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How to put out a bus fire with a dry chemical fire extinguisher

from Mike Greenwood
DEO, Contract Services

(Sept. 1, 2009) Fire extinguishers are standard equipment on every bus but do you know how to use one?

Twelve supervisors from the Westside/Central Sector Vehicle Operations (VO) Unit had a chance to prove their know-how when instructors from the Los Angeles Fire Department conducted a fire extinguisher drill at Metro Support Services Center (MSSC) Aug. 27.

With the smoke from the Station fire visible from the safety zone set up on MSSC grounds, the supervisors were trained in the use of the dry chemical fire extinguisher that is standard equipment on all 2,600 Metro buses and in all VO Supervisor vehicles. As temperatures approached 100 degrees in downtown Los Angeles, the supervisors learned what types of fires that can be put out with the dry chemical extinguisher, how it works and how long the supply of fire retardant material lasts.

The effort was organized through the joint efforts of the Los Angeles Fire Department Battalion Chief John Quintanar, Westside/Central Senior Safety Specialist Richard Long, and Westside/Central VO Assistant Manager Fernando Hernandez. The LAFD instructors were Capt. Carlos Avina and Firefighter Jeffrey Hudson. The training consisted of a lecture, a question and answer session, and hands-on experience in putting out a fire. Staff from several other sectors and Corporate Safety observed.

A second round of fire extinguisher training will be conducted for the remaining 12 supervisors in the 24-member Westside/Central Sector Vehicle Operations (VO) Unit. Organizers are proposing to take the training program on the road to all divisions and facilities to make certain that all personnel are fully equipped for fire and other emergency scenarios.

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Class of #29: Fourteen highly motivated service attendants earn the rank of Mechanic 'C' after completing 18 months of on-the-job training. Graduates are joined here by, from left, Director of Operations Training Doug Middleton, ATU Local 1277 President Neil Silver, Equipment Maintenance Instructor Brian Markey, Chief Operations Officer Carolyn Flowers, and, at right, Senior Equipment Maintenance Instructor Steve Mullaly. *Photos by Gayle Anderson*

Metro Mechanics Tool Up to Take New Positions

By Laura Kloth
Staff Writer

(Sept. 1, 2009) Fourteen Metro service attendants proudly earned their torque wrenches and diplomas to become Class C Mechanics after undergoing an intense 18-month apprenticeship program.

CEO Art Leahy congratulated the graduates at the Aug. 26 ceremony, and afterward asked each one why they chose to become Metro mechanics.



Mechanic 'C' Arturo Roldan



Mechanic 'C' Gail Williams

Rite of Passage: Mechanics brandish their shiny new torque wrenches at MSSC graduation ceremony.

Among the graduates were Arturo Roldan and Gail Williams, both of whom said

that they were eager to participate in Metro's in-house training program and gladly switched from first to second shift to accommodate their training schedule.

"It was very interesting. I learned a lot. The hardest part was going to class and working at the same time," said Roldan, "My family was very supportive. They were happy for me."

Williams, who received her on-the-job training at Div. 5, is "grateful" for the program.

"The training was great," she said. "I had excellent training here [at the Metro Support services Center (MSSC)] and at Div. 5 ... excellent, excellent training. So I'm going to be one of the finest. So it's great."

Other Class C mechanics graduates were: Jose Garcia, Juan Becerra, Dave Buakong Green, Brian Lench, Cheryl Rakisits, Abraham Diaz, Jose Fernandez, Matthew Aragon, Anthony Jackson, Guillermo Diaz, Emmanuel Vasquez, and Poo Ung.



Sr. Instructor Steve Mullaly shares cake and glory with Instructor Brian Markey, who picks up yet another honorary certificate presented to him by appreciative students.

Matching mentors and students

Sr. Equipment Maintenance Instructor Steve Mullaly, who hosted the ceremony, said most of those participating were required to change shifts to attend two, four hour classes a week. Later, students also qualified for a bus driver's license to be able to make road calls.

Mullaly lauded the cooperation of the division managers who helped by pairing up the trainees with experienced mechanics at Divisions 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 9, 10 and the MSSC.

"On behalf of the Operations Maintenance Instruction Department, we would like to say thank you very much for volunteering to become one of the OJT work locations. So you know, we picked you as you have good management skills and good mechanics for students to learn from," Mullaly said.

A 'strong collaborative effort'

Chief Operations Officer Carolyn Flowers said the program is evidence of "strong collaborative" efforts between labor and management.

The program, she said, "was an opportunity for us to show the class, the union and all other employees that there's opportunities for advancement, and the agency supports training, that the agency values the employees and feels we should give them an opportunity to develop within the organization."

Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 1277 President Neil Silver noted that this was the first graduation he knew of that was attended by a Metro CEO.

"The CEO actually cares about what goes on around here. He's a hands-on manager and I have a lot of faith in him," he said.

Among those also attending the ceremony were Deputy Executive Officer John Roberts, Director of Operations Training Doug Middleton and several division managers.

The ATU chief said Metro should implement apprenticeship programs in other areas to help Metro "grow their own" and keep jobs within the agency.

"This is an excellent program. It's probably the only one in the country that does this. Anyone that comes out of this school could go to any transit agency," he said. "The minute they here they come out of the mechanics training program, they'll hire them right away. Nobody's got a program like this."

"These buses are getting more and more complicated every day. There's more and more rules they have to adhere to for the environment which is important. The real crux of the matter is people have to be trained."



ATU Local 1277 President Neil Silver and Chief Operations Officer Carolyn Flowers share a light-hearted moment at graduation party.

Metro San Fernando Valley General Manager Richard Hunt congratulates José Garcia and others at luncheon for new mechanics.



Learn and grow

Graduate Gail Williams, who spent nine years as a Service Attendant, said the program required a great deal of focus.

"You have to dedicated when you do it because when you have family, and you're trying to take care of your family and at the same time get up and go to school and then go to work," she said, noting that she has grown children, and it was still a challenge, "but well worth it, for anyone who wants to continue to learn and grow."

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Senior Transit Security Officer Henry Solis with trophy-winning K-9 Officer Nakita. Officer Solis had something to do with it, says the Ventura County Sheriff's Department, organizers of the Ventura County Police K-9 Trial held July 10, 11 in Camarillo.

Metro's Own Transit K-9 Earns Top Dog Honor

- Metro has a new top dog and her name is Nakita.

By Laura Kloth
Staff Writer

(Sept. 3, 2009) The 4-1/2 year old black Labrador brought home three trophies including one for best overall bomb sniffing dog in this year's Ventura County 4th Annual K-9 competition.

Nakita's handler Senior Transit Security Officer Henry Solis couldn't be prouder of his energetic four-footed partner.

Solis, a 22-year-Metro employee who enjoys competing, says when he first teamed up with Nakita his objective was to challenge her into becoming among the very best K-9 officers.

"I like to compete. I like the competition. I like to push her to the edge so that way I know what we're capable of doing. And if we could do it in trials, I know we can do it out in the field, and that's what really counts," he said.

In this impromptu demonstration in the Metro Headquarters plaza, Nakita identifies a suspicious package and stays at attention while her handler determines a course of action.

*Photos:
Gayle Anderson*



Sorry, Alameda

Nakita competed against some 60 other four-footed K-9 officers including dogs from the Alameda County Sheriff's Department, who at the onset of the July competition, boasted they would take top honors.

Unfortunately for them, they left empty handed while Nakita received 1st place in the overall event and vehicle search, and 2nd place for the container search. Two years ago, Nakita brought home four trophies in the same competition.

This year, the competition involved scenarios including one where dogs had to sniff out explosives in a mock-up of President Barack Obama's motorcade. The objective was to search four cars and locate explosives in only 3-1/2 minutes.

"We ended up finding two explosives, one in the president's vehicle, and one in the chase car," Solis said.

Nakita was also given a five minute window to sniff through 500 lockers, and just a few minutes to search for explosives through punctured paint cans.

Hard work and pride

Solis said he was elated with Nakita's abilities, but not entirely surprised because he trains with her regularly on both Metro buses and trains, and during training exercises with other law enforcement agencies.

"I'm invited by other law enforcement agencies to train with other types of explosives. Basically, we're well rounded. We get to play with everybody's explosives so she works really good in all sorts of environments," he said, recalling how his first dog - General Grant - was also a good bomb sniffing dog.

General Grant, a chocolate lab, was retired from active duty in 2006 for medical reasons and now lives with the Solis family.

Solis said he's looking forward to showing Nakita's skills at an international competition in Las Vegas this fall and is optimistic about the final results.

"This is going to be pretty serious. I know we'll do good," he said, "I take personal pride in my dog and in our canine team. And being the officer in charge of our canine program, I have a lot of personal pride in my unit, and I want to make sure that we're top notch."

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Prevention is the best medicine, but a flu shot is still a good idea.

- **Metro employees asked to take precautions to stay healthy as flu season approaches**
- **First step: Get your regular seasonal flu shot at Metro on Sept. 22**

(Sept. 3, 2009) As the flu season approaches, this time swarmed with warnings about the H1N1 virus, Metro employees are being asked to take extra precautions to stay healthy and safe.

"The CDC (Center for Disease Control and Prevention) has issued warnings about a possible heavy flu season," said Stefan Chasnov, DEO of Metro Human Resources. "We are asking employees to prepare for that possibility by taking precautions to stay healthy."

The [memo](#) from Human Resources sent to all employees Sept. 1 tells us how. As the CDC sees it, there are eight ways to stay healthy at work. Follow this advice and trade in your sick days for vacation time.

Download your copy and staple to your cubicle: [8 ways you can stay healthy at work](#) (PDF)

As flu season approaches, the most obvious advice for employees and others to prevent its spread is to practice good hygiene, Chasnov said.

"Wash your hands often with soap and keep the common areas clean," advises Chasnov.

To avoid the potential spread of the flu through the workforce, Chasnov asks employees who develop flu-like symptoms to stay home. This means you have a fever or signs of a fever, such as chills, you're feeling very warm, you have a flushed appearance, or you're sweating.

Stepped-up sanitation efforts continue

General Services staff have instructed cleaning crews to continue efforts in keeping public areas at Metro Headquarters sanitized.

Alcohol-based hand sanitizers were installed throughout the Gateway building and at all divisions and Metro facilities earlier this year.

West Valley Division 8 Assistant Manager Bill Hesser reports that employees and visitors are using the hand sanitizers installed at strategic locations throughout the division. The areas include entrances and exits to the

Get your flu shot!

When: Tuesday, September 22

Time: 7:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Where: Metro Headquarters building, Gateway Plaza Conference Room, 3rd Floor

Who: You. Note: Family members are welcome.

Dress code: Short sleeves are appreciated.

Cost: \$25 cash or check

Purveyor: Passport Health
Info: www.passporthealthusa.com

Reservations are required:
RSVP to Raul Rodarte, 922.6865 or e-mail rodarter@metro.net

Screener: Bring this form with you to get vaccination

Flu Vaccine: What you need to know

Vacuna: Lo que usted necesita saber

Wash your hands often!



Anna Mercaldi disinfects hands at

transportation and maintenance buildings, as well as the kitchens, lunch areas and restrooms. "We've saved our personal disinfectant spray dispensers that were issued in the spring. In case we need refills, we won't have to replace dispensers," he said.

What about H1N1?

The memo notes that staff is working with the County Department of Public Health to secure a high priority for distribution of the H1N1 vaccine when it becomes available. Metro's corporate safety and human resources departments will continue to monitor the situation, Chasnov said.

Education, not scare tactics, will help manage reactions to scenarios that range from "ordinary" to "pandemic," said Scott Norwood, Corporate Safety Emergency Preparedness Manager.

"It's a good idea to become familiar with Metro's [pandemic plan](#)," said Norwood, who urges all employees to review the online document. The plan provides guidelines for each department to follow in the event a viral outbreak disrupts daily life on a global level.

As noted in the plan, a pandemic is likely to alter business functions by causing employee absenteeism, shortage of supplies, reduced ridership and health department restrictions. "The pandemic plan is consistent with Metro's policy to provide a safe and healthy working environment and a safe transit system for the public," he said.

--from Gayle Anderson

sanitizer installed on the 19th floor. Below, the devices are located near the elevator doors on every floor at Metro Headquarters.



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Collins Kalu, Metro's Principal Industrial Hygienist, known as the agency's 'chemical detective,' implements Corporate Safety's new Safety Review Standard Policy. *Photos by Gayle Anderson*

What's in your carpet?

Customer Relations is testing ground for Metro's Safety Review Standard Policy for projects involving hazardous materials.

(Sept. 8, 2009) Was there something in the air, or in the carpet, that had a couple of Customer Information Agents 'itching' for callers recently?

Leaving nothing to chance, Gail Harvey, Customer Relations director, ordered up a thorough deep cleaning from General Services.

She and her department got more than what they expected: a complete fumigation that required three departments to coordinate a temporary relocation of 30 Call Center stations for the weekend.

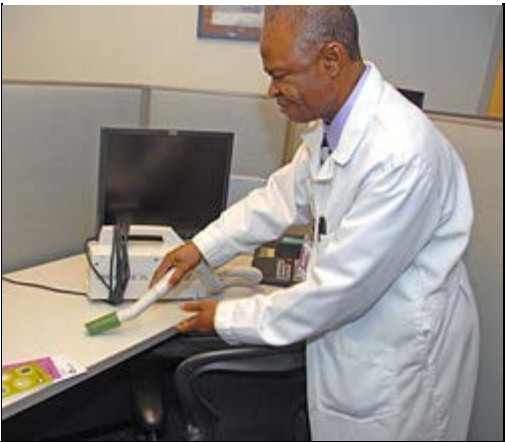
"John Flores and the Building Services staff were responsible for directing, coordinating and assembling the team and all the prep work along with several extra tasks requested by Telephone Information management," said Phyllis Meng, Facilities Maintenance Supervisor. "This project included thorough dusting, steam-cleaning the office carpet and the complete fumigation in early August. This entire project



Demonstrating a safety procedure to Customer Relations Director Gail Harvey, hygienist Collins Kalu extracts samples from Customer Information Call Center's desktops and carpet to test for possible irritants in the work place.

required a significant organized coordination by all involved."

The fumigation project proved to be a testing ground that enabled Collins Kalu, Principal Industrial Hygienist, to implement the new [Safety Review Standard \(SRS\) policy](#). The policy requires that Metro control activities that may affect employees' safety and health and the environment including those of contractors and suppliers.



"The policy is a watchdog that provides for timely evaluation of projects or systems planned in order to identify potential safety, health and environmental hazards that could impact employees, the public, or the environments," said Kalu.

The big move

The fumigation meant that the entire Metro Information Call Center operation had to be relocated to the IT Training Room, the only area equipped to handle the operation.

"The IT and Telecom staff were there with us to ensure that we had no problems with the telephones or the computers and there were none. It was great," said Alonzo Williams, Communications Manager.

Harvey credits Joe Giba, Director, Operations and Service Delivery, and Elizabeth Bennett, Chief Information Officer, for directing Ray Schuck, Systems Maintenance Supervisor and Alex Biehl, Network Support Manager, to quickly construct the temporary call center.

Working during the weekend, a General Services crew, under the direction of Supervisor Jose Aguilar, met the tight deadlines to make certain the Call Center was ready for inspection bright and early on Monday morning so that the agents could return to their regular work stations by 6 a.m.

The last step of the project was the laboratory analysis performed by Corporate Safety, which determined that the clean-up was adequate and that no residual fumigation product remained in the work area.

Projects involving hazardous materials must get the SRS final clearance, in order to be signed off as completed.

"This fumigation project proved to be good benchmark test for Metro's new safety review standard procedures. It proved that the process can and does work when properly applied," said Kalu.

--from Gayle Anderson


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Systems Safety Manager Abdul Zohbi watches over photo enforcement for the Metro Gold Line extension to East Los Angeles. *Photo by José Ubaldo*

Traffic Enforcement Camera Installation Nearly Complete Around Gold Line

Lights ! Camera ! Stop and Think !

By Michael D. White
Staff Writer

(Sept. 8, 2009) Metro has begun the installation of traffic enforcement cameras at selected intersections along the six-mile long Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension.

Part of a concerted effort to promote safe driving habits and reduce the number of incidents of motorists crossing rail tracks against signals, the cameras will be positioned at 14 intersections selected by Metro and the Transit Services Bureau of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) based on risk and potential for accidents.

According to Abdul Zohbi, Systems Safety Manager - Metro Corporate Safety, a pair of cameras will monitor the left-hand turn lanes at each of the selected intersections as they account for the highest rate of grade crossing accidents.

"Metro is the only transit agency in the country with photo enforcement at grade crossings," he said, adding that the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension camera program is an extension of the camera systems in place on the Metro Blue Line and Metro Orange Line.

According to Zohbi, who serves as Photo Enforcement Project Manager, the Eastside Extension camera array will be completed by the end of this month and, as new light rail and dedicated busway alignments are built, Corporate Safety plans call for making photo enforcement part of the system's overall safety elements.

Pays for itself

The camera system, he stressed, is "cost neutral," meaning that the expenditures for equipment and maintenance is entirely paid for by the revenue generated by the citations issued by the LASD.

Each of the photo installations is comprised of a specially-designed cameras equipped with flash equipment and ground loop detectors. Violators will have their vehicles "shot" twice – once prior to the violation point and again after their vehicle has moved beyond the violation point.

Citations will be processed per Metro, the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department and the California Department of Motor Vehicles to ensure citations are mailed to the vehicle's registered owner.

Warnings will be issued to offending motorists for 30-days after the cameras are installed, said Zohbi. After that, the LASD will begin issuing citations to drivers that violate the grade crossing rules.

The current fines for a photo enforcement violation are \$445 for adults and \$435 for legal motorists under 18. Additional fees for attending traffic school apply.

Saving lives

Due to open in the coming months, the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension will serve eight new stations and run from Union Station in downtown Los Angeles via the Arts District/Little Tokyo and Boyle Heights to Atlantic/Pomona Boulevards in East Los Angeles.

The light rail construction project is within budget, on time and the contractor has logged more than four million working hours without a day lost for any accident or injuries – a safety record that Zohbi wants to see continue.

"Like the other Metro routes that are camera equipped, we want to make sure that the new installation on the Eastside Extension exceeds the standard requirements for safety," said Zohbi. "This has been a tremendous cooperative effort between Metro and all of the partners involved in designing, installing and implementing the new system and if it all results in the saving of just one life, it will be worth it."



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Move Over R2-D2, The Metro Robots Are Here

- Transit Education Programs Teach Children About Rail Safety

By Laura Kloth
Staff Writer

(Sept. 10, 2009) Experts say that if you're slightly animated and maintain good eye contact, you'll draw more attention and keep your audience interested.

If this is true, Metro's two newly purchased, cute and portable safety robots will probably do very well as Metro's Community Relations department uses them to teach children and adults about rail safety at schools and at Metro safety fairs and events.

The eye-blinking robots were delivered this week and will debut at Monte Vista Elementary School on Sept. 21.

According to Community Relations Manager Barbara Burns, the decision to purchase the two robots - which resemble a P-2000 and a Breda rail car - after one was spotted in action at an APTA conference.

Burns used a prototype that resembles a bus at the Gold Line Extension Safety Fair in May and it turned out to be a big hit.

"The robots speak to the kids. They are about 3-feet high, and 3-feet long. The children love them and the adults love them too," Burns said indicating the pair have not yet been named.

'Awe'-some reactions

The robots cost about \$10,000 a piece and were purchased from Utah-based Robotronics, a 26-year old company best known for creating *McGruff*, the crime-fighting hound.

Metro's newest hires are able to blink their eyes, move forward, backward and sideways, and talk in a childlike high-pitched voice controlled by a human via remote. They will also be programmed to authenticate Metro's distinctive train whistle.



'Handlers' Jackie Martinez, left, and Jennifer Arndt keep the portable, lovable robots on track.

Community Relations Coordinator Jacqueline Martinez, who has become an expert robot handler, says the best part about her job is watching reactions from children who have no idea she's controlling the robot.

"This one actually has a microphone so when the kids are talking, I can hear them and answer their questions. I can have a whole conversation with them without being noticed," she said. "We did the event for the [Gold Line Extension] safety fair, and I was telling people, 'Oh I like your shirt, nice purple shirt,' and their response would be, 'Oh my, the robot knows. He can see me.'"

"We actually had to get security for it because there were so many people approaching it. The kids wanted to hug it. The adults wanted to hug it as well and take pictures with it," she said.

CEO Art
Leahy got
on board

with the Safety Robots after an impromptu 'meet and greet' in the 3rd floor lobby on Thursday.



Burns said the new additions will become a good tool to keep students focused on safety.

"We're always trying to keep our program fresh since we train the schools around our rail lines every year. We think the robots will be a big surprise for the students," Burns said.

Real illusions

Floyd Tippetts, a Robotronics sales representative, says the robots are saving lives because children remember what they learn.

"The thing that works the best is the illusion that it is real. It listens and it hears, and then you could respond back," he said.

Tippetts says the company has some 7000 robots across the world teaching children about fire, street, train, school bus and boating safety, as well as crime prevention. There's even a new character going to Greece aptly named Curby who will teach children about recycling.

"As we're moving toward fewer cars on the road, you've got new avenues to teach safety," Tippetts said, "It just gives them an avenue to be taught in a fun type of way."



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WSI Metro -- East Valley Division Maintenance Manager Sal Llamas, at left, and Equipment Maintenance Supervisor Andy Gonzalez, third from left, congratulate service attendants, from left, Roman Guzman, Rosel Petronilo, Anthony Ortega, Daniel Munoz, Silviano Cervantes, Jose Ramirez, Eduardo Manzanares, and Keith Purcell for outstanding work in the window guard and seat insert replacement program. Also awarded but not pictured: WSI team leader Brenda Young and service attendants Kenneth Parga and Nyeshia Lewis.

WSI Metro

Service attendants fight grime on Division 15 buses

(Sept. 15, 2009) Changing out vandal-damaged window guards and graffiti-tagged seats on Metro buses is a tough-as-nails, thumb-straining, tedious, tiring, backbreaking and time-consuming job, but at East Valley Division 15, dedicated service attendants are up to the task, and all over it, says Maintenance Manager Sal Llamas.

Service attendant Rosel Petronilo changes out a graffiti-stained seat insert ...



and digs out a stubborn rubber window guard to replace a graffiti-

Call it WSI Metro. The team of service attendants changes out an average of 1,200 seat inserts a month. Ditto for the window guards, the stubborn rubber strip that secures the small pane above the passenger-side window.

When the numbers came in this month from team leader Brenda Young, who has tallied up more than 10,000 change-outs in each category since the beginning of the year, Llamas and Equipment Maintenance Supervisor Andres "Andy" Gonzalez put together a certificate and cupcake reception Sept. 8 to celebrate.

"This is a tremendous achievement," said Llamas. "The work is not easy and this level of performance requires a professional, dedicated team."

East Valley Division 15 were the first responders to the call to action, said John Roberts, DEO, Operations, who developed

etched pane atop a passenger window.



the WSI program in 2003. The program delegates a mechanics' task to service attendants, who, in exchange for a new skill set and hard work, are paid Mechanic "C" wages for the duty.

(In an agreement with the ATU, service attendants were granted use of "tools of the trade" for this function and Mechanic "C" classification while performing the task.)

"Over the years, graffiti and vandalism increased to the point that it became difficult for the mechanics to get to the task, which was absorbing time that needed to be dedicated to repairs," said Roberts.

In a letter handed out to the service attendants by Gonzalez, Roberts noted:

"You have led the way in establishing a damaged seat insert and window guard change-out program that has set the standard for the rest of the MTA." The damage caused by vandalism is unfortunate, he noted, but "our customers deserve the cleanest buses we can provide. The work is not easy. But the results are very rewarding."

Another endorsement came by way of San Fernando Valley General Manager Richard Hunt, who had been riding Line 794 during the day and called Llamas to say he was "very impressed with the cleanliness with buses out there."



Llamas reads congratulatory letter from WSI program founder DEO John Roberts

All three shifts work together to keep the buses clean, said Llamas, "and it's a daily challenge. When a bus comes back damaged by vandals, it's heartbreaking."

Although vandalism has increased over the years, the service attendants have kept pace to change out the damaged seat inserts and window guards daily. As an example, Roberts points to a report from July 2009,

when the team replaced 1,946 seat inserts and 1,285 window guards in one month.

"When the program started in 2003, it was not unusual for a bus to harbor 30 graffiti-stained seats," said Roberts.

"Your high score stands out," Llamas told the team. "Keep inspiring each other to provide world class quality service, to which we constantly aspire."

-- from Gayle Anderson

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Sheriff's Deputy William H. Lynch says the mutual aid following the Metrolink crash was significant.

North Bureau Sheriff's Deputies Receive Medals for Metrolink Crash Efforts

Sheriff's Deputy Recalls Details of a Tragic Day

By Laura Kloth
Staff Writer

(Sept. 10, 2009) Transit Services North Bureau Sheriff's Deputy William H. Lynch says he can't recall the exterior of the Sept. 12 Metrolink crash scene in frighteningly vivid detail.

But Lynch, one of the first responders to arrive at the scene, says the images of the mangled passengers, piles of debris, and the painstaking efforts it took to free the victims from it will remain with him for the rest of his life.

Along with Transit Bureau North Deputies Barry Ryan and Brad Johnson, Lynch was among 15 Los Angeles County Sheriff's employees honored Sept. 9 with the award of the Medal of Valor and Meritorious Conduct for their efforts in responding to the deadly crash involving a Metrolink train and Union Pacific freight train.

The crash injured 135 people and killed 25 more including Metro Storekeeper Donna Remata, who was riding in the first car of Metrolink's Ventura County Line 111.

When he arrived at the scene, Lynch recalls Sheriff's Deputies Ryan and Johnson were already pulling people out of the wreckage.

"There were trains on fire. There was about four or five of the cars. I think three from the freighter and a couple from the Metrolink," he said. "My training kicked in and the initial thing I thought about was resources. Do we have the necessary resources coming to deal with the problem?"

Lynch recalls that he "hopped right into the train and started pulling people out. There was a fire in the front, and a lot of gas and oil. I knew I had a buffer because I went into the back part. So if it ignited, I knew I had a decent escape route to take."

Complicating the effort to assist the victims, he said, "was that the train was on its side and everything was just in complete devastation inside, with the seats and the railing bars -- and everything was in the way."

Lynch remembers seeing fire department rescue workers arriving with tools which included the Jaws of Life and several saw-saws which he quickly maneuvered around the debris.



September 12, 2008: The scene of the Metrolink crash in Chatsworth.

"One of the things that sticks in my mind is that I went through three of those saws because the battery just kept wearing out because we were cutting through so much metal," he said. "The majority of the people that I pulled out were really in bad shape. They were trapped and caught up in all the debris," he said noting that he probably pulled out as many as eight people in 2-1/2 hours.

As they were being along the line of rescue workers, Lynch remembers, some of the victims slipped off the boards as they weren't fitted with rail bars.

It was then that he heard something.

"I kept hearing this -- what I thought was a fireman calling for something, and one distinct time I felt it came from below. I told everybody to be quiet. Generators went off and a fire rescue worker called out, 'Hey, is there anybody there, give a yell,'" he said, "And you hear this gurgly grunt. It was a guy down there calling for help, and we were actually standing on the debris that was on top of him."

Using saws to cut through the wreckage, it took 30 minutes to reach the trapped man. "The victim was all busted up, but he was alive when we pulled him out," said Lynch, indicating that he never found out if the man survived his injuries.

"People say, 'How was it inside that train?' The two analogies that I can give you is that it was like a human trash compactor," and like the scene in Star Wars where the heroes are nearly crushed to death in a large trash container, he said.

Lynch credits adrenaline for keeping him going during the ordeal, but he remembers when he stepped away from the wreckage, "I just laid on my back and just about passed out."

Since the accident, Lynch, who has worked in law enforcement for 21 years, says he has been able to cope with the haunting memories and, at times, the nightmares about the incident by using tools he learned on the

job and the support of his family.

"One [good] thing that came out of this was the mutual aid from all the agencies," he said. "Metrolink, LAPD, CHP and the fire department... everybody worked together, and we might as well all have been in the same uniform that day. That was pretty cool. The mutual aid was significant," he said.

On Sept. 8, Metrolink officials paid tribute to the passengers lost in the Line 111 crash, and a second deadly incident, and to the first responders to the tragedy with the dedication of a plaque in the East Portal of Union Station. Other tributes are planned for this weekend.

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Metro Customer Information Agent Marie Tervalon pays tribute to close friend and commuting companion Donna Remata at dedication, Saturday, of the Metrolink Memorial Plaza.

*Photos courtesy of
Tervalon family*

Metro Storekeeper Donna Remata Remembered at Simi Valley Memorial

By Laura Kloth
Staff Writer

A ceremony held at the new Metrolink Memorial Plaza in Simi Valley, created to honor the 25 people killed in the Sept. 12, 2008, Metrolink crash, turned out to be an "emotional, yet beautiful tribute," said Metro Customer Information Agent Marie Tervalon.

Metro Storekeeper Donna L. Remata was among the 25 killed that day when a Metrolink commuter train collided head-on with a Union Pacific freight train in a tragedy that injured 135 others and garnered national headlines.



"It was more beautiful than I thought it was going to be. It was just so peaceful," said Tervalon, who attended the ceremony to pay tribute to Remata, her close friend and commuting companion.

Soon after the event, Tervalon remembered telling Remata on the morning of the crash that she might be taking the 3:26 p.m. train home with her, and might need a ride since they lived near one another in Simi Valley.

Tervalon said she had taken the

Image of friend and co-worker Donna Remata was displayed in a floral wreath near her office following Metrolink tragedy on Sept. 12, 2008. She is remembered today with a permanent tribute at the Metrolink Memorial Plaza pictured below.



same train the previous day, but on Sept. 12, she missed it. As the day unfolded, Tervalon said she was grief stricken when she heard confirmation that her friend had been involved in the fatal crash.

Some 600 people attended the dedication of the memorial, which stands at the southeast corner of the Metrolink station on Los Angeles Avenue and was designed by Simi Valley City Architect Jerry Clark. Ten Simi Valley residents died in the tragedy.

Simi Valley officials began designing the memorial – which also commemorates those killed in the 2005 Metrolink crash in Glendale – with input and contributions from the victims' families and the community, said Asst. City Manager Laura Behjan.

"It's a nice peaceful place with landscaping," Behjan said.



After holding several workshops, Clark compiled everyone's ideas and created the \$150,000 memorial, which features large lava columns, one for each victim, surrounded by beautiful native landscaping and individual hexagon-shaped markers engraved with the names of those who lost their lives.



Tervalon said that in addition to city officials, attendees at the memorial one-year anniversary service included an unidentified female survivor who sustained extensive burns in the crash, and several students who tearfully placed a class picture at the stone of a former teacher, who died in the crash.

Emotions were sometimes so overwhelming, at one point, Tervalon said she left the service with her husband, but returned the following day to place flowers on Remata's stone.

Referring to the charcoal colored stone which reads:
Donna L. Remata, She was a



Marvelous Person, "It got to [me] especially when I was by her name," Tervalon said.

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Metro's K. N. Murthy Lands National Industry Award

(Sept. 17, 2009) The Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO) honored Krishniah N. Murthy with the *Industry Innovation Award* at the 38th National Meeting and Training Conference held in Dallas, Texas, this summer.

"This award is a recognition of the development of the underground and light rail projects we have here," said Murthy. "Also it recognizes the pioneering work we did earlier in seismic design."

Some of the major achievements under Murthy's direction include the establishment of seismic design criteria for underground rail structures; designs for stations that are unique in terms of their functional and safety (seismic, hazardous gas) requirements; ongoing and successful efforts to incorporate "lessons learned" from earlier Metro Rail experiences into current designs; the application of stringent value engineering concepts resulting in millions of dollars of savings, and a rigorously implemented quality assurance program.

About COMTO



Krishniah N. Murthy, the holder of COMTO's Industry Innovation Award for 2009, is the Deputy Chief Capital Management Officer at Metro. Murthy directs the design and construction activities for the rail capital projects in the agency and is also the task leader for the Measure "R" program. *Photos by Gayle Anderson*

-- Reported by Sharad Mulchand



On the Move: From left, South Bay General Manager Dana Coffey, Southern California Chapter President Marion Jane Colston, COMTO National Board Chair Shirely DeLibero, CEO Art Leahy, Chief Operating Officer Carolyn Flowers, Executive Officer of Administration Don Ott, Chief Administrative Services Officer Lonnie Mitchell and Fred Minagar, who heads Minagar & Associates, a multidisciplinary traffic engineering, transportation planning and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) consulting firm.

The Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO) is the premier organization for the training, education and professional development of minority transportation professionals. Founded in 1971 on the campus of Howard University in Washington, D.C., the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO) was created to provide a forum for senior-level minority professionals in the transportation industry. From highways and roads to mass transit systems, subways to rail systems and port authorities to airports, COMTO members represent every level of the transportation industry. Marion Jane Colston, Director, Strategic & Organizational Planning, is the president of the Southern California Regional Chapter of COMTO. The chapter hosted a reception in May to welcome the organization's national officers, National Board Chair Shirley DeLibero and COMTO CEO Julie Cunningham. CEO Art Leahy was the featured speaker.



CEO Art Leahy addresses prime time COMTO reception hosted by Southern California Regional Chapter in May.

--from Gayle Anderson

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TCAP interns who began their transit studies July 10 gather with program coordinators for a class photo on Aug. 8. Click [here](#) or on image to expand view. *Photos by Gayle Anderson*

TCAP Interns Experience Successful Summer Stint at Metro

(Sept. 17, 2009) If a successful internship program is defined as one that provides a welcoming and productive environment, then Metro's Transportation Career Academy Program (TCAP) is doing exceptionally well.

Several interns who started with Metro this summer completed their program at an Aug. 28 ceremony which included an encouraging speech from CEO Art Leahy and an invitation to return by Marion Jane Colston, Director, Strategic & Organizational Planning.

A total of 95 interns participated in the summer TCAP program this year, some of them coming from high schools which include North Hollywood, Franklin, Wilson and John Glenn.



CEO Art Leahy draws from his own experience to advise the next generation of potential transit officials.

Leahy told the exiting interns what he said he would state to his own children as they were growing up -- focus on getting a good education.

"The market is a cold place if you don't have anything that the market values," he said. "If you have no skills, if you don't have any brain power, then your ability to compete in the market is going to be very poor, and you're going to be without power."

Referring to his own experience, Leahy stated, "You might come here as a bus driver while you're going to college and you might end up being the CEO. There's going to be a vacancy in the future, so you'd better get ready."

Colston said it was a "fantastic" experience to work with the interns, and she praised them for working well together despite the difference in schools.

"Many of you became friends with one another despite the fact that you attend different high schools and have competing sport and academic programs," Colston said. "You are welcome to come back and apply for the college internship program."

Jose Alcantar, who recently graduated from John Glenn High School, and said he was "happy to participate" and planned to return.

"This was a great first job and helped in creating the momentum for college. I recommend the program highly and plan on re-applying for a college internship," he said.

Alcantar, who interned in the Long Range Planning Department, assisted in research and helped complete a department reference project. He currently attends Long Beach City College and plans to transfer into Cal State-Long Beach to study electrical engineering.

"I was really impressed by the professionalism of everybody I worked with. Everyone I met wants Metro to succeed and it amazed me how everyone works so well together," he said.

Not only did the TCAP interns learn new skills in Metro's various departments, they also attended weekly in-service training courses taught by Colston, Metro Senior Development & Training specialists and by adjunct faculty from East Los Angeles College.

The courses were expected to enhance subjects students studied in high school which included urban planning, engineering, and Computer-Aided



Student Jose Alcantar, at right, with mentor Falan Guan, Transportation Planning Manager, and fellow student Rosanna Espinoza Below, Andy Ho, with mentor and program director Marion Jane Colston and fellow student Kenia Miranda.



Design (CAD).



TCAP interns from John Glenn High School collect their diploma certificates at graduation ceremony Aug. 27.

Andy Ho, who interned in Manpower System & Support, was just as pleased with his experience.

"The program gave me the opportunity to see things the way they really are in the corporate world. I'd recommend the TCAP program to anyone interested in working in a large company. What impressed me was the fact that everyone I worked with at Metro was working toward a common goal," Ho said.

Like Alcantar, Ho is a graduate of John Glenn High School and plans to attend Cerritos College in the fall and eventually earn a degree in sports management.



TCAP interns from Franklin High School collect their diploma certificates at graduation ceremony Aug. 27.

Both students said they would recommend that young people who've been through the program be given the opportunity to talk with young people coming into the program for the first time.

"That would give them some idea of what to expect and show them that it won't be an entirely overwhelming experience," said Alcantar.

Part of the experience began before they arrived at work.

Both Alcantar and Ho rode Metro trains together to get to work every day. The pair would pick up the Metro Green Line train in Norwalk, transfer to the Metro Blue Line and then board the Metro Red Line for the final leg of their daily trip to Gateway Plaza.

"Taking the train every day really put a face on what Metro does," said Alcantar. "I think people really don't appreciate what it takes to keep the trains and buses working as efficiently as they do."

-- from staff reports

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A terracotta ceramic plaque commemorating the late Deputy Executive Officer of General Services Brian Soto was quietly installed over the weekend at the entrance to General Services on the 15th floor. Near the help desk and visible to all who enter General Services Department, the plaque hangs as a gentle and permanent marker to honor the contributions and the integral presence of Mr. Soto, who, as head of general services, played a major role in the construction and later the upkeep and maintenance of the 26-story building.

Ceramic Plaque Pays Tribute to the late Brian Soto, General Services DEO who is often thought of as the soul of Gateway

(Sept. 22, 2009) The installation of a ceramic plaque that recalls the heritage of the Gateway Building is a heartfelt tribute to the spirit of the friend and leader who is often considered the soul of the Gateway Building.

From the inception of the building following the merger of the Los Angeles County

Transportation Commission (LACTC) and the Southern California Rapid Transit District (SCRTD) in 1993, until his death on March 29, 2009, Mr. Soto took charge of a demanding and rapidly changing environment that began with the coordination of the big move of nearly 1,900 Metro employees into their new digs.



General Services Manager Irma Licea invites employees and visitors to view the ceramic plaque honoring Brian Soto. The permanent tribute is installed at the entrance to the building services center on the 15th floor.

"Being in this space that I shared with Brian for 10 years is a daily reminder of his absence," said Irma Licea, General Services Manager. "Installing this plaque now is to remind all of us who he was and what importance he has in this building."

The timing of the dedication recalls rings true to two special anniversaries, said Licea. "Brian's birthday was Saturday. He would have been 47 years old on Sept. 19. And, the Gateway Building turned 14 on Sept. 15."

Brian Soto introduces speakers at program he coordinated to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Metro Headquarters building in 2005.

See myMetro report Sept. 16, 2005: [10 years later, Metro Headquarters Builders Look Back with Pride](#)



Licea, always wanting to keep his name alive since Mr. Soto's untimely passing at the age of 46, suggested a commemoration in the form of a plaque. The suggestion was hailed by Board staff member Ray Harris, who backed the recommendation. The project was turned over to Creative Services Director Jorge Pardo.

Pardo chose a composition of clay cast in a tile patterned after an historical and architectural element of the Headquarters Building and the Union Station complex. He worked with the local firm California Pottery and Tile Works to produce the piece.

"Rather than a generic bronze plaque, we looked to something more tailored to his experience with us," said Pardo. The ceramic plaque, which replicates a tile pattern visible in the cafeteria, is a continuum, a detail that's an element of the building, he said. "Brian did a great job of maintaining this lovely facility. I am happy to be working here," said Pardo.

"Brian is a part of the building," said Licea. "Anybody that comes to 15th floor, where the help desk is, can see this token of our fondness for Brian."

—from Gayle Anderson

MORE:

- [Brian Soto Leaves Gateway Legacy](#)
 - [Remembering Brian Soto](#)
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The eighth annual Mobility 21 Southern California Transportation Summit drew an unprecedented 700 transportation advocates in search of solutions to the region's most pressing transportation challenges. *Photo by Ted Nguyen/OCTA*

Mobility 21 Announces 'IMBY' List of Critical Transportation Projects to Improve Mobility in the Region and Throughout Southern California

- [Mobility 21 goes live on social network circuit:](#) Blogger Steve Hyman reported live from 8th Annual Transportation Summit on *twitter*. Link from the Mobility 21 *twitter* report to view highlights from the Summit and interviews with CEO Art Leahy and key transportation officials on YouTube.
- Making news:** 'Funding drive hits the fast lane: Officials' aim is to get money to keep Southland moving' — [Daily News 09.22.09](#)
- Lifetime Achievement Award** goes to Mobility 21 co-founder and retired Metro CEO Roger Snoble. Orange Mayor Carolyn Cavecche is named Leader of the Year; Inland Action, Inc. chosen as Organization of the Year.



Former Metro CEO Roger Snoble --

mobility in Southern California." A co-founder of the Mobility 21 Coalition, Snoble partnered with the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce and the Automobile Club of Southern California to host the first transportation summit on Nov. 18, 2002. He is pictured here addressing the third annual transportation summit held Aug. 3, 2004. Although not present to accept the award, Snoble thanked the appreciative audience via video from a vacation spot in Hawaii. In a press release recounting his achievements, Mobility 21 Executive Director Marnie

and retired 44-year transit veteran -- was given the Mobility 21 Lifetime Achievement Award for his "tireless efforts and accomplishments improving

Primmer called Snoble "a champion of transportation improvements who capped off his career in leading the passage of Measure R."

(Sept. 22, 2009) More than 700 regional transportation, government, business and civic leaders convened Sept. 21 in support of Mobility 21's list of critical transportation projects proposed to improve mobility throughout Southern California.

The ["IMBY" List](#) — a pointedly positive acronym for "In My Back Yard" — was developed by Mobility 21 Southern California Transportation Coalition, and revealed at its 8th Annual Southern California Transportation Summit attended by mobility advocates from Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego and Ventura counties.



Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa announces list of critical transportation projects developed by Mobility 21 Coalition. [DOWNLOAD: 'In My Back Yard' list of critical projects \(PDF\)](#)
Photo by Monika Medina/Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce

"Not only will these projects reduce traffic and improve air quality," said Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, "the Westside subway extension and the other projects will create thousands of good jobs for local people and catapult the region to economic recovery once they are fully funded and break ground."



Addressing a record-breaking confab of transportation advocates, CEO Art Leahy gives progress report for high-speed rail advances in Southern California. *Photo by Monika Medina/Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce*

"California is making notable progress when it comes to one of our most important long-term mobility solutions -- high-speed rail," said CEO Art

Leahy. "High Speed Rail will not only be a tremendous boost to mobility in our region, it will also create needed jobs. We are proud that the link between downtown Los Angeles and Anaheim is one of the first legs of the proposed state-wide project."

As critical transportation legislation – such as the next Surface Transportation Authorization bill – makes its way through federal, state and local governments, this year's Summit focused on strategies for planning and funding Southern California's Transportation Future. The annual event also serves as a springboard for the Mobility 21 Coalition's advocacy efforts, which aim to secure needed funding for transportation projects throughout the six-county region.



California Business, Transportation & Housing Agency Secretary Dale E. Bonner applauded the effort: "When it comes to transportation and other critical infrastructure, speaking with one voice helps everyone understand that investment in Southern California pays dividends to the people of this region and the state and national economies."

Photo by Monika Medina/Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce

Among the region's most pressing transportation challenges addressed were financing California's transportation infrastructure; a corridor approach to goods movement investment; strategies for transit and highway efficiency; and how to position Southern California as the leader in developing a U.S. high-speed rail system.

The Mobility 21 ["IMBY" List](#) includes 21 projects aiming to improve rail safety, reduce congestion, move more people, move goods faster, and create the transit system of the 21st century.

— from staff reports



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2009 METRO BUS ROADEO

Metro Employees & Friends Invited!

Families are invited to partake in transportation extravaganza of sport, feast and fun in the California sun. Maintenance competitions begin at 7:30 a.m. Bus Operators start on the Obstacle Course at 8:30 a.m. Trophies take the stage at 1 p.m.

Metro's Finest roll out Saturday in annual Bus Roadeo Competition

- Winners from the local event will defend Metro's national title next May at the American Public Transportation Association's competition in Cleveland, Ohio.

(Sept. 24, 2009) Showcasing the skills and expertise of some of the finest operators and mechanics in transportation, Metro will hold the 34th annual Bus Roadeo, Sept. 26, in search of the next round of champions to represent the excellence of Los Angeles public transit.

Balmy Southern California weather, clear skies and a big turn-out are expected for the popular event, which starts at 7:30 a.m. and ends with the trophy awards at 1 p.m.

Employees, who are invited and encouraged to bring their families to Santa Anita Park this Saturday, can expect a fun-filled day, said Metro South Bay General Manager Dana Coffey.

This year's Roadeo will feature a barbecue feast with all the trimmings, the popular car and motorcycle show, kid's playground activities and interactive exhibit booths, said organizing committee member Demetrius Jones.

Winners from the local event will defend Metro's national title next May at the American Public Transportation Association's competition in Cleveland, Ohio.



The home team advantage - from left, Arthur Winston Division 5 champion mechanics Andrew Warren, Jr., Rommel Vargas and Frank Forde and North Los Angeles Division 3 Operator Juan Navarro, who claimed victory at the 2008 Metro Bus Roadeo in Los Angeles, went on to Seattle to win the prestigious 34th APTA 2009 International Bus Roadeo held May 3.

Preliminary competitions held last week narrowed the Bus Operator field to 35 finalists from some 164 competitors.

Crossroads Division 2 Operator Luis Martinez enters the field in the number one spot. The top five eliminators include Martinez and operators Walter Ireheta, Herman Gavia, Erik Maldonado and Felipe Patlan-Gutierrez. Last year's Metro and national champion operator Juan Navarro, who emerged from the preliminaries in the top ten, remains a strong competitor.

The mechanics competition, which tests mechanics' abilities to troubleshoot mechanical problems and fix them quickly, will be held among three-member teams from participating operating divisions.

Although the Arthur Winston Division 5 mechanics team have won the Metro Roadeo five years running, this year's entry is a wildcard. Two of the team members - Andrew Warren Jr. and Rommel Vargas - have advanced to Central Instruction. It's now up to veteran Frank Forde to carry the banner into the competition and retain the championship for the Arthur Winston Division. But he's got help. Two more master mechanics — Enrique Perez and Danny Galindo — have joined the team with the intention to fill those sizable championship steel-toed boots left vacant by departing team members Warren Jr. and Vargas.

Returning to the original location in the vast Santa Anita arena, this year's Roadeo will be held on familiar territory at the Santa Anita Race Track parking lot, Gate 6. Directions, along with up-to-the-minute schedule of events, are online on myMetro.net at the [Bus Roadeo](#) pages.

"Those who compete in the preliminaries will get the official Roadeo hat, the belt buckle, a T-shirt and a lapel pin," according to Frank Cecere, assistant manager of Central



Instruction, who helps coordinate the event every year.

Click on map to go to [Bus Roadeo](#) site at myMetro.net for directions and schedule of events.

Previous winners of the local Roadeo have gone to the national competition and placed high in the rankings among the 90 or so transit agencies that compete every year.

— from Gayle Anderson


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Duane Martin's image appeared on billboards and posters during Metro's 'Imagine' campaign in 2008. He quipped: "I've gotten quite the ribbing. People are talking about taking up graffiti as a hobby...."

Director of Transportation Duane Martin Retires Oct. 2 after 33 Years

- He stays in transportation but takes an executive management position in the private sector, where he'll oversee light rail operations.

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(Sept. 24, 2009) After 33 years on the job – which he began as a bus operator in 1976 – Duane Martin will retire from Metro, Oct. 2, as Director of Transportation.

But leaving his Metro post does not mean retirement for Martin. In a little more than a month, he'll be taking up a new position in executive management in the private-sector side of the rail industry.

Martin's years on the job spans three decades of defining moments in Los Angeles history that challenged public transportation to the limits: the 1984 Olympics, the 1992 civil unrest and the 1994 Northridge earthquake.

During the civil unrest, the entire city was shut down south of Washington Boulevard and west of Vernon, Martin said. Every single bus had been pulled out of South Central Los Angeles. Only the Blue Line was running. Martin recalls the moment of decision: "Lots of people went to work today and they have no way get back home to Compton and Long Beach if we don't keep running." Martin opted to put a Sheriff's deputy on board and an operator on both ends of the train. "We ran every single train that night. The operators were willing and it was a proud moment for us."

Martin joined the SCRTD in 1976 as a bus operator at the age of 21. It was the first real job for the New York native who arrived on the West Coast in 1973.

< Martin revisits his
career in transit.



^ Duane Martin was 21 when he took up the wheel.

Starting at Crossroads Division 2, he worked as an operator for nine years, finishing the first level of his transit career on a high note by ranking sixth in the MTA Bus Rodeo. "It's a total accomplishment just to qualify," he said. "It means keeping your record clean and landing in the top percent of operators."

At the SCRTD, he rose through the ranks to Vehicle Operations road supervisor in 1985, a job that includes observing and monitoring compliance to the rules and procedures along with setting up detours and conducting accident investigations. It was in that capacity where Martin developed his passion for "controlling the chaos" – his term for "putting things back and making things work when something goes wrong."

When the Blue Line was beginning to take shape in 1990, Martin joined the rail control center (ROC) and during the next seven years found himself on the starting line of both the Red Line and Green Line.

In 1997, he took charge of the Blue Line and Green Line in his capacity of senior supervisor and then as Division 11 manager.

In a fast-paced fiscal year between 2002 and 2003, Martin went from managing field operations at ROC to ROC Manager. As part of a cross-training management team covering all the bases, he became manager of the Gold Line, then manager of the Red Line. "As a result, everybody was working as a team; we were all familiar with everything," he said.

Rail GM Mike Cannell appointed Martin Director of Transportation shortly after Cannell came on board in the last months of 2007. In that position, Martin became responsible for all the rail operations as well as Central Instruction.

Roman Alarcon, Director of Bus and Rail Operations Control, in charge of the control centers, is Martin's counterpart on the mainline.

"We've worked so close together that we were known as the Roman and Martin show," said Alarcon, who has worked with Martin for at least 10 years. "I'm sad to see him go and wish him the best. He has not only been a co-worker and a friend but also a great mentor."

"Duane has been a part of Metro through many transitions and his depth of experience is going to be missed," said Mike Cannell, General Manager of Rail Operations.



Working on the railroad: Duane Martin on his working relationship with Director of Fleet Maintenance George Kennedy: "He gives me the trains. I put the trains out on the street. I can't do my job without him so he has to give me what I need. I'm the end customer."

"Under his leadership, on-time performance is at 99 percent, morale is up and he and his partner, George Kennedy, Director of Fleet Maintenance, maintain 100 percent pull outs routinely," he said.

"Duane Martin is one of the best, most dedicated, and conscientious transportation professional that I have ever been associated with in my 39 years in this business," said Kennedy.

Kennedy tells the tale of his first day on the job as maintenance manager at Division 11 on June 4, 2001. Martin walked in Kennedy's new and unfamiliar office and ticked off a list of seemingly insurmountable challenges and said "I hope you can fix these issues." Then, as he was leaving, turned around and said "Good Luck." It was the start of a beautiful friendship, said Kennedy.

Cannell has appointed Gold Line Transportation Manager Tom Jasmin as acting Director of Transportation. "Tom is an ideal candidate and one who has managed bus divisions, the BOC, ROC and a number of Rail Divisions."

It was Jasmin, who, as manager of the Green Line start-up team, hired Martin as one of the seven supervisors for the start-up. "That was where I learned the nuts and bolts of running a train," said Martin. "I watched the Green Line grow from inception all the way through the start of operations in the summer of '95."

Metro Blue Line Rail Division Transportation Manager Robert Castanon praises Martin's unique management style. "In working with Duane Martin, I have realized his forte for building rapport with co-workers and people in general. His understanding and ability to inspire represents true leadership skills."

When ask to describe his management style, Martin says he tries to be fair and honest. He points to a worn and yellowing piece of paper taped to his desk that he calls his "daily prayer."

In simple terms, here are the words that start Martin's day at 5 a.m.: "Lead by example, listen aggressively, communicate purpose and meaning, create a climate of trust, look for results not salutes, take calculated risks, go beyond standard procedure, build up your people, generate unity, and improve your people's quality of life."

"One of the good things about operations is that there's a lot of good people that know what to do. Filling in a void is not as hard as you think if everybody works as a team. And that's what we do at Metro."

I've put in some long days, but
the years went by really fast.

—Duane Martin



Looking back over the years, represented by memorabilia collected in a bookshelf populated by SCTR, MTA and Metro pins, event hats, photographs of good times at work, family and movie stars on the set, and more than a few plaques and acrylic trophies, he sighs and shakes his head. "I've put in some long days, but the years went by really fast."

Martin and wife Colleen, who make their home in Covina, have two grown sons and one daughter plus the happy addition of four grandchildren.



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Employees donate blood at American Red Cross drive held onsite at Metro Headquarters

(Sept. 24, 2009) Metro employees at Gateway H.Q. donated enough blood during the Sept. 16 drive to potentially save as many as 177 lives, said organizer and Asst. Administrative Analyst Raul Rodarte.

A total of 74 people made appointments, and of those, 59 were able to provide one full bag or pint of blood translating into three lives potentially saved per pint, according to American Red Cross statistics.

The turnout increased by as many as 20 donors over the previous drive Rodarte said, noting that he sent out additional information to remind employees about the event after an initial e-mail blast.

With blood bank reserves routinely only about 48 hours from the point of depletion across Los Angeles, Rodarte said it wouldn't be a bad idea to hold another drive.

"Normally we do it once a year. There's no reason why we can't do it twice a year," he said. Names of those who participated will be submitted into a regional drawing to win a \$1,500 gift card.

--from Laura Kloth

The need is constant.
The gratification is instant.

Give blood.

Organizers increase turnout by sending out an e-mail blast with this message to remind employees to donate blood.



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2009 Metro Bus Rodeo

^CLICK 'PLAY' and 'STOP' TO VIEW TRT 2:20 ADJUST sound 'SLIDER' FOR SOUND^
VIDEO: Scenes from 2009 Metro Bus Rodeo>Mechanics race to beat the clock, a spin around the obstacle course with Operator Mimi Pereira, and the winners are ... with emcee Richard Hunt, CEO Art Leahy, Chief Operating Officer Carolyn Flowers and mechanics event organizer Steve Mullaly.

A video by Gayle Anderson

**North Los Angeles Division 3 Operator Joe Acosta Scores Top Op;
Arthur Winston Division 5 Mechanics Claim 6th Championship Trophy**

- [The results are in!](#) Order of finish for best of the best operators and mechanics

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(Sept. 29, 2009) North Los Angeles Division 3 Operator Joe Acosta and Arthur Winston Division 5 master mechanics Enrique Perez, Danny Galindo and Frank Forde emerged as champions in the Operators and Mechanics categories at the 2009 Metro Bus Rodeo, Sept. 26. They'll carry the agency's flag at the 2010 APTA Internationals set for next May in Cleveland, Ohio.

In Saturday's competition, North Los Angeles Division 3 Operator Joe Acosta emerged victorious with a solid top score of 634 points. The new champion edged out last year's top gun North Los Angeles Division 3 Operator Juan Navarro, in second place with 629 points, and San Gabriel Valley Division 9 Operator Erik Maldonado, in third place with 619 points.



Top Ops: From left, organizer and Central Maintenance Instruction Manager Frank Cecere, San Gabriel Valley Division 9 Operator Erik Maldonado, North Los Angeles Division 3 Operator Joe Acosta, North Los Angeles Division 3 Operator Juan Navarro and CEO Art Leahy. New champion Acosta edged out last year's top gun Juan Navarro, in second place, and Erik Maldonado, in third place. *Photos: Gayle Anderson*

Rodeo 2009 scored big in entertainment and fun, too. Metro South Bay General Manager Dana Coffey estimated that some 800 employees, their families and guests came out to Santa Anita Park for the annual event.

The 2009 event, hosted by Metro South Bay, featured the official obstacle course for operators and a mechanic's competition where teams of three raced against the clock to diagnose and repair performance-related bus problems.

Thirty-five operators and 12 maintenance teams competed in this year's event.



South Bay GM Dana Coffey and Lei Leahy lead Division 5 group hug and trophy hoist to celebrate Arthur Winston Division team unprecedented sixth win.

In the periphery of the main events, there were plenty of activities to keep everyone thrilled, happy and inspired: a thrill-filled "Kid's Fun Zone" featuring the spectacular "Metro Experience" traveling safety show, plenty of snow cones, hot dogs and burgers for more than 700 hungry race fans, a row of information booths, the traditional car show and motorcycle exhibit and a huge tented picnic area where everyone could enjoy the barbecue and watch the events underway.



Arthur Winston Division 5 master mechanics, from left, Frank Forde, Danny Galindo and Enrique Perez score top in the maintenance competition to retain the championship crown. Veteran Frank Forde held on to the championship banner with two new members — master mechanics Enrique Perez and Danny Galindo. The Arthur Winston team has represented Metro at the international competitions every year since 2003, with the exception of 2004, and won the national championships in 2007 and 2009.

Mechanics were neck and neck to the finish

Rodeo 2009 was the sixth Metro championship for the Arthur Winston Division team, who inched by the close runner-up team from Division 8. The Division 5 champs racked up 1,230 points to beat out the Division 8 team only 5 points. Third-place winners - the Gateway Division 10 team were hot on the heels with a score of 1,115 points.

The Division 8 team's close second was sweetened with the coveted ABS Brake Board trophy, a replica of a brake pedal atop a walnut trophy base, signifying that the mechanics were the fastest team to correct the electrical portion of the grueling ABS Brake board event.

Mechanics competition organizer Steve Mullaly, senior equipment maintenance instructor at Central Instruction, was amazed to see how close the scores of the top three finishers were in both the operators and mechanics events. "We almost went into tie-breaker mode," he said, noting event times were a factor in a few down-to-the-wire instances.

The close competition was one of the reasons that made 2009 a great rodeo for Mullaly. "The support we got from various operating divisions and departments made it all possible," he said.

The Arthur Winston team has represented Metro at the international competitions every year since 2003, with the exception of 2004. The veteran maintenance team and Operator Juan Navarro took home the Grand Championship Award in the 2009 APTA International Bus Rodeo

held in Seattle, Wash.

Metro San Fernando Valley General Manager Richard Hunt called the play-by-play for the bus operator half of the competition and called out the names of the competitors at trophy time.

Credit Roll: 2009 Metro Bus Rodeo Organizing Committee: Dana Coffey, Cindy Karpman, Alex DiNuzzo, Ken Matsuno, Myrine White, Demetrius Jones, Gary Shiroishi, Margaret Merhoff, Edward Castillo, Frank Cecere, Steve Mullaly, Gwendolyn Keene, Omark Holmes, Esther Carlstone, James Woodson, and Harold Torres



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The results are in ... Rankings, Order of Finish, Winners All



And the winner is... CEO Art Leahy congratulates top op Joe Acosta from North Los Angeles Division 3.



Runners-up: West Valley Division 8 mechanics take second place and win the Brake Board, too.

Operators

- 1 Joe Acosta, Division 3
- 2 Juan Navarro, Division 3
- 3 Erik Maldonado, Division 9
- 4 Julio Flores, Division 8
- 5 Marcos Mejia-Portillo, Division 1
- 6 Maximiliano De Angelis, Division 1
- 7 Miriam L. Pereira, Division 15
- 8 Walter Iraheta, Division 9
- 9 Felipe Patlan-Gutierrez, Division 1
- 10 Herman Gavia, Division 3
- 11 Jesus Valdez Division 2
- 12 Conrad Noriega Division 9
- 13 Luis Martinez Division 2
- 14 Cain Portillo Division 5
- 15 Luis Perez Division 1
- 16 Gerado Zavaleta Division 7
- 17 Jose Sanchez Division 9
- 18 Juan Arias Division 7
- 19 Raul Stevenson Division 5
- 20 Jeffery Wilbanks Division 2
- 21 David Pariente Division 0
- 22 Oscar Jimenez Division 0
- 23 Dean Louis C Obieta Division 5
- 24 Roberto Ramirez Division 1
- 25 Elvin Meza Division 5

Maintenance

1st Place - Division 5

- Frank Forde, Master Mechanic
- Danny Galindo, Master Mechanic
- Enrique Perez, Master Mechanic

2nd Place - Division 8

- Ha Nguyen, Master Mechanic
- Don Reiwtaevee, Master Mechanic
- Jeremy Lockwood, Mechanic A

3rd Place - Division 10

- Dave Klinkenborg, Mechanic A, Ldr
- Angel Feria, Master Mechanic
- Jose Moya, Master Mechanic

4th Place - Division 330 MSSC

- Alex Calderon, Mechanic A
- Chris Knudson, Mechanic A
- Fernando Saucedo, Mechanic A

5th Place - Division 7

- Glenn Buakong, Master Mechanic
- Craig Daniel, Mechanic A
- Mauricio Arias, Mechanic A

- 26 Ramiro Mota Division 2
- 27 Leon Fraser Division 7
- 28 Lucio Delcid Division 9
- 29 Adrian Mandese Division 5
- 30 Jose Mismith Division 0
- 31 Joe Barbosa Division 9
- 32 Mauricio Y Escobar Division 9
- 33 Norman Mangente Division 0
- 34 Manuel Guzman Division 3
- 35 Manuel Alvarez Division 8

6th Place - Division 9

- Javier Castro, Mechanic A
- Eduardo Garcia, Master Mechanic
- Adrian Garcia, Master Mechanic

7th Place - Division 2

- Edward Hernandez, Mechanic A
- Jaime Nava, Mechanic A
- Peter Nguyen, Mechanic A

8th Place - Division 1

- Sergio Barron, Mechanic A
- Gustavo Sanchez, Master Mechanic
- Adam Barron, Mechanic A

9th Place - Division 18

- Luke Logan, Mechanic A
- Mina Ros, Master Mechanic
- Ryan Mori, Mechanic A

10th Place - Division 3

- Arnold Del Toro, Mechanic A
- Ariel Angeles, Mechanic A
- Souk Sayavong, Mechanic A

11th Place - Division 15

- Juan Rivas, Mechanic A
- Phillip Ly, Mechanic A
- Grigor Barmaksyan, Mechanic A

12th Place - Division 6

- Naren Desai, Mechanic A
- Leo Marin, Mechanic A
- Jose Ramirez, Mechanic A

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Quiet on the set: Metro Film Manager Herman Hagan readies a location in the Metro Red/Purple mezzanine for a VISA commercial. *Photos by Gayle Anderson*

Lights! Camera! Metro!

Metro's Buses, Trains Still Great Backdrop for Movies, Commercials

By Michael D. White
Staff Writer

For the better part of a century, Metro and its Los Angeles transit predecessors have provided the backdrop for scores of the most memorable – and, admittedly, some of the most forgettable – films ever made.

Take the 1994 thriller *Speed*, for example. Contrary to Hollywood lore, the famous scene with a frantic Sandra Bullock at the wheel of a booby-trapped bus wasn't filmed aboard a Metro vehicle, at all.

The scene was filmed aboard a Santa Monica Transit bus, while the film's subway shots were staged on the Metro Red Line.

In the 1920s, the legendary comedian Harold Lloyd produced and starred in four silent "flickers" featuring scenes incorporating Pacific Electric "Red Car" trolleys and Metropolitan Motor Bus coaches.

The most memorable, by far, was the 1924 classic – and appropriately named – *Off His Trolley*, which featured Lloyd as a hapless groom late for his own wedding dangling from the trolley pole of a moving PE car.

The scene is considered to this day to be among the best action scenes ever filmed, a trailblazer for such contemporary action films as *Collateral*,

SWAT, *L.A. Confidential*, and *Lethal Weapon II*, all of which utilized the service's of Metro's Film Office to coordinate their transit-related production activities.

"We currently get around 20 to 30 inquiries a month from various media about using Metro trains, buses and facilities. We wind up working with about half of those," says Metro Film Manager, Herman Hagan, adding that the scope of the agency's media exposure has grown beyond the Silver Screen to include television, magazine advertising and commercials.



Order Productions, above, stages the scene for a VISA commercial where extras exit a subway through Metro's newly installed turnstiles. Behind the scenes, Hagan briefs the film crew's security chief, Manny Berumen of Manny's Security. The VISA commercial was shot in the Union Station East Portal entrance to the Metro Red/Purple Line.

more> [Metro Film Credits](#)

Hagan joined the Metro Public Relations Department 16 years ago after a globe-trotting career as a lawyer, semi-pro basketball forward, San Diego police officer, and stockbroker.

Drawing on his legal experience, his purview includes acting as liaison with the entertainment industry on any activity involving Metro's bus and train fleet and all of its operating, administrative and maintenance facilities including the bustling Patsaouras Transit Plaza.

"It's fairly routine really, but each case has its own requirements that have to be carefully spelled out," he said, adding that a key element in the process is a meeting with Metro's Operations Department held a minimum of one week before the scheduled "shoot."

"We have to make sure that everyone's aware of how the planned activity will impact Metro's ability to serve its ridership," said Hagan, who makes a point of being at every shoot be it an advertising photo session for Porsche or an episode of the now-iconic TV series "24."

"I've had the opportunity to meet a lot of truly interesting people," says Hagen, who describes himself as an "10 or 11" handicap golfer with "the best job in the entire agency."