmas 1993' by Mark Clifford)

The photography unit in Creative Services, managed by Sr. Creative Designer Elizabeth Bain, is staffed by Southwick, Peter Watkinson, and intern Carl Greenlund.

Metro photography has developed from assorted contributions from staff and contracted photographers to a full range of corporate, commercial, and studio photography. Armed with professional camera and lighting equipment and creative know-how, the photographers are ready for the daily challenges of the institutional environment, including assembling and even improvising a studio environment for big shoots.

"Our photographers have to consider on-the-spot solutions and have the flexibility and creativity to come up with a way to make it work," said Bain. "It could be a bus, a location, people on the move or even a studio shot for a billboard."

The nine photos submitted to the CA annual illustrate the variety of creative challenges. Included are images of a traffic-blurred freeway for the Measure R campaign, a lone Metro Transit Security Officer holding vigil in a vast lot, a product shot of toy buses, and colorful insets of East Los Angeles.

--from Gayle Anderson



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BlueLiners concert May 5 celebrates Cinco de Mayo in the Metro Café lounge.

Blue Liners Ready for July 16 Summer Performance

By Laura Kloth
Staff Writer

Tuning up to perform a July 16 concert, the core members of the Metro Blue Liners can think of a few reasons why their band has been around for more than a decade.

The most obvious reason according to band leader and Metro Schedules System Supervisor Michael Ortiz and band Executive Producer and Metro Customer Information Agent Marie Tervalon is their infinite passion for music and their love of performing.

Video: A taste of the BlueLiners in concert.

"Our real first performance was in the Overflow Room. Some of these people don't even play with us anymore," Tervalon said flipping through band photos of previous years.

Venues have included an outdoor barbecue at the Gateway Headquarters entrance, the Board Overflow Room, and currently, the Metro Café, where the band is happy to play for a free lunch every couple of months.

The July 16 concert will run from noon to 1:00 p.m.

The Big Motivator: A Love of Music

When he selects members, Ortiz says, he doesn't look for professional musicians. Instead, he likes to recruit people who just enjoy playing music even if they don't know how to play. In fact, Ortiz has taught many of the previous and current members because they were eager to learn.

"We do the best we can with the people who are available," Ortiz said.



Band leader Michael Ortiz backs Lynda Gillam's flute solo in recent concert.

Members are: Carl Hobson, Schedule Checker, on congas, who will be retiring soon; Larry Morris, Schedule Checker, on keyboard; Joe Parise, Records Management Supervisor on guitar; Raul Gomez, Lead Photo Copying Machine Operator, on drums; Lynda Gillam, Sr. Real Estate Officer on flute; Paul Burke, Transportation Planning Manager, on Sax; and Tervalon who sings along with Belen Marquez, Human Resources Analyst and Pricila Hidalgo, Administrative Analyst. Gomez, who works in the copy center, designs the T-shirts and posters.

The upcoming concert will have Bus Operator Carlos Torres accompany the group on his accordion with special guest, Rodger Maxwell, Scheduling Systems Project Leader, singing a few country and western tunes.

Ortiz says he picks the songs with the help of members, but reminds them that their choice will have to balance with the band's abilities.

And as they play, he says, the objective to give the song the Blue Liner interpretation, not to duplicate the artist. "If you want to hear the exact thing, go to the karaoke club," he says.

Typically, the band's song list includes 14 songs to play during an hour. One of Ortiz's favorites is "Get Your Kicks on Route 66" written in 1946, because of its blues and jazz sound. The band sometimes picks songs according to a theme or holiday, like the recent Cinco de Mayo tunes: "Mariposa," "Frenesi" and "Amor a la Mexicana."

Over the years, the band has gone through names like "Metromorphosis," "Jammers" and "P-2," a name they picked up from the location where they practice a few a times a week. The Blue Liners name stuck because of the band's love for blues music.

Fun and Family

Ortiz, with 36 years at Metro under his belt, is a self-taught guitarist who began playing some 50 years ago when he was a young teen.

A 37-year employee, Tervalon remembers being introduced to music at an even younger age when she sang in a neighborhood band.

"I love music," she says. "My father was a promoter in the record industry at one time. He was instrumental in getting a lot of the black groups into music. And he was also instrumental in getting black DJs on the radio out here in Los Angeles and other areas."

In her case, it's truly a family affair. Her younger brother is Kenny

Gradney, a bass guitarist for the band "Little Feat" and as a child she also played with Al McKay, who later played with "Earth, Wind and Fire."

Tervalon says the Blue Liners plan to keep going for years to come for another obvious reason. "It's just to have fun. You know we really like it. We all love music and we do it just for fun," she said.

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OBITUARIES

Services Scheduled for Retired RTOS Shirley Mangram

(July 9, 2009) Services have been scheduled for retired Rail Transit Operations Supervisor Shirley Mangram, 60, who passed away following a brief illness.



Shirley Mangram

Born on Nov. 24, 1948, Mrs. Mangram was hired at Metro on March 4, 1976 as a bus operator. She retired on July 1, 2006, as a controller at Central Rail Operations Control.

Survivors include her husband and three sons.

Visitation has been scheduled for 3 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Friday, July 10, at the [Inglewood Park Cemetery](#), 3803 W. Manchester Blvd. Inglewood, CA 90301. The funeral will be held at 11:30 a.m., Saturday, July 11, at the Manchester Chapel at the Inglewood Park Mortuary, 3803 West Manchester Blvd., Inglewood.


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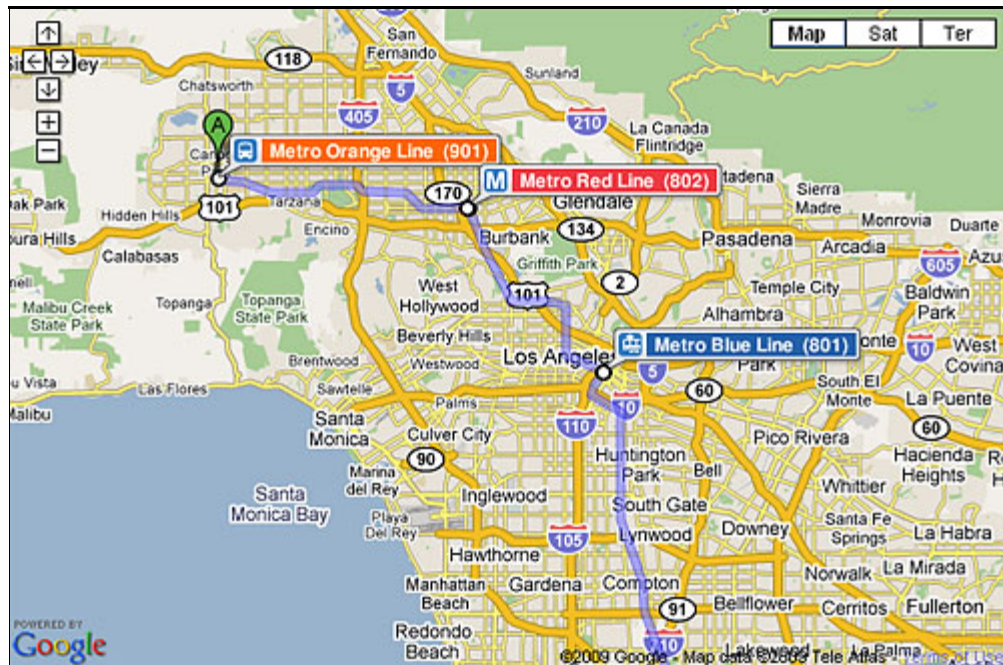
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Over 200 bus lines and five rail lines with more than 2.5 million data points are now on [Google Transit](#), an option found on [Google Maps](#).

Metro Transit System now on Google Maps

By Dave Sotero
Metro Communications

(July 9, 2009) In a move that is expected to boost local transit ridership and make it much easier for anyone on the Web to plan their Los Angeles area transit trips, Metro has officially signed a license agreement with Google Inc. to include Metro's bus and rail information on Google Maps.

Metro is the latest major transit agency to enter the Google Transit Partner Program. Google will have access to transit route and schedule data for the nearly 200 bus lines and five rail lines Metro operates within Los Angeles County. Metro also provides its transit data updates to developers on its developer site at [metro.net/developer](#).

The announcement comes as welcome news to Metro customers, who have actively requested Metro transit data be made available on Google.

"We have listened to our customers and have provided the Google transit planning resource they have requested," said Metro CEO Art Leahy. "As the third largest transportation agency in the United States, it made perfect sense for us to join the Google phenomenon. We are extremely excited to now be a part of the most popular online mapping website in the world, and we have high hopes that a worldwide audience will now be able to more easily plan their Metro trips here in Los Angeles."

There were 25.9 million domestic visitors to Los Angeles County in 2007.

How it works

Click on link below to view a recording of the WebEx Online Press Briefing. (30 min: Web access only)
[Metro/Google Online Press Briefing](#)

Last year these visitors spent \$2.85 billion on transportation, including taxis and shuttles in Los Angeles, according to L.A. Inc. The Los Angeles Convention and Visitors Bureau. Google's innovative, cutting edge transit mapping tool is expected to help Metro reach more of these visitors, turning potential riders into active riders.

"We are pleased to partner with Metro in making the authority's transit information available on Google Maps," said Jessica Wei, Strategic Partner Development Manager for Google Transit. "Coupled with Google functionality, users from around the world now have a suite of powerful, integrated tools to better help them plan their transit itineraries. This partnership, as well as Metro's public release of transit data on its new developer website, establishes Metro as a formidable regional technology leader."

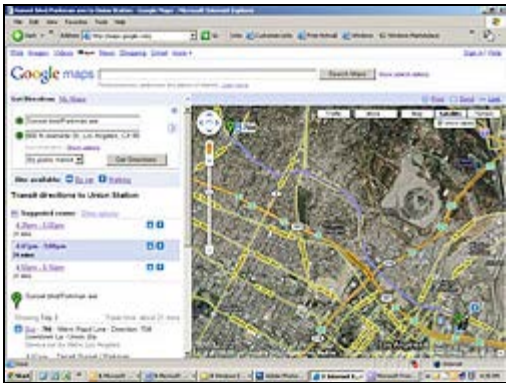
Metro currently logs an average of 1.5 million weekday boardings on its bus and rail system. However, both peak and off-peak boardings have the potential to increase based on several key free Google-enabled functionalities intended to reach car commuters who may be looking for alternatives to driving. For example, a "Public Transit" link will appear every time a user searches for driving directions within Los Angeles County. Metro transit stop and station icons will automatically appear on transit maps. Daily transit riders also can discover new transit alternatives they didn't know existed. Google automatically creates agency transfers in overlapping participating transit agency service areas. Google will provide links back to Metro's website at metro.net so users can find additional information such as service alerts, fares, and destination discounts.

Google Transit, which supports 12 languages, is also expected to help international travelers plan their trips while in the region. Last year, Los Angeles had 4.7 million international visitors, many of those from non-English speaking countries.

Additionally, the free Google Translate feature increases the number of supported languages to 34.

Transit trip planning is available on both desktop computers and mobile phones such as iPhone, Blackberry, Windows Mobile, S60, and other Java enabled phones.

Google will provide information on Metro services only. For other municipal operator transit information, visitors should visit Metro's own Trip Planner on Metro.net. Metro is currently building a more robust Trip Planner engine which should be available in the near future.



You do it! Visit google.com/transit or access Google Maps, the free online mapping service provided by Google, at maps.google.com. Simply enter the date and time and Google will provide options showing the amount of time and number of transfers for each option. By using the technology of Google Maps, users do not need to search by the exact address of their origin or destination, and can easily plan trips from landmarks, attractions and businesses. Riders can easily select the most convenient trip. Google Maps also provides walking directions that enable users to find out exactly how to get to the nearest transit stop or station, as well as how to get to their destination once they leave the bus or train. No other online mapping service puts transit data in the context of so much other useful information, such as other points of interest, areal imagery, business listings, user reviews and street-level views.

The Google announcement follows the recent launch of Metro's developer website at metro.net/developer. Here developers and other interested individuals can utilize public transit route and schedule data for inclusion in new or existing web-based transit planning computer applications. The downloadable data sets are provided in Google Transit Feed Specification and GIS data.

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Rail General Manager Mike Cannell and Bus and Rail Director Roman Alarcon monitor crowds from the Los Angeles Sheriff's Dept. Emergency Operations Center post (EOC) at the agency's Gateway Plaza Headquarters. *Photo: Gayle Anderson*

Smaller Crowds to MJ Memorial Keep Metro Running Smoothly

By Laura Kloth
Staff Writer

(July 7, 2009) Smaller than anticipated crowds for Michael Jackson's memorial Tuesday at the Staples Center may have disappointed vendors, but it was wonderful news for Metro officials who made special efforts to keep transit running smoothly all day.

With the memorial service well under way by mid morning, Los Angeles Sheriff's Lt. Jenny L. Bethune said the morning commute had been "very good and very smooth" all along Metro's light rail and bus network.

Bethune was joined by Metro CEO Art Leahy, Rail General Manager Mike Cannell, and Bus and Rail Director Roman Alarcon as she monitored the crowds from the Los Angeles Sheriff's Dept. Emergency Operations Center post (EOC) at the agency's Gateway Plaza Headquarters.

Watching the crowds on television, some smiled a sigh of relief noting that operations were running well despite road closures on Olympic and Flower and restrictions on movement through other areas around Staples and the Nokia Theater that forced Metro to reroute several Metro bus lines.

To prepare for the event, Bethune said her department met with Metro officials and Los Angeles Police personnel Thursday.

At one point, the LAPD wanted to completely shut down service on the Metro Blue Line at Pico Station, but Bethune said the concerted efforts by her department, Metro and Transit Service Bureau officials assured the

LAPD they had the situation under control.

LASD Capt. Pat Jordan said past events like last year's immigration rallies and the recent turmoil following the Lakers' NBA championship win were indicators that the sheriff's staff needed shoring-up to cover more ground. Answering the call, sheriff's personnel who typically work graffiti patrols were reassigned, while others were being asked to work overtime.

"So we've learned when you have a big event, you know that you actually have to have your people spread out," he said. "It isn't just going to be impacting the area where you have the problem. If it's really big, you're going to be impacted all along the line."

Jordan said he spent years working out the West Hollywood area and noted that the LASD has extensive experience in handling large crowds. "I think we're getting to be old hats at it. Most people are trying to play catch up, but we just open up and we're ready to go," he said.

Cannell said his department would be monitoring the events of the day, and make changes if necessary.

"We had put additional bus and train service out. There does not seem to be a surge that we anticipated. Everything is going very smoothly and we hope the exodus will be as calm as the entrance," he said.

By Tuesday afternoon, Alarcon announced the bus line detours were being cancelled as of 3:45 p.m. while Bethune noted earlier the Emergency Operations Center had shut down by 3 p.m.

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U.S. Secretary of Transportation, Congress Members tour new Metro Gold Line to East Los Angeles extension

U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood: New light rail extension is a 'model for America'

(July 3, 2009) U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood on Friday toured the new Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension, now nearing completion. The Secretary rode a test train and toured stations with Congress members Lucille Roybal-Allard and Grace Napolitano along with Los Angeles County Supervisor and Metro Board member Gloria Molina, Los Angeles City Councilman and Metro Board member José Huizar, Metro Board member Richard Katz and Metro CEO Art Leahy, among other officials.

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Venice Division 6 operators celebrate 200 days of safety with a luncheon and rounds of applause from UTU reps, Transportation Manager Cheryl Brown, at left, and Metro Westside/Central General Manager Mark Maloney, back row center.

Venice Division Celebrates 200 Days of Safety on the Job

- Roster: [Safety Honor Roll](#)

(July 14, 2009) Along with the ocean breeze and the Line 534 coastal route to Malibu, a sparkling safety record is just one more reason why Venice Division 6 employees love their job. As of June 26, the division has put together more than 200 days of work without lost time due to an accident or work-related injury.

At a recent celebration at the venerable division, which held its [centennial](#) in 2001, Transportation Manager Cheryl Brown presented awards to some 25 operators recognized for their adherence to the high safety standards that thrive at the Venice Division.

Everybody on the safety honor roll received a baseball cap embroidered with a Metro corporate safety logo and



Westside/Central GM Mark Maloney,

personalized with the number of years of driving safely. Those with safety records amounting to milestone years of 5, 10, 15 and 20 also received the coveted Metro belt buckle.

The safety awards are based on the established criteria of zero worker's comp claims, zero avoidable accidents, no more than one unavoidable accident or incident and zero absences that exceed 30 days.

In the spirit of celebration, Brown presented a "Manager's Choice" recognition to Venice Division staff who have gone "above and beyond" in their efforts to promote and enhance division safety. The recipients of the annual award are honored with their names on a perpetual plaque that is publicly displayed in the division training room. The FY2008-2009 honorees are Earis Valls for safety suggestions, Frank Cole for transportation operations and Melvin Braxton and Carlo Salas for morale.

Division staff were rewarded with a festive luncheon for their safety achievements. Co-sponsored by UTU Local 1607, the event was attended by UTU Local 1607 Chairwoman Lisa Arrendondo, and UTU Local 1607 Vice Chairman Ernie Martinez, who personally thanked the operators for their outstanding work performance. Also appreciative was Westside/Central Sector's Byron Lee, who not only attended but also helped serve the *El Pollo Loco* buffet lunch.

--from Gayle Anderson

Transportation Manager Cheryl Brown and Safety Award-winning Operator Tyronne Rouege at the entrance to Venice Division offices.

Safety Honor Roll

19 * Samson Gessesse * Benjamin Zisner * **17** * Carlton Robertson * **15** * Melvin Braxton, * Evan A. Hale * Dung Vu * **11** * Javier Lopez * **10** * Jackie Davis * **8** Darrell Carter * Tracy McZeal * **7** * Francesca Brande * **6** * David Stidhum * Denise Cabaong * Landon White * **4** * Sean McCormick * Robson Mendaña * Dennis Moss * **3** * Ike Collins * Angelo Colon * Tracy Pettigrew * Mark Roat * **2** * Robert Larks * Tyronne Rouege * Mario Trigueros * Laura Villarreal



Morale booster Melvin Braxton, who navigates the celebrated Line 534 to Malibu, wouldn't have it any other way. He's stayed at Venice Division for 39 years.

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Metro Transit Security Lt. James Cook, center, congratulates Transit Security Officers Ron Allen, left, and Dion Middleton for a job well done. *Photos by Gayle Anderson*

Metro Transit Security Officers Use Training, Experience To Help Keep Riders Safe

By LAURA KLOTH
Staff Writer

(July 14, 2009) Relying heavily on their experience and training, Metro's Transit Security officers were able to react quickly and effectively to several potentially dangerous incidents last month.

On June 12, a team of Senior Transit Officers detained three robbery suspects following an incident at the Green Line Hawthorne Station.

Senior Transit officers Loretta Ferem and José Ortiz were on patrol when they were stopped by two women who told them they had been assaulted and robbed of their cell phone while standing on the station platform.

The transit officers moved quickly to search the area with Ferem covering the overpass bridge while Ortiz moved quickly toward the street.

The three suspects were caught walking around the platform and promptly detained.



Metro
Transit
Security Sr.
Officers
Loretta
Ferem and
José Ortiz
on patrol.

Senior Officer Rene Lopez was on the I-710 Freeway approaching the Firestone Station when he heard the officers' call for assistance. Quickly reversing course, Lopez arrived at the Hawthorne Station to provide the needed back-up.

"Based on our training, we were able to react and apprehend all three suspects before they fled the scene," Ortiz said.

The three suspects, all under 17 years of age, were taken to Padrinos Juvenile Hall by Los Angeles County Sheriffs Deputies.

In another incident, Lopez was sent to a Metro Bus at Venice and Broadway in response to a "10-3-90" – drunk on a bus - call. Meeting Security Officer Dion Middleton, already on the scene, the officers approached the man, who was sleeping on the floor of the bus, with a bit of apprehension.



Metro Transit Security
Sr. Officer René Lopez
rolls with calls.

"We didn't know if he was drunk, asleep, or needed medical assistance," said Lopez. "Turns out, the guy was inebriated so we asked him to get off the bus. Just then, the operator reported that the man had walked on the bus and slapped the operator on the shoulder."

When the operator told Lopez he wanted to press charges, it changed the entire circumstance of the call, he said. "We reported it to the Sheriffs and detained the suspect until their arrival."

In the meantime, Middleton and Transit Officer Ronald Allen were at the right place and time at the Rosa Parks Station to help a man claiming a group of men had attempted to rob him.

The victim summoned the two officers for help, and officers immediately issued a station-wide broadcast alert with a description of the suspects.

Middleton rounded up most of the suspects with Allen promptly apprehending another who attempted to board a train.

"We contained the situation and made sure nobody got hurt," Allen said. "A lot of the patrons or employees look for us to figure out the situation. So we try to do the best we can."

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San Gabriel Valley Operators Rewarded With Hearty Breakfast for Staying Safe

Bus Operator Cynthia Rocha and Asst. Transportation Manager Larry Cosner serve a sunrise breakfast to early shift operators.



By Laura Kloth
Staff Writer

(July 16, 2009) How do you thank 220 operators for maintaining a safe work environment for 50 consecutive days? You feed them breakfast, of course.

That's what San Gabriel Valley Division 9 bosses did for their operators on June 11.

With Transportation Manager Jon Hillmer helping to serve, the operators feasted on a hearty breakfast of eggs, sausage, pancakes and fresh fruit.

The meal began at 3 a.m. with Assistant Transportation Managers David Castillo, Larry Cosner and Brock Davis lending a hand to prepare and also serve the food.

Acting RTWC Tanya Romo and Senior Safety Specialist Veronica Rodriguez also assisted in other preparations including food purchasing.

"The event was very well received by our Operators," said Hilmer.

"Several Operators asked if they could have steak and eggs if they reached 100 consecutive days without an injury," he said, adding that he would agree to their request.

Thanking his immediate staff, Hillmer said, "These dedicated employees are to be highly commended, but, the real stars were the Division 9 Operators. Achieving over 50 days without an injury is an achievement they all can be proud of."

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Milestones:

Metro South Bay Operator Jack Bailey logs in 50 years with Metro and has been accident-free for an astounding 42 years.

- Photos by Rich Morallo

Veteran Operator Jack Bailey takes bows for 50 years of service and 42-year safety record at South Bay appreciation program

- [Safety Honor Roll](#): South Bay operators rack up 131 years of accident-free safety records
- Veteran South Bay operators Jack Bailey and [Donald Dube](#), each with 50 years at Metro, will be recognized at the Board meeting on Thursday.

By Rich Morallo
Community Relations

(July 21, 2009) Jack Bailey was 23 years old in 1959 when he joined Metro. "I was filling out applications for a job that week and then happened to walk into the Metro office on Broadway that morning and got hired as an operator."

Fifty years later Bailey is still with Metro driving buses and was honored for his dedication and service to the agency during an appreciation program, July 9, at Carson Division 18.

"I didn't think I would be with Metro this long but I enjoyed the job, the passengers and my fellow operators, so I decided to stay," said Bailey. The 72-year old operator also said the pay was good and he was able to provide for his family.

CEO Art Leahy congratulated Bailey and the 77 other staff members being

Veteran operator Jack Bailey gets kudos from CEO Art Leahy, Chief Operating Office Carolyn Flowers, UTU vice chair Butch Johnson and Metro South Bay General Manager Dana Coffey.



recognized, including 22 operators with 5 years or more of accident-free driving.

Leahy, himself a former operator, praised the staff for handling a demanding job where "...a person operates heavy equipment in an uncontrolled environment while conducting interaction with customers who want to know where the bus is going and what time the bus get there...."

"I want to thank Jack for his 50 years of service," said Chief Operating Officer Carolyn Flowers. "We cannot deliver public transportation without the work of Jack and all of the other operators at the agency," she said.

Bailey, who rides a motorcycle, is a firm believer in Safety's First and has been accident free for 42 years. "This is a huge accomplishment - Jack has been self-starting, reliable and great to have at the division," said Metro South Bay General Manager Dana Coffey.

A mentor of student operators for almost all of his 50 years, Bailey was complimented by UTU vice chair Butch Johnson during the program. "Upon my return to active driving, it was Jack who gave me my final evaluation on the road," Johnson revealed. "Jack gave me the confidence and encouragement and helped me tremendously to get back to driving," Johnson added.



Metro South Bay General Manager Dana Coffey and Chief Operating Officer Carolyn Flowers congratulate operators with safety achievements at festive celebration held at Carson Division 18. Pictured here are Robert Brown with 7 years, Harold Williams, with 27 years, and Carlos Calderon with 5 years.

Safety Roster: Operators with reach milestone safety records,

achieving from 5 to 42 years with no accidents or incidents.

42 * Jack Bailey * 29 * Shelton Jones * 27 * Harold Williams * 11 *
Bennie Harris * 9 * Jeffrey Locke * 7 * Robert Brown * 6 * John Payne 5
* Horace Kinney * Emiliano Chavez * Francisco Sanabria * Michael Palmer *
Lawrence Coar * Phung Dinh * Hiep Pham * Carlos Calderon * Victor
Andrews * Horace Leftwich * Luis Romero * Guadalupe Franco * Arturo
Avila * Oscar Mayorga * Robert Gregg.

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Sheriff's Deputy Ted Broadston demonstrates identifying suspicious packages in transit stations at OD&T's in-service training session for Transportation Career Academy Program (TCAP) interns.

Metro Welcomes New Crop of Transportation Career Academy Interns

By Tawny Gestuvo
Contributing Writer

(July 21, 2009) Dressed to impress, Metro's Transportation Career Academy Program (TCAP) interns on July 10 began their mini-careers at Metro by participating in one of five in-service training sessions held in the Organizational Development & Training Department.

The diverse group, made up of high school juniors, seniors and recent graduates, have been placed in various Metro departments including General Services and Public Relations.

According to OD&T Administrative Intern Katie Talbert, who helps coordinate the program, there are 46 interns, seven of which are TCAP Intern supervisors.



TCAP student supervisors include, from left, Sajid Hameed, Rabia Fnu, Hannah Blair, Gavin Nilpradab and Angela Campos. *Photos by Gayle Anderson*

Valuable experience, understanding

Kavin Nilpradab, a senior at Schurr High School in Montebello, is a TCAP student supervisor and hopes to gain valuable work experience and a better understanding of the public transportation industry.

“OD&T’s in-service trainings are really effective. We determined what the students training needs would be step by step and it is a bonding and learning experience for both the interns and TCAP Intern Supervisors,” said Nilpradab.

As part of their internship experience, interns will be required to attend in-service training courses every Friday to be held in the University Conference Room in the OD&T Department.

The courses are taught by Metro’s Sr. Development & Training Specialists and the OD&T Director, and by East Los Angeles College Adjunct faculty.

The courses complement what students may have already studied at their respective TCAP high schools, where curriculum focuses on urban planning, engineering, and Computer-Aided Design (CAD).

Talbert said the TCAP curriculum is structured to introduce the students to careers in transportation, computer technologies and advanced tips and tricks in computer software applications.

This marks the first year Metro was able to secure monies from the Los Angeles Community College District to cover the cost to offer internships to the TCAP students for the summer months.

Students were required to attend a Metro’s sponsored Safety First training and Metro’s Transit Terrorism Awareness training course.

The TCAP internship has been offered through Metro’s Organizational Development & Training Department since 1995.

Advantages gained

Since Christopher Cortez steps into his internship at General Services after graduating from North Hollywood High School in June, Metro will be his

first professional experience.

"I was nervous at first but it is a pleasure to work here. I appreciate the opportunity to work for such a good company," said Cortez, who plans to attend college.

Though he's undecided about his major, Cortez says he is interested in teaching and hopes his stint with a transit agency will help him gain an advantage in the labor market when he launches his permanent job search.

If a full-time position opens up at Metro in the future, Cortez says he'll be happy to apply for it.

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Proposed California high-speed trains would reach speeds up to 220 mph. Click on image for to view video and more images at the [California High Speed Rail Authority](#) website. (Source: California High Speed Rail Authority)

Metro Moves To Support Development of California High Speed Rail

- Support for first L.A. to Anaheim segment could create 75,000 jobs. Construction could begin in 2012, open in 2018.

By Dave Sotero

A Metro News Release report

(July 23, 2009) In a move that brings high speed train service one step closer to reality in Southern California and the state, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority Board of Directors today approved the agency's support for the development of the California High Speed Rail initiative, as well as a first segment that would connect Los Angeles to Anaheim in under 20 minutes.

The decision officially brings Metro on board as a strategic partner in a broad-based coalition of transportation and other agencies statewide that are committed to building an 800-mile network of trains whose maximum speeds can reach up to 220 mph. The high-speed train network would connect Southern, Central and Northern California as proposed by the California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) (www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov).

Under a Memorandum of Understanding, both Metro and CHSRA would work together to establish high-speed train service in the Los Angeles Corridor utilizing, among others, Metro-owned facilities and rights-of-way. Metro will ensure full integration of all of its public transit services serving Union Station, which include the Metro Red Line, Metro Gold Line and ubiquitous Metro Local and Metro Rapid bus lines.

Metro has put its weight behind the very first proposed segment that would begin at L.A. Union Station and end at the proposed Anaheim Regional Transportation Intermodal Center (ARTIC) Station in Anaheim. End to end, the trip would take under 20 minutes, its stations resembling airports without airplanes.

The proposed segment has already undergone preliminary environmental reviews and is now considered one of the most "construction ready" projects of its type in the country. CHSRA has completed an Alternatives Analysis and is expected to issue a draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Study for the L.A. to Anaheim segment at the end of 2009.

Construction could begin as early as 2012 and open in 2018. The five-year construction period and ongoing operation of the service would create 75,000 regional jobs while establishing a new centralized high speed transportation alternative that is also safe, reliable and environmentally friendly.

"High speed rail is just the kind of sustainable economic stimulus we need during this recession," said Los Angeles Mayor and Metro Director Antonio Villaraigosa. "It will help reduce traffic, improve air quality, and create direct construction and service jobs for the Los Angeles region."

High-speed rail on fast track

Transportation agencies throughout California are encouraged by recent developments at the state and national levels that will potentially accelerate the L.A. to Anaheim segment. California's high-speed rail line efforts, for example, are funded in part by \$9.95 billion in voter-approved Proposition 1A — the Safe, Reliable High-Speed Train Bond Act of November 2008. Additionally, the project also is eligible for \$8 billion in funding under the federal government's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

In its action today, the Board also voted to support the preparation of a statewide application to receive ARRA funds for the project. The deadline to submit the state's application is August 1, a deadline all parties are now actively preparing to meet.

The Board also voted to support general improvements to the Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor for more efficient and coordinated service.

"Metro Bus and Rail lines will provide the connections that will help feed this new high speed train service here at Union Station," said CEO Art Leahy. "Union Station will become transformed into a world-class, 21st Century intermodal transit hub that will serve the County of Los Angeles in ways that are very exciting to imagine."

A statewide high-speed train system will offset the need to spend nearly \$100 billion to build up to 3,000 miles of new freeway lanes, five airport runways and 90 departure gates over the next 20 years – all for less than half the cost. The effort also will be an important step forward in building "Livable Cities."



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See [myMetro report](#): (June 25) **Leahy's on the mound. Here's the wind-up and the pitch.**

Tickets Still Available for Metro Dodger Night

(July 23, 2009) Metro employees are invited to watch CEO Art Leahy throw out the first pitch as the Dodgers take on the Atlanta Braves at 7:10 pm on Aug. 8.

Only two weeks before the event, tickets are still available for the Metro Dodger Night event, according to event organizer Jim Barnfather, Northrop Grumman Federal Credit Union Vice President of Marketing and Business Development.

"Tickets are selling like crazy at Gateway, but we still have plenty of tickets at all the divisions," said Barnfather.

Tickets will be on sale through July 31 at the credit union's Metro Headquarters office, the credit union's Gardena location, and from Metro transportation stenos at the following divisions: 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 21 and at Rail Operation Control (ROC).

The price includes admission and "All You Can Eat" hot dogs, nachos, peanuts, popcorn, soda and water. Beer, ice cream and parking are not included.

This will be the second time the credit union hosts a Metro Dodger Night to honor Metro employees. In 2003, former CEO Roger Snoble threw out the first pitch at that event.


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Funding for the Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project is being provided by a special \$210 million grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation, announced by Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa at a news conference held Feb. 27, 2008, adjacent to a freeway onramp. Pictured here are then-U.S. Transportation Secretary Mary Peters, California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, Mayor Villaraigosa, California Transportation Secretary Dale Bonner and Metro Board Member Pam O'Connor. *(Photo by Jose Ubaldo)*

Metro Board Approves Toll Rates for Freeway Express Lanes as Part of Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project

By Rick Jager
A Metro News Release report

(July 23, 2009) The Metro Board of Directors approved toll rates to be used on portions of the I-10/I-110 ExpressLanes following a series of public hearings that gathered public input on the tolling pricing proposal to be implemented as part of the agency's Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project (ExpressLanes) that will debut late next year.

The new adopted toll rates will range from 25 cents to \$1.40 a mile for solo drivers using the ExpressLanes. Tolls will go into effect with the opening of the ExpressLanes in December 2010. Staff estimates that the average trip on the I-10 ExpressLanes will be nine miles with an average toll of \$6 depending on demand and the average trip on the I-110 ExpressLanes is five miles for an average toll of \$5.

The annual revenue estimated from the tolls is approximately \$21 million. The net toll revenues will be reinvested in the corridor where they are generated for transit and carpool lane improvements. Adoption of the toll rates and toll policy will now move forward as part of the draft environmental document which is expected to be circulated this fall.

In partnership with Caltrans, Metro is embarking on a one-year demonstration program that will convert existing carpool lanes on the I-10 (El Monte Busway) and the I-110 (Harbor Freeway Transitway) freeways to high-occupancy toll lanes.

No toll for transit users

Present day carpoolers, vanpoolers, motorcycles, and public transit users will not be charged a toll to use the lanes. Solo drivers, who currently are not allowed to use the lanes, will be allowed to use the ExpressLanes by paying a toll. No tolls will be charged in mixed-flow traffic lanes.

Funding for this demonstration project is being provided by a special \$210 million grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation. A majority of the funding will be used to enhance public transit options along the two corridors by providing an additional 57 transit buses and to increase the number of vanpool and carpool participants.

The purpose of the demonstration is to squeeze more capacity out of crowded freeways in a region where building new freeways is almost impossible because land is not available and there is a lack of funding for new construction.

The project will provide the opportunity for individuals to choose better transportation alternatives and provides a choice for solo drivers to shift to more convenient express transit options that will serve the corridor route.

The toll price will be variable depending on traffic flow. The goal is to ensure vehicles in the ExpressLanes travel at a minimum of 45 miles per hour. It will be cheaper to access the ExpressLanes during non-peak hours, or opt for public transit, carpools and vanpools and pay no tolls.

Rewards program may offer toll credit

Staff also is considering implementing an ExpressLanes Rewards Program to provide a toll credit or transit credit of \$5 to frequent transit riders on the I-10 and I-110 ExpressLanes. To earn the \$5 credit, transit riders would have to ride 16 round-trips during the peak period over a 30 day period. Transit riders would choose to apply the credit to their toll account or transit fare. The \$5 credit would expire after 60 days. Frequent transit riders could earn up to \$60 toll/transit credit over the one-year demonstration period.

The rewards program would apply to all Los Angeles County transit bus lines operating during the peak periods on the ExpressLanes including Torrance Transit, Gardena Municipal Bus Lines, Foothill Transit, LADOT and Metro. ExpressLanes toll revenues would reimburse operators and Metro operations for the \$5 transit credit.

A wide range of low-income mitigation measures will be surveyed, including enhanced transit investments, various types of credit schemes including transponders pre-loaded with toll credits for low income commuters and other strategies. The assessment will be completed in the fall and reported to the Metro Board for review and approval.


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Board moves to support development of high speed rail; approves toll rates for freeway express lanes

- [Milestones:](#) Two Bus Operators mark 50 years on the job

(July 23, 2009) In his first board meeting as chairman, City of Glendale Mayor Ara Najarian played host to lengthy public comment sessions and detailed discussions surrounding the motion to adopt the Long Range Transportation Plan and the item authorizing the CEO to secure Los Angeles County's fair share of federal rail funding through the New Starts Program. Both items were moved forward to the September agenda. In the matter of considering light rail vehicle options, the board voted to extend the current bid period for 60 days. The consent calendar, which passed unanimously, included support for California high-speed rail and determining toll rates for freeway express lanes.

Report: [Metro moves to support development of California High Speed Rail](#)

Report: [Metro Board approves toll rates for freeway express lanes](#) as part of Congestion Reduction Demonstration Project

Milestones:

Board recognizes South Bay operators, each with 50 years of service.



So noted: Board recognizes veteran operators for 50 years of service. From left, Board Chairman Ara Najarian, Operator Jack Bailey, Operator Donald Dube and CEO Art Leahy.

(July 23, 2009) CEO Art Leahy, himself a transportation veteran with 38 years of service, invited Metro Bus Operators Donald Dube and Jack Bailey up to the podium at the Metro Board meeting held July 23 to recognize each for 50 years of service.

Dube, hired Nov. 1, 1958, intended to stay at the wheel for 6 months or until he could afford to return to college to become an aeronautical engineer. But college didn't pay well in those days and the job as a bus operator turned into a career that extended well into his golden years. "It's been a pleasure for me to work here and I'd like to stay on quite a few more years," said Dube.

In the same year the Los Angeles Dodgers won their first pennant in their new home town, Jack Bailey came on board the Los Angeles MTA on July 6, 1959. He went to work the very next day at the West Hollywood Division and never looked back. A line instructor for 49 years and a mentor to new employees and trainees, he's never had a miss-out (a bus yard term for late) in the entire 50 years. "He enjoys driving, enjoys his passengers, enjoys his co-workers," said Leahy, who attended Bailey's 50-year bash at the Carson Division on July 9. "It's been wonderful to have 50 years of steady employment," said Bailey.

United Transportation Union spokesman Goldy Norton heaped praise on the two longtime operators, congratulating both on behalf of General Chairman James Williams and the entire UTU membership for their "outstanding service to this agency and the outstanding manner in which they have represented our union. Driving a bus in the Los Angeles area is not easy and that they have accomplished this in over a half a century is an amazing accomplishment of which we are very proud," he said.

Both operators are assigned to Carson Division 18.

-- from Gayle Anderson

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"Go Metro" ads – now showing in local movie theaters – feature actors Louis Lombardi and Terry Crews performing a jazzy rap to get more riders to use Metro buses and trains. [Check it out](#) at [metro.net](#).

"Go Metro" Ads Now Playing at a Theater Near You

- *Actor Louis Lombardi Talks About His Role*

By Laura Kloth
Staff Writer

(July 29, 2009) Metro's latest campaign to increase ridership has "Gone Hollywood."

The agency's "Go Metro" ads – now seen at a theatre near you – feature actors Louis Lombardi and Terry Crews performing a jazzy rap to get more riders to use Metro buses and trains.

The ad campaign – which started July 17 – will run for three weeks on 616 movie screens across Los Angeles County, and then replay beginning Sept. 18.

The ads are also featured prominently on [metro.net](#) and also promote Metro's carpool and vanpool programs, as well as the agency's transportation expansion programs and greening objectives.

During a recent interview with myMetro, actor Louis Lombardi, (*The Sopranos*, *24*, and *Doughboys*) said he really enjoyed working on the ads for several reasons.

Lombardi said he was excited about being able to work with close friends Terry Crews on screen, and production team Robert Weiss and John Daley, all friends in the movie business. The Metro role gave him the opportunity to branch out from the more serious acting roles he's played on screen for nearly 26 years.

Lombardi says the Metro ads are loosely based on Terry Crews's self-created alter-ego -- a buffed up, over-the-top dancer who loves to strut wherever an audience can be found.

The character isn't much like Crews, who Lombardi calls "one of the classiest, most loveable people you can meet," but he really gets an audience going.

In the ads, Lombardi gets to play Crews's business agent who raps on the benefits of riding Metro, while Crews performs jazzy dance steps behind him accompanied by dancers and/or musicians.

Crews (*Everybody Hates Chris*, *White Chicks*) has taken his character across the country and his popularity has taken-off on YouTube and other venues like half time NBA games.

Metro's ads were somewhat of a challenge to Lombardi, who is more use to playing dramatic characters like Skip Lipari on Sopranos and his own self-created character, "Lou" a lovable family man on his own movie project, "Doughboys."

"When I got there, I didn't realize there were five spots. We got up there and kind of winged it. I didn't realize it would turn out so good," Lombardi said, adding that the entire project took about 10 hours to shoot.

"I always wanted to be like Biggie Smalls, the rapper and it turned out to come true," he joked.

A native New Yorker, Lombardi now makes Southern California his home with his wife and 3-year-old daughter.

Lombardi says he's "amazed" by the progress Metro has made to get more people to use public transportation.

"The L.A. transportation system is insane. How can they do that? I'm kind of impressed with it," he said.

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Attending the Lifesaving Awards Ceremony are, from left, South Bureau Capt. John Witt, Deputy Dennis Chuck, Deputy Jason Roberts, Deputy Chris Griego, Lt. Holly Perez, Deputy Scott Schneider, Deputy Armando Guzman, Deputy James Chambless, Detective David McAllister, Deputy Elton Simmons, Deputy John Sands and North Bureau Capt. Patrick Jordan.

Nine Transit Sheriff's Deputies Receive Lifesaving Awards

- Three Deputies Share Their Experiences

By Laura Kloth
Staff Writer

(July 29, 2009) Nine Los Angeles Sheriff's deputies who work with Metro were among the 40 deputies recently honored July 14 with a Lifesaving Award and uniform pin for performing life saving rescues over the past year.

Some of those whose lives were saved were present at the ceremony to thank the deputies and listened as Los Angeles County Sheriff Lee Baca lauded their heroism.

"There is no such thing as a life that is 100 percent secure," said Los Angeles County Sheriff Lee Baca at the presentation. "There are thousands of heroic deeds that go unrecognized, but today you shine within the Department and within the community. I am very proud of you."

Last year, North Bureau Deputy John W. Sands was taking his uniform in to be cleaned at a laundry in Chatsworth when he noticed a 10-year-old boy pop a piece of candy into his mouth.

A few seconds later, the boy began gasping for breath, and signaling that he was choking. The boy's father had stepped away to the restroom and the only employee in the cleaners was busy in another part of the shop.

"I knew I had to do something. I grabbed him and pulled him toward me,

and immediately started the Heimlich," Sands said.

Prayer and training

After several attempts, the boy was unresponsive, went limp and began turning purple. With three sons of his own, Sands felt compelled to keep trying and then began to pray.

"I resorted back to my training, and began the thrust maneuvers trying many times," he said, adding he was willing to break the child's ribs to get him breathing.

Sands was finally able to get the candy dislodged from the boy's throat, when the father returned. Explaining the situation, the father began to cry and said, "Oh my God, you saved my son's life."

Sands left the cleaners deciding not to report the incident. As it turned out, the boy's father is a Los Angeles Police Department sergeant who tracked Sands down to thank him and report the incident to his supervisor.

"I'm glad I was at the right place, at the right time," Sands said, noting that he hoped someone else would do the same for his own sons in a similar situation.

Day-to-day heroism

South Bureau Deputy Elton E. Simmons was on his motorcycle patrolling the Metro Blue Line when he noticed an angry truck driver blowing his horn after a female driver had cut him off, and was nearly struck from behind.

The woman, apparently disoriented, suddenly slowed down with the wheels of her car butting up against a berm separating the light rail tracks from traffic.

"I was yelling at her to stop the car, and got around on the driver's side and started banging on the window," Simmons said.

A few moments later, the woman was finally able to stop and put her car into "park" gear, but, a few moments later, shifted back into "drive" and started moving forward. Slowly rolling her window down, Simmons was able to reach into the car, switch off the ignition and remove the keys.

Paramedics were summoned and determined the woman had gone into diabetic shock. After treatment by paramedics, she began to respond, thanking Simmons for saving her life.

"I told her now you owe me. Leave your car here, and go get you some food," Simmons said.

The 23-year employee of the Sheriff's Department, Simmons said he was happy to help but was somewhat surprised by his award, since he deals with "these kinds of things" all the time.

Saved by the belt

North Bureau Deputy Christopher J. Griego and his partner were patrolling the North Hollywood Station on the Metro Red Line last September when they noticed a man leaning over a guardrail on the mezzanine level.

"His back was facing toward us. I thought he was a maintenance guy changing a light," he said. "We got closer and realized he was distraught

and kept saying he wanted to kill himself.”

Suddenly, the man began slipping. Realizing he was falling, he began struggling to pull himself back over the guardrail. Griego and his female partner grabbed the man, and began yelling for assistance from passersby.

“Once I grabbed his belt, we were able to slip him back up,” he said. With the mezzanine close to 30 feet over the rail, Griego predicted, the man would have easily killed himself or seriously injured someone else in the fall.

Other recipients of the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department Lifesaving Award were: David E. McAllister, Scott A. Schneider and Armando A. Guzman, all of whom assisted heart attack victims; Jason W. Roberts and Dennis R. Chuck, who prevented suicide attempts; and James T. Chambles, who performed a rescue from a burning vehicle.

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[Club Scene @ Metro]

Deadline is approaching for Employee Clubs to apply for annual subsidies

- Subsidy is \$300 for FY 10; application deadline is August 31
- Download form and guidelines for Employee Clubs at [Forms Online>Employee](#)

(July 30, 2009) Want to start an employee club?

Eligible for funding in the amount of \$300 in 2009 fiscal year, Metro employee clubs are defined groups of employees who get together for social, recreational or professional purposes. Under the guidelines, clubs, such as Toastmasters @ Metro and the African American Employees Association, hold meetings and plan activities or events.

Metro Employee Activities plans to provide funding for 10 employee clubs this fiscal year and is encouraging groups of employees with similar interests to get together and organize clubs.

The application deadline to start an employee club is Friday, Aug. 31.



Metro Cycling Club hosts weekly bike to lunch rides, safety and maintenance support, weekend outings and cycling events. One of the most active of the Metro clubs, the Cycling Club created a 'bike bus' ride from Pasadena to promote Bike to Work Day, pictured here at the Metro Gold Line Mission Station. Want to try it out? Send an e-mail to club officer [Cory Zelmer](#).

"This employee program provides a supportive environment for a wide range of employee interests and activities," said Danielle Boutier,

director of Communication Services.

Approved clubs will be eligible for annual subsidies – currently \$300 per fiscal year – from Employee Activities. To qualify, clubs must submit organizational rules or bylaws, a list of officers, a meeting schedule and justification for the use of funds.

Open to all

Clubs that set qualifications or screen for membership must explain the process. Clubs must be open to all employees regardless of race, color or creed, political or religious affiliation.

If more than 10 groups apply for funding this fiscal year, Boutier says, a drawing will be conducted to select those that will be funded. The number of clubs to be funded each year will depend on funds available in the Employee Activities budget.

To remain eligible for funding, a club must use at least 70 percent of its funding each year.

Funds may be spent for speakers or to attend conferences, club clothing items or supplies, parties or events, or other appropriate activities. Funds may not be spent on alcohol or other items or activities that violate Metro policies. -- *From staff reports*

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[Club Scene @ Metro]



Metro yogis strike the warrior pose at Metro Yoga Club's retreat held on a Saturday in Griffith Park. Pictured are, from left, Michael Pan, Nyguen Tham, Jennifer Gill, Michelle Jackson, Mary Morgan, Avital Shavit, Yoga Instructor Jillian Szafranski, Elvira Broida-Shirk(back row), Karla Duran, Salida Kaing, Shane Allen and his daughter Sarah Allen and Maria Duran. *Photos provided by Karla Duran.*

Metro Yoga holds first-ever retreat on a Saturday in Griffith Park

Contributed by Karla Duran

(July 30, 2009) Metro Yoga held its first-ever retreat June 27 at the shady Ferndell section of Griffith Park. Some 30 people - Metro employees, friends and family - participated.

Avital Shavit, Maria Dolores Ramos, Garth Garret coordinated the event with many others contributing to the retreat's success, said member Karla Duran. "Club founder Shavit brought her cart filled with extra yoga mats, blocks and straps for those who don't have one or simply forgot to bring their own," she said.



The Metro Yoga Club was formed in January 2008 with Shavit, and co-worker Nicole Casalino organizing a noontime class for club members.

Jillian Szafranski, a certified Yoga instructor, was invited to design and teach the class -- an hour-long class of Yoga poses that feature stretching and energizing breathing techniques that simultaneously increase energy levels while reducing the effects of stress.

Karla Duran, who has been attending the yoga classes for more than six months, gave the experience high marks.

"I'm fairly new to Yoga, but I have to say it has changed my life," she said. "Yoga has done wonders for me! I have more energy and feel full of life."

The class, she adds, "is for beginners, intermediate and advanced yogis. All yoga positions start off basic and if you're up to the challenge, instructor Jillian will always say 'For those of you who want to take it to the level you can do this.'"

Metro Yoga meets every Tuesday and Thursday at noon and is suitable for all levels and open to all employees, said Metro Yoga coordinator Avital Shavit.

Wear or bring comfortable clothing. Mats are provided, or participants can bring their own. A modest fee is charged for those who want to attend just a single class or a series.

Metro Yoga retreat was a day of relaxation, hiking in the sunshine, and bring your own picnic lunch in the company of good friends:

- > 10:30 -11:30 Yoga stretching session
- > 11:30 a.m. Lunch break
- > 12:30 a.m. Choice of group or individual hike on Griffith Park's trails
- > 2 p.m. Yoga stretching session



For more information and meeting notifications, send an e-mail to Metro
Yoga coordinator [Avital Shavit](#).

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