



[Metro.net](#) (web)

Resources

- [Safety](#)
- [Pressroom](#) (web)
- [CEO Hotline](#)
- [Metro Projects](#)
- [Facts at a Glance](#)
- [Archives](#)
- [Events Calendar](#)
- [Research Center/Library](#)
- [Metro Cafe](#) (pdf)
- [Metro Classifieds](#)
- [Retirement Round-up](#)

Metro Info

- [Strategic Plan](#) (pdf)
- [Org Chart](#) (pdf)
- [Policies](#)
- [Training](#)
- [Help Desk](#)
- [Intranet Policy](#)

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[E-Mail Webmaster](#)

myMetro.net archives | Articles from January 2010

Thursday, January 28

Board Approves 21 Contracts with Tow Truck Operators to Boost [Metro Freeway Service Patrol](#) service
Sheriff's Special Problems Unit [Nabs Another Alleged 'Career' Tagger](#)
Deadline looms for [Basketball League](#) sign-up

Tuesday, January 26

[Sheriff's Deputy Broadston](#) Combats Complacency with Transit Terrorism Awareness Class
[Metro programs and projects](#) promoted at Supervisor Ridley-Thomas 2010 Annual Summit **VIDEO**

Thursday, January 21

[How It Works:](#) Rail Manager Explains How Earthquake Sensor Network Operates
[Metro Mechanic Seeks Blood Donations](#) for Daughter Facing Surgery. Tiffany Remata is the daughter of Div. 8 Mechanic Larry Remata and the late Donna Remata, Metro storekeeper who lost her life in the Metrolink accident on Sept. 12, 2008.

Tuesday, January 19

[Sheriff's Newest K-9 Deputy](#) Johnny Ringo Helps Keep Metro Riders Safe
[On the Job:](#) Metro Rollout at Arthur Winston Division **VIDEO**

Thursday, January 14

[Metro Delivers](#) Measure R Funds to City of Glendale
[Accounting Manager](#) Uses Sherlock Holmes Tactics to Find Owner of Lost Pocketbook

Tuesday, January 12

[Metro Transit Officers](#) Use 'Boot Camp' Balancing Skills on the Job
[Civic Leaders Tour Metro](#) on 'Supervisor Knabe's Day at the County' Program **VIDEO**

Thursday, January 7

[Metro Basketball](#) > West Hollywood TOS Richard Wright Rallies Hoopsters to Join New Metro League
[Metro Minutes](#) > CEO Art Leahy on Metro in *The Source*
[iWork@Metro](#) > East Valley Maintenance Manager Sal Llamas is featured in first *myMetro.net* iWork@Metro report.

Tuesday, January 5

[Metro Team Scores Victory](#) with Metro Gold Line on New Year's Day
[Div. 8 Bus Operator](#) Ted Neill Says He's Proud to be Lifetime Blood Donor



[Metro.net](#) (web)

Resources

- ▶ [Safety](#)
- ▶ [Pressroom](#) (web)
- ▶ [Ask the CEO](#)
- ▶ [CEO Forum](#)
- ▶ [Employee Recognition](#)
- ▶ [Employee Activities](#)
- ▶ [Metro Projects](#)
- ▶ [Facts at a Glance](#) (web)
- ▶ [Archives](#)
- ▶ [Events Calendar](#)
- ▶ [Research Center/Library](#)
- ▶ [Metro Classifieds](#)

Metro Info

- ▶ [30/10 Initiative](#)
- ▶ [Policies](#)
- ▶ [Training](#)
- ▶ [Help Desk](#)
- ▶ [Intranet Policy](#)

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Metro Team Scores Victory with Metro Gold Line on New Year's Day

By Rich Morallo
Transit Operations/Volunteer Coordinator

(Jan. 5, 2010) Stephen Tu knew exactly what he wanted to do on New Year's Day.

On Friday at 5 a.m. the Metro transportation planner was busy on the Union Station Metro Gold Line platform, guiding crowds into train cars headed for the festivities in Pasadena.

"I'm volunteering this morning to help with everyone traveling to the Tournament of Roses Parade and Rose Bowl Game," said Tu, who takes the Metro Gold Line everyday to work from Little Tokyo.

Also working at Union Station on the first day of the year was Metro Rail and Bus Operations Control Director Roman Alarcon, who busied himself monitoring the families, tourists and football fans waiting for the train.

"We have about 50 operations staff helping the travelers at Metro Rail stations from East Los Angeles to Sierra Madre," Alarcon

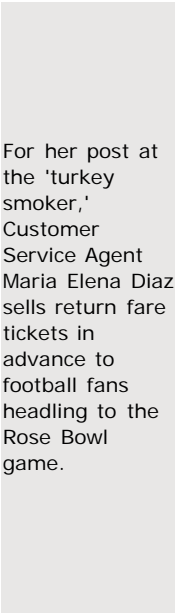
said.

Six miles north at the Memorial Park Station, Metro Customer Service Agent Maria Diaz stood next to a couple of portable fare boxes, busy punching holes into paper tickets.



"We use these blue fare boxes – also known as 'turkey smokers' – to sell tickets to people for when they return from the parade and game," remarked Senior Cash Counting Supervisor Beverly Williams.

Augmenting the ticket vending machines and keeping the passenger lines moving at Metro Rail stations, other Metro staff provided the same service with "turkey smokers" at Sierra Madre, North Hollywood, Del Mar, Lake and Union Stations.



For her post at the 'turkey smoker,' Customer Service Agent Maria Elena Diaz sells return fare tickets in advance to football fans heading to the Rose Bowl game.



Customer information staffers Ruth Moreno, Maria Hernandez and Susan Tate offered directions to riders exiting the train on the best route to get a prime vantage point for the big parade on Colorado Boulevard.

"This is so interesting," remarked Moreno, working on her first New Year's Day assignment. "I'm interacting with people directly, face-to-face, when normally I'm taking their phone calls as a customer information agent," she said.

Nearby, Napoleon, a Metro Security dog, let out a low howl when prompted by Metro transit security officer Gustavo Lozano, who was on station to assist with crowd control.

Back at Union Station crowds continued to arrive.

"We're keeping the ridership happy, answering their questions and helping them to get to where they want to go," Deputy Jose Acero said as he stood watch on the Gold Line platform.

On her fifth year of working on New Year's Day, Service Attendant Leader Virginia Middleton inspected the train cars for debris and litter. "It's nice to see all of the friendly faces this morning," she said.

Throughout the morning, throngs of passengers continued to line the pedestrian tunnel at Union Station where Revenue Collection Clerk Autumn Perry shouted, "If you have a ticket come down this line and you don't have to wait."

Meanwhile, Deputy Leticia Martinez took a moment from crowd control

duties to ponder her new year's resolution - "To ride Metro often, and drive less."

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[Home](#)[CEO Hotline](#)[Viewpoint](#)[Classified Ads](#)[Archives](#)[Metro.net](#) (web)

Resources

[Safety](#)[Pressroom](#) (web)[Ask the CEO](#)[CEO Forum](#)[Employee Recognition](#)[Employee Activities](#)[Metro Projects](#)[Facts at a Glance](#)
(web)[Archives](#)[Events Calendar](#)[Research Center/
Library](#)[Metro Classifieds](#)[Bazaar](#)

Metro Info

[30/10 Initiative](#)[Policies](#)[Training](#)[Help Desk](#)[Intranet Policy](#)

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Div. 8 Bus Operator Ted Neill Says He's Proud to be Lifetime Blood Donor

By Laura Kloth
Staff Writer

(Jan. 5, 2010) For those making resolutions to do something of value this year, Div. 8 Bus Operator Ted Neill proposes one suggestion – donate blood.

Neill, a 31-year Metro employee, has been donating blood since he was a high school student, and says that "it's something you can do that doesn't take a whole lot of effort and time."

Neill proudly carries his four blood donor cards – the first earned in 1974 when he was encouraged by his father, Ronald Neill, to begin donating.

Ronald Neill, who worked at Metro for 27 years, died about five years ago, but was an avid blood donor credited with giving a total of 12 gallons - or 96 pints of blood – over the span of his adult life.

Altogether, both father and son have donated approximately 25 gallons of blood to the American Red Cross. That amounts to 200 pints, and according to American Red Cross statistics, each pint could potentially save three lives.

"If you need blood, there's usually some reason behind it like surgery, or some catastrophe or sometimes cancer patients need a blood transfusion, following chemotherapy to help boost their white cell count," he said.

"My wife had major surgery that required two pints of blood, and when my daughter was born in 1990, she weighed one pound and five ounces, and they asked us to give blood," Neill said.

However, most donated blood goes to strangers, and that is the best part about donating, he added.



Div. 8 Bus Operator Ted Neill has donated 112 pints of blood over the past 37 years.

Photos by Laura Kloth

“Do it for the right reasons. If you are motivated to help people, not just because they need it, or because you are related to them,” said Neill.

Ideally, the 55-year-old operator has made it a point to donate about four times a year, usually as a walk-in and he proudly shows off the transfusion scars on his arm to remind others to give.

“When you step out of your comfort zone and you do something nice for somebody, you actually feel good inside,” he said.



Neill proudly shows of his American Red Cross blood donor cards when he encourages others to donate.



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Resources

- ▶ [Safety](#)
- ▶ [Pressroom](#) (web)
- ▶ [Ask the CEO](#)
- ▶ [CEO Forum](#)
- ▶ [Employee Recognition](#)
- ▶ [Employee Activities](#)
- ▶ [Metro Projects](#)
- ▶ [Facts at a Glance](#) (web)
- ▶ [Archives](#)
- ▶ [Events Calendar](#)
- ▶ [Research Center/Library](#)
- ▶ [Metro Classifieds](#)

Metro Info

- ▶ [30/10 Initiative](#)
- ▶ [Policies](#)
- ▶ [Training](#)
- ▶ [Help Desk](#)
- ▶ [Intranet Policy](#)

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Metro Basketball League News

Wright Rallies Employees to Join New Metro Basketball League

By Laura Kloth
Staff Writer

(Jan. 7, 2010) Years ago, with squeaking sneakers and sporting traditional team monikers like the Bruins, Lakers and Clippers, Metro employees once proudly competed in a thriving basketball league.



Transit Operations Supervisor Richard Wright remembers those days and wants to return to that era of by-gone "hoopster" glory by starting up a new Metro basketball league.

"It was serious. These guys used to really play. We had a team, Gateway had a team," he said. "It was great. We had eight teams from eight divisions."

Richard Wright

Wright wants any employee who can – or thinks they can - dribble or sink one from the three-point line to give him a call. Even beginners who love the game are welcome.

With the bleak economy, and all the bad news of the day, employees need a morale boost, and playing basketball with Metro coworkers could be just the ticket, Wright said.

The new league will carry the Metro name, but would be funded by participants.

Practice is planned for Sundays from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Hawthorne High School in Hawthorne and Wright said he hopes to hold a meeting for those interested sometime this month with the first practice tentatively scheduled for February 14.

Wright has already distributed flyers around the divisions and has generated some genuine interest in enough wannabe "hoopsters" to roster two teams, so far, but he said he'd like to spread the word further to both men and women who'd like to unveil their inner Kobe Bryant or Michael Jordan.

For more information, contact Richard Wright at (310) 854-3142 or (323)449-3604 or e-mail him at rwmentor@att.net.



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Resources

- ▶ [Safety](#)
- ▶ [Pressroom](#) (web)
- ▶ [Ask the CEO](#)
- ▶ [CEO Forum](#)
- ▶ [Employee Recognition](#)
- ▶ [Employee Activities](#)
- ▶ [Metro Projects](#)
- ▶ [Facts at a Glance](#) (web)
- ▶ [Archives](#)
- ▶ [Events Calendar](#)
- ▶ [Research Center/Library](#)
- ▶ [Metro Classifieds](#)
- ▶ [Bazaar](#)

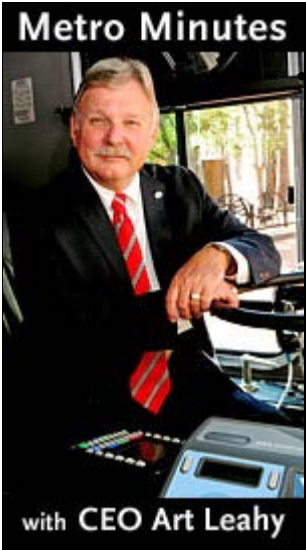
Metro Info

- ▶ [30/10 Initiative](#)
- ▶ [Policies](#)
- ▶ [Training](#)
- ▶ [Help Desk](#)
- ▶ [Intranet Policy](#)

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Metro Unveils *Metro Minutes* Audio Report

Check it out on [The Source at metro.net](#)

Not hooked up to the web at work? Check out *The Source* at home. Go to [www.metro.net](#) and click on the link to *The Source*.

(Jan. 7, 2010) Metro has unveiled yet another way to spread the word about the agency's programs and services.

An audio report, *Metro Minutes*, is prominently featured on Metro's *The Source*.

In its first edition, *Metro Minutes* features an interview with Metro CEO Art Leahy, who reflects on the past year at the agency and what to look

forward to in 2010.

According to host Communications Manager Rick Jager, future posts will follow to keep the public and Metro customers informed about news and developments affecting the agency and its operations.

The agency continues to improve its communications with the public and its employees. Metro has already been spreading the word using other social media, including Twitter, Facebook and YouTube.


[Home](#)
[CEO Hotline](#)
[Viewpoint](#)
[Classified Ads](#)
[Archives](#)
[Metro.net](#) (web)

Resources

- ▶ [Safety](#)
- ▶ [Pressroom](#) (web)
- ▶ [Ask the CEO](#)
- ▶ [CEO Forum](#)
- ▶ [Employee Recognition](#)
- ▶ [Employee Activities](#)
- ▶ [Metro Projects](#)
- ▶ [Facts at a Glance](#) (web)
- ▶ [Archives](#)
- ▶ [Events Calendar](#)
- ▶ [Research Center/Library](#)
- ▶ [Metro Classifieds](#)
- ▶ [Bazaar](#)

Metro Info

- ▶ [30/10 Initiative](#)
- ▶ [Policies](#)
- ▶ [Training](#)
- ▶ [Help Desk](#)
- ▶ [Intranet Policy](#)

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[iWork@Metro]

- As 2010 rolls out, we want to introduce a new myMetro feature called **iWork@Metro**. This new series offers a quick glimpse of who you work with, and what makes them special. If you'd like to suggest someone to be spotlighted for this feature, please contact us at myMetro@metro.net.



East Valley Division Maintenance Manager Sal Llamas oversees the division's bus fleet.

Sal Llamas – Div. 15 Maintenance Manager

By Laura Kloth
Staff Writer

Jan 7, 2010

Q: Tell us a little about yourself. What do you do here at Metro?

A: My name is Salvador Llamas. I'm responsible for overseeing the maintenance operation and the bus fleet at Division 15.

Q: What do you like the most about working at Metro?

A: Providing a valuable service to the community. There's always someone waiting for a bus, and when we get them to where they have to go on time and in a clean, safe, reliable bus, that's great. Sometimes we forget how many times we do that a day, and how many thousands of lives we impact a day. That helps me to be able to deal with the day-to-day struggles and challenges, and we could always do a better job.

Q: What is the most interesting place you've ever been to that no one knows about?

A: I would say Iraq. I actually had the opportunity to visit some of the ruins that are mentioned in the Bible which were very interesting. There was a lot of very interesting historical sites that I was able to visit. I'm a

Marine and was deployed there for 10 months.

Q: What would you do if you won the lottery?

A: Oh wow. That's a good question. Believe it or not, I have contemplated that. I don't play anymore but I would want to help my family, my brothers and sisters and my parents. I'd help my family pay off their homes and then establish a business that would contribute somehow to the public.

Q: What's the best meal you've ever eaten and who cooked it?

A: My mom cooked it and it's a meal called pozole. It's a Mexican traditional meal but the way she makes it is unique because she adds pork and chicken, and it just gives it a whole different flavor. And to this day, I can eat that meal for a whole entire week, breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Q: What's the strangest or most unusual movie you've ever seen?

A: Well the movie that I've seen that has never left my mind to this day is the *Exorcist*, probably because I saw it when I was a child around 10 or 11. And my teenage cousins and my brothers and sisters we were all staying at my uncle's house, and I got forced into it.

Q: What would be No. 3 on your bucket list?

A: I've always wanted to be able to just pack up and go, see different parts of the world, get to know and understand different cultures. I had a little bit of that in the military. I was able to go to Korea, Japan, and the Middle East. But there are other parts of the world that I've never been to that interest me. It actually humbles you to appreciate humanity when you get to go around the world and see other people struggling to live. It gives you a better appreciation of life.



[Metro.net](#) (web)

Resources

- [Safety](#)
- [Pressroom](#) (web)
- [Ask the CEO](#)
- [CEO Forum](#)
- [Employee Recognition](#)
- [Employee Activities](#)
- [Metro Projects](#)
- [Facts at a Glance](#) (web)
- [Archives](#)
- [Events Calendar](#)
- [Research Center/Library](#)
- [Metro Classifieds](#)

[Bazaar](#)

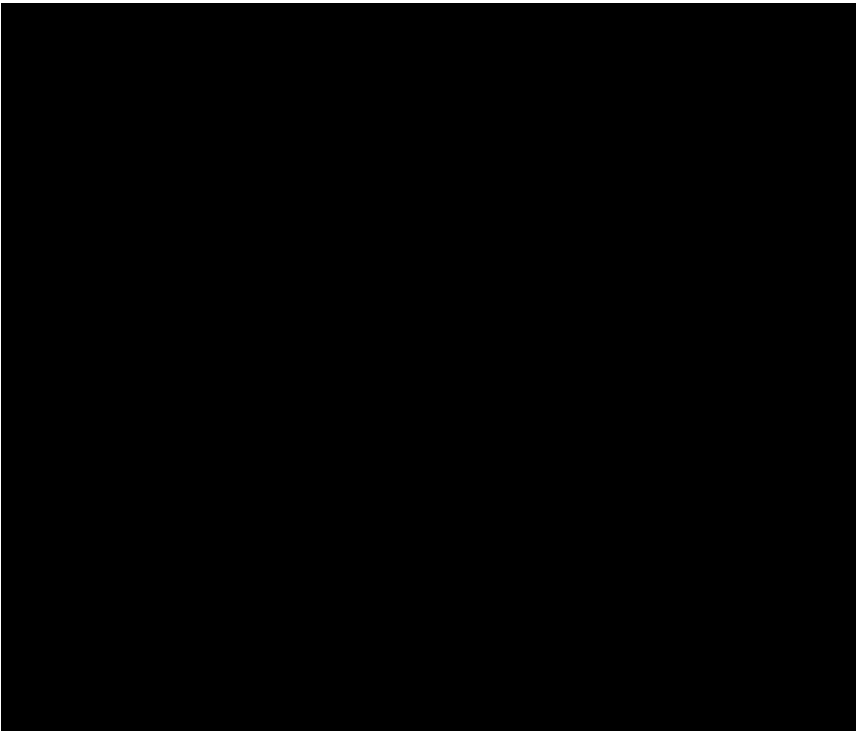
Metro Info

- [30/10 Initiative](#)
- [Policies](#)
- [Training](#)
- [Help Desk](#)
- [Intranet Policy](#)

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Civic Leaders Tour Metro on ‘Supervisor Knabe's Day at the County’ Program

By Rich Morallo
Community Relations / Volunteer Coordinator

(Jan. 12, 2010) After riding on the Metro Red Line Ashley Atkins walked out of the subway car exclaiming, "The ride was fantastic and I love the art work."

Atkins and other members of Leadership Redondo visited Metro on Friday as part of Supervisor Don Knabe's Day At The County program where civic managers visit Los Angeles community and government facilities. In its 10th year, Leadership Redondo identifies emerging leaders and develops them to help strengthen and transform the community.

The South Bay visitors toured the County Hall of Administration and the Disney Concert Hall before arriving at Metro, and taking a short round trip on the Red Line from Union Station to Civic Center. They saw the 80-foot mural of Los Angeles settlers and the river bench with Chinatown artifacts at Union Station, and gazed up at the fiberglass figures soaring over the platform at Civic Center.

During the walking tour of Union Station's east side portal and the

headquarters building, Leadership Redondo members asked about bringing bikes on buses and trains, the power source for the subway, current ridership on Metro Bus and Metro Rail, and an updates on the Westside Subway Extension.

Marina Mora, on her first visit to Metro, said she liked the "traffic-free" subway. Fellow Leadership Redondo member Sandy Marchese agreed, saying, "It's a great system and people don't have to deal with traffic or parking."

"Redondo Beach is proud to have a station," announced Michael Ude, referring to the west end of the Metro Green Line on Marine Avenue.

Over the past few years more than 300 South Bay civic leaders have participated in Supervisor Knabe's Day at the County and toured Metro facilities to learn how mass transit helps to reduce smog and traffic congestion.

Susie Grant also enjoyed the visit to Metro. "It was a pleasure," she said, "I went home and told several people about Metro and my experience on Friday. I may be taking a Metro Blue Line and Metro Red Line trip soon."



[Metro.net](#) (web)

Resources

- [Safety](#)
- [Pressroom](#) (web)
- [Ask the CEO](#)
- [CEO Forum](#)
- [Employee Recognition](#)
- [Employee Activities](#)
- [Metro Projects](#)
- [Facts at a Glance](#) (web)
- [Archives](#)
- [Events Calendar](#)
- [Research Center/Library](#)
- [Metro Classifieds](#)
- [Bazaar](#)

Metro Info

- [30/10 Initiative](#)
- [Policies](#)
- [Training](#)
- [Help Desk](#)
- [Intranet Policy](#)

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Metro's Finest: First class of Metro Transit Security Officers graduate from grueling 18-week police training at El Camino College Police Academy. In addition to expanding an expertise in law enforcement, the officers are now certified to work as Reserve Officers. They are, from left, Senior Officer Henry Solis, Senior Officer Gregory White, Officer Barry Nixon, Officer Marlon Valdez, Officer Ayman Soliman, Officer Edbert Pickwood, Officer Carlos Pena, and Senior Officer Dave Ebling. Not pictured: Graduates Sergeant Yi Pu and Officer Patrick Garcia.

Metro Transit Officers Use 'Boot Camp' Balancing Skills on the Job

By Michael D. White
Staff Writer

(Jan. 12, 2010) With breathtaking understatement, the El Camino College Police Training program is described, simply, as a "non-traditional college course."

But to the trainees who successfully navigated the 18-week program it was "a learning experience in seeing the law in a greater context," said Senior Transit Officer David Ebling, one of 10 Metro officers who graduated from the grueling "non-traditional" course last June 19.

"It's a challenge for law enforcement officers in balancing the upholding of the law on the one hand and protecting citizens' rights on the other and the whole course centered on teaching us how to maintain that balance," he said.

Master the Curriculum

Functioning in a "semi-military"



environment, trainees – called Cadets – are required to balance an extensive academic course load with strenuous physical exercise and law enforcement-related field activities and demonstrate “a mastery of the curriculum” by achieving a minimum passing score on every exam.

Senior Transit Officer David Ebling is one of 10 Metro officers who graduated from the grueling “non-traditional” course June 19.

Seemingly endless hours in the classroom were offset by an emphasis on tactical field training and building physical endurance.

Classroom course work included instruction in a variety of areas including arrest procedures, investigation techniques, report writing, search and seizure, first aid and CPR, evidence processing, crimes against both persons and property, media and community relations, missing persons, domestic violence and other general criminal statutes.



Senior Officer Henry Solis illustrates 'boot camp' environment of the police training program in a slideshow presentation.

Tactical field work centered on tactical communications, patrol techniques and procedures, crimes in progress, building searches, vehicle stops, use of deadly force, and weapons skills, while physical training built strength and endurance through physical conditioning, learning defensive tactics, developing practical physical arrest techniques, crowd control, and weapon-less defense.

“Unit Cohesion” Pays Dividends

“The pressure was on all the time, so it was critical that we develop a sense of ‘unit cohesion’ to make it through,” said Ebling, a Navy veteran. “That was somewhat easier for those of us who’d been in the military, particularly in meeting the physical challenges.”



But, the 41-year old adds, that created an interesting dynamic – many of the younger Cadets had never been in the military, but were much more physically fit than their older counterparts, many of whom had – some decades ago – survived the rigors of boot camp or basic training.

“The military experience definitely made a difference,” said Ebling, who served as class president and was named class Honor Graduate. “The final exam included a 7-mile run and that’s where the ‘unit cohesion’ really came into play. We worked together to encourage and keep one another motivated in the classroom and on the drill field and it paid off.”

Of the 83 people who started with Class No. 65 of the El Camino College Police Training Program, 49 were ultimately awarded their diplomas.

The 49 included the entire Metro contingent – the first group of Metro

Transit Security Officers to graduate the course: Sergeant Yi Pu, Senior Officers Dave Ebling, Henry Solis, and Gregory White, and Officers Patrick Garcia, Barry Nixon, Carlos Pěna, Edbert Pickwood, Ayman Soliman and Marlon Valdez.

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Resources

- [Safety](#)
- [Pressroom](#) (web)
- [Ask the CEO](#)
- [CEO Forum](#)
- [Employee Recognition](#)
- [Employee Activities](#)
- [Metro Projects](#)
- [Facts at a Glance](#) (web)
- [Archives](#)
- [Events Calendar](#)
- [Research Center/Library](#)
- [Metro Classifieds](#)
- [Bazaar](#)

Metro Info

- [30/10 Initiative](#)
- [Policies](#)
- [Training](#)
- [Help Desk](#)
- [Intranet Policy](#)

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Measure R funds change hands at Glendale City Council meeting Jan. 12. Pictured with ceremonial check representing the first installment of the Measure R sales tax money for use in improving transportation systems in Glendale are, from left, Metro CEO Art Leahy, Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, Glendale Council Member John Drayman, Glendale Mayor Pro Tem Laura Friedman, Board Chairman and Glendale Council Member Ara Najarian and Glendale Council Member Dave Weaver.

Metro Presents 'Measure R' Check to City of Glendale

By Rick Jager
Communications Manager

(Jan. 14, 2010) At the Glendale City Council meeting Jan 12, Board Chairman Ara Najarian, along with Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and CEO Art Leahy, presented a ceremonial check to council members representing the first installment of Measure R sales tax money for use in improving transportation systems in Glendale.

During the presentation it was noted that Measure R is expected to generate approximately \$40 billion over the next 30 years, with the City of Glendale expected to receive \$113 million for various transportation improvements it chooses to make.

Glendale received \$491,969 in funds collected through December 2009 from Measure R, the half-cent sales tax approved by Los Angeles County voters in 2008. As part of the measure, local cities within LA County will receive 15% of the funding to use for major street resurfacing, pothole repair, improving traffic congestion, bikeways, pedestrian improvements, signal synchronization and general transit improvements.

[Home](#)[CEO Hotline](#)[Viewpoint](#)[Classified Ads](#)[Archives](#)[Metro.net](#) (web)

Resources

[Safety](#)[Pressroom](#) (web)[Ask the CEO](#)[CEO Forum](#)[Employee Recognition](#)[Employee Activities](#)[Metro Projects](#)[Facts at a Glance](#)
(web)[Archives](#)[Events Calendar](#)[Research Center/ Library](#)[Metro Classifieds](#)[Bazaar](#)

Metro Info

[30/10 Initiative](#)[Policies](#)[Training](#)[Help Desk](#)[Intranet Policy](#)

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Accounting Manager Ray Chio, at right, and Metro Customer Information Agent Juanita "Maggie" Cook were the friendly face of Metro to a Japanese tourist who lost her wallet.

Accounting Manager Uses Sherlock Holmes' Tactics to Track Pocketbook Owner

By Laura Kloth
Staff Writer

(Jan. 14, 2010) Sherlock Holmes would be proud of Metro Accounting Manager Ray Chio.

On a mission to do the right thing, Chio and a friend recently went the extra mile to track down a young Japanese tourist who had inadvertently left her pocketbook on a downtown bus bench.

Like most mysteries, the story began simply. Waiting for his bus early one evening last week, Chio noticed the pink pocketbook sitting abandoned.

Too late to turn it over to Metro Customer Relations, Chio took the pocketbook home and began examining its contents and found it contained \$533 in U.S. currency, about 7,000 Japanese yen, some photographs and a few receipts.

"When I checked the receipts, there were two IDs, one name in English and one had no name," Chio said.

With Holmesian deduction, Chio concluded the owner was a young female tourist who had just arrived in Los Angeles on Jan. 7 and was probably frantic about having misplaced her pocketbook.

He located a phone number to a residence in Japan and tried calling. "I tried to explain that I found a wallet, but the person who answered just

said, 'no English'."

Undaunted, Chio summoned a Japanese-speaking neighbor, Punky Duero and with dictionary in hand they painstakingly tried to make some sense from the purse's contents.

They were able to decipher a membership card that apparently belonged to a dance school before Duero suggested that maybe the young lady in question had a Facebook account.

The two began searching for the name they found in the wallet, and soon enough, they located three matches, one of which belonged to a young woman who talked about how much she loved to dance and her global travel adventures.

Duero emailed the woman on Facebook, and about a half hour later, a young woman replied.

"She spoke a little English and used a friend to translate. And I told her to come Monday at 8 a.m. and go to Customer Relations and look for me or call my number again," Chio said.

Metro Customer Information Agent Juanita "Maggie" Cook then stepped in to serve as the mediator saying that she was "very proud" of Chio for being so tenacious in his effort to track down the purse's owner.

"When she [the young Japanese woman] first came in there was a language problem," said Cook. "She was very apprehensive. She called, and she was kind of frightened. I was able to calm her down, and reassure her that he (Chio) was coming to see her."

When the woman was able to provide specific descriptions of the items in the wallet, Cook handed it over to her.

Elated, the woman began bowing in gratitude to Chio, and soon afterward returned with a sack of Japanese candies to thank him.

"She was almost floored when she saw that all her money was still in it," Cook said.



[Metro.net](#) (web)

Resources

- [Safety](#)
- [Pressroom](#) (web)
- [Ask the CEO](#)
- [CEO Forum](#)
- [Employee Recognition](#)
- [Employee Activities](#)
- [Metro Projects](#)
- [Facts at a Glance](#) (web)
- [Archives](#)
- [Events Calendar](#)
- [Research Center/Library](#)
- [Metro Classifieds](#)

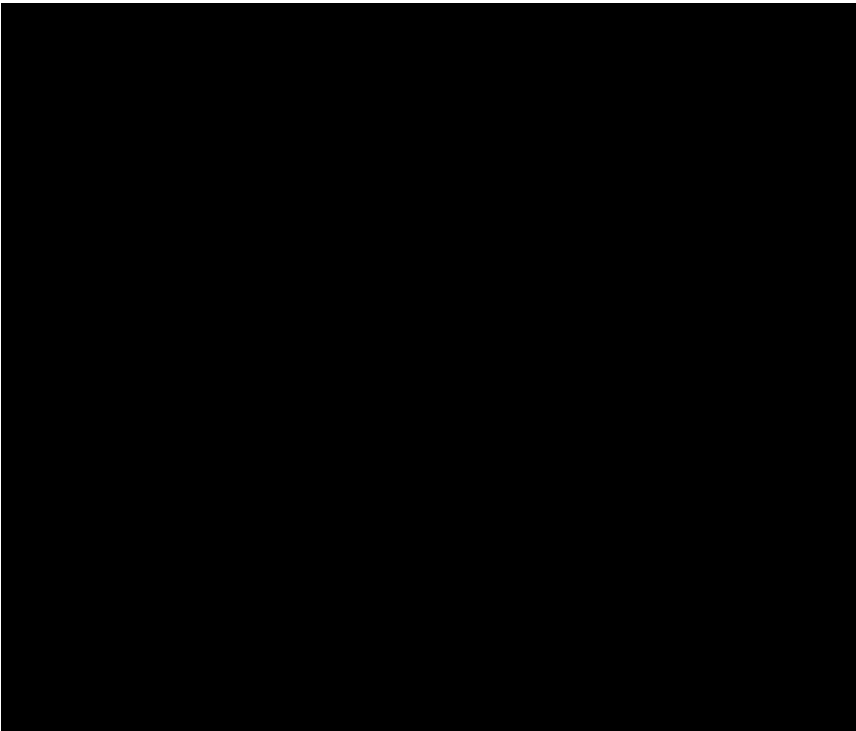
Metro Info

- [30/10 Initiative](#)
- [Policies](#)
- [Training](#)
- [Help Desk](#)
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Metro programs and projects promoted at Supervisor Ridley-Thomas 2010 Annual Summit and Empowerment Congress at Cal State Dominguez Hills

By Rich Morallo
Community Relations Manager & Volunteer Coordinator

(Jan. 19, 2010) Setting up shop at the recent 2010 Annual Empowerment Congress Summit at Cal State Dominguez Hills, Metro Senior Diversity and Economic Opportunity Representative Sherman Gay came prepared to “talk transit” with visitors to the event, hosted by Los Angeles County 2nd District Supervisor and Metro Board member Mark Ridley-Thomas.

"I go to a lot of city [events] and county fairs," explained Gay, who serves as part of a team of Metro staffers, consultants and volunteers promoting Metro and its bus and rail services at a year-long calendar of events across the Southland.

While Gay spent the first dry day of his week talking with small companies on the ins-and-outs of becoming certified as a Metro vendor, Ronni Jackson and Camilla Dennis manned another table, talking up Metro’s Rider Relief Transportation Program.

"Discount coupons are provided to low-income families so they can save

money on various county transit passes," explained Jackson, a program manager with FAME Assistance Corp., a non-profit group that works primarily to cultivate economic development in South Los Angeles.

A few tables down, Metro volunteer Bob Thomas prepared stacks of bus and train maps to hand-out to interested potential bus and rail riders.

As Thomas busied himself with the colorful transit system maps, schedules and promotional magnets, Ginny Brideau a project lead with The Robert Group, a public affairs agency, detailed the pedestrian improvement, safety and beautification plan for the Rosa Parks Metro Blue Line Station for several interested passers-by.

Throughout the day hundreds of attendees visited the Metro tables and participated in general assembly meetings on subjects including local and regional economic development, housing, transportation, health and environment, and safety and break-out transit-focused workshops.

One panel featured Metro Transportation Planning Manager Roderick Diaz, who spoke on the latest developments regarding the Crenshaw/LAX Transit Corridor project.

"I enjoyed coming to this empowerment workshop," said Inglewood City Council member Ralph Franklin and chair for the Metro South Bay Governance Council.

Picking up transit maps and pamphlets, Anjela Gomez, staff member in the Los Angeles County Office of Education, said, "The freeway system isn't always accessible but the bus routes are always accessible and on time."

[Home](#)[CEO Hotline](#)[Viewpoint](#)[Classified Ads](#)[Archives](#)[Metro.net](#) (web)

Resources

[Safety](#)[Pressroom](#) (web)[Ask the CEO](#)[CEO Forum](#)[Employee Recognition](#)[Employee Activities](#)[Metro Projects](#)[Facts at a Glance](#)
(web)[Archives](#)[Events Calendar](#)[Research Center/
Library](#)[Metro Classifieds](#)[Bazaar](#)

Metro Info

[30/10 Initiative](#)[Policies](#)[Training](#)[Help Desk](#)[Intranet Policy](#)

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Sheriff Lee Baca, at right, and Sheriff's Deputy Wayne Carpini welcome LASD Deputy Johnny Ringo, a biochemical sniffing Labrador Retriever, to the Transit Services Bureau at a press conference Jan. 16.

Sheriff's Newest Deputy Johnny Ringo Helps Keep Metro Riders Safe

By Laura Kloth
Staff Writer

(Jan. 19, 2010) There's a new nose in town and his name is Johnny Ringo, a beautiful 17 month-old black Labrador Retriever – the nation's only chemical/biological weapons detection dog.

The latest addition to the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department's 50-member canine unit, Johnny Ringo was introduced by Los Angeles Sheriff Lee Baca accompanied by Deputy CEO Paul Taylor Jan. 15 at a press conference and demonstration held in the Metro Board Room.

With his tail wagging, it took only a couple of minutes for the dog to



detect non-lethal anthrax and ricin hidden in the Metro Board Room.

Trained in Germany and Texas, Johnny Ringo responds only to German commands like "*platz*" (sit) and will be used to detect biochemical agents such as ricin and anthrax on Metro's trains and buses and at public sites throughout the county, according to the dog's handler, Sheriff's Emergency Operations Deputy Wayne Carpini.

New sheriff in town doesn't hide behind his badge.

In action for the first time, Johnny Ringo spent a day sniffing out the Rose Bowl before the venue's signature football game parade and the BCS game a week later, and, more recently, conducted a "sweep" of the Beverly Hills Hotel before the celebrities attending the Golden Globe Awards took to the red carpet.

The sheriff's department invested some \$40,000 in grant money to purchase and train the dog, which has logged more than 235 hours of training to sniff-out and hone-in on odors at concentrations nearly 100 million times lower than what humans can detect.



Johnny Ringo checks out the Board Room to demonstrate chemical detecting abilities.

When a scent is identified, the dog is promptly pulled back by Carpini, who can read the "tell" signs the dog signals when it recognizes a scent.

Baca said the dog is a "great investment" for his department because it

provides a portable, sensible way to assist his department deputies in dangerous situations.

“Biological detection is very important to us in keeping Los Angeles safe and Johnny Ringo is our number one detective in the Sheriff’s Department when it comes to biological agent,” said Baca, as he introduced the four-footed retriever and pinned an LASD deputy badge on his collar.

“This is where man-based science cannot exceed what is now known as the canine science,” he said, indicating that the Los Angeles Police Department and several other public agencies are thinking seriously about adding chemical agent sniffing dogs to their own rosters.



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Resources

- ▶ [Safety](#)
- ▶ [Pressroom](#) (web)
- ▶ [Ask the CEO](#)
- ▶ [CEO Forum](#)
- ▶ [Employee Recognition](#)
- ▶ [Employee Activities](#)
- ▶ [Metro Projects](#)
- ▶ [Facts at a Glance](#) (web)
- ▶ [Archives](#)
- ▶ [Events Calendar](#)
- ▶ [Research Center/Library](#)
- ▶ [Metro Classifieds](#)

▶ [Bazaar](#)

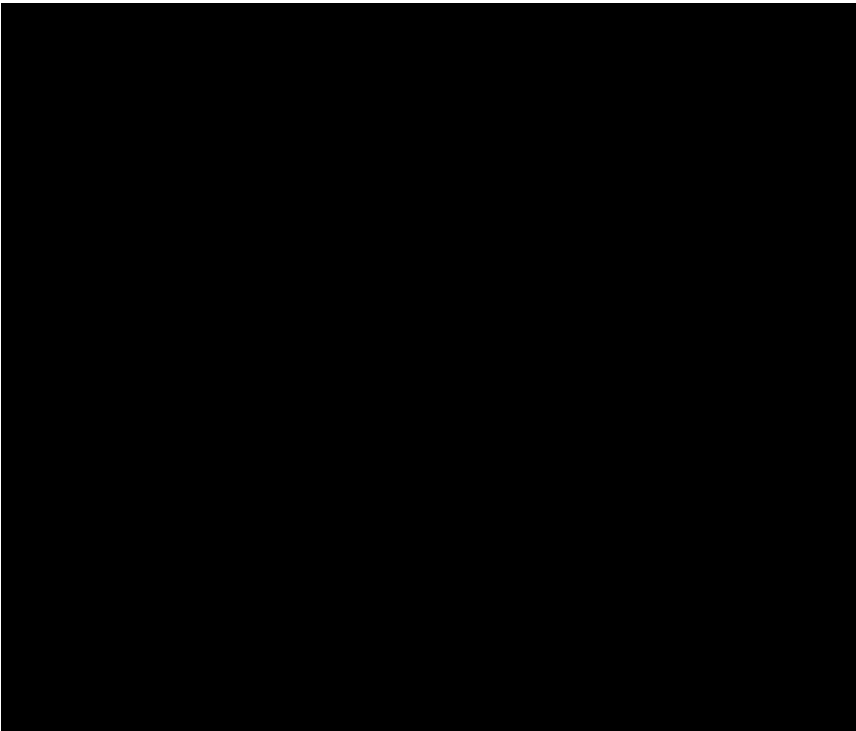
Metro Info

- ▶ [30/10 Initiative](#)
- ▶ [Policies](#)
- ▶ [Training](#)
- ▶ [Help Desk](#)
- ▶ [Intranet Policy](#)

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On the Job: Metro Bus Rollout at Arthur Winston Division

By Rich Morallo
Community Relations / Volunteer Coordinator

(Jan. 19, 2010) Conducting his safety pre-trip inspection, Rodney Bowers used a flashlight to check the exterior of the orange 40-foot New Flyer bus in the Arthur Winston Division 5 (AWD) yard.

It was just a few minutes after 4 a.m. on Friday but Bowers, in his 30th year with Metro, looked forward to pulling out of the Chesterfield Square Metro bus facility to pick up passengers waiting on the South Los Angeles streets.

"I'm an early morning person," said Bowers, "and today I'm heading out on Line 305 towards the UCLA loop."

This was morning rollout when AWD and the other eight Metro divisions launched their bus fleets before dawn to transport patrons where they need to go in Los Angeles County. By the end of the day patrons will have boarded Metro buses 1.1 million times.

Transportation Operations Supervisor (TOS) June Singleton-Reece, another early morning person, handed out bus assignments to operators arriving

at the dispatch window. "I've been doing this for eight years," said Singleton-Reece, who has 20 years with the agency. During rollout the supervisor gave operators bus line assignments, running board schedules and vehicle locations in the yard as nearly 170 buses rolled out before 7:30 a.m.

"I'm signing on now," announced Martin Gourzong, walking up to the window, while other operators already with their assignments donned their safety vests and headed out to their buses. Some staff such as Cardell Stewart lingered in the operator lounge. As "extra board" operators, Stewart and others fill in the gap when drivers are not able to report for their bus assignments.

Outside in the yard for the past five hours, mechanic Terry Owens patrolled between the parked buses and the maintenance building. As yard master Owens made sure the buses were ready for revenue service. "We check the buses for everything including lights and heating so the operators stay on schedule in leaving the bus division." This morning Owens dispatched a bus with a rear flat to Miguel Garcia, who promptly replaced the 22-inch tire.

Also in the yard were service attendants, such as Tommy Pham, who daily clean, fuel and park the AWD buses, which will tally about 135,000 passenger boardings throughout the day. With the agency for only five months, Pham said he likes working his shift, from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. "Everyone is nice and we all work together," remarked Pham, who slipped on a dust mask before blowing out the debris inside a bus.

Back at the dispatch window Singleton-Reece and another TOS DJ Thompson continued to process operators. "I've known some of these operators for 15 years," said Singleton-Reece. Thompson said she liked interacting with the operators. "We're family-oriented," remarked Thompson.



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Resources

- ▶ [Safety](#)
- ▶ [Pressroom](#) (web)
- ▶ [Ask the CEO](#)
- ▶ [CEO Forum](#)
- ▶ [Employee Recognition](#)
- ▶ [Employee Activities](#)
- ▶ [Metro Projects](#)
- ▶ [Facts at a Glance](#) (web)
- ▶ [Archives](#)
- ▶ [Events Calendar](#)
- ▶ [Research Center/Library](#)
- ▶ [Metro Classifieds](#)

▶ [Bazaar](#)

Metro Info

- ▶ [30/10 Initiative](#)
- ▶ [Policies](#)
- ▶ [Training](#)
- ▶ [Help Desk](#)
- ▶ [Intranet Policy](#)

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Metro Mechanic Seeks Blood Donations for Daughter Facing Surgery

- Any blood type will be accepted. Donors are asked to donate at a Kaiser Permanente facility as soon as possible in order to allow time for the blood testing.
- More about donating blood: [50 quick facts](#)

(Jan. 21, 2010) Nothing's more precious than the gift of life.



Mechanic Larry Remata is seeking blood donations on behalf of daughter Tiffany.

How to Donate: Employees and friends who are able to make donations can call Kaiser Permanente Woodland Hills Medical Center at (818) 719.4329 to make an appointment or the Kaiser Permanente Los Angeles Medical Center at (323) 783.6667.

When making the appointment, please indicate you are making the donation on behalf of Tiffany Remata. For identification purposes, give the patient's birth date and location and date of operation: 8.28.91 / Los Angeles Medical Center Sunset facility / Feb. 1.

For Metro West Valley Div. 8 Mechanic "A" Larry Remata, the gift of life comes in the form of blood donations for his 18-year-old daughter, Tiffany.

Tiffany, who is facing an upcoming heart surgery, is the daughter of Remata, a 31-year-veteran of the transit agency, and his late wife, Donna, a storekeeper and beloved friend at Metro Headquarters who was among the 25 passengers and train crew members killed in the Metrolink train accident Sept. 12, 2008.

The operation is necessary to repair the damage caused by bacteria that lodged in the high school senior's heart valve, leading to life-threatening complications during the summer of 2009.

Remata is asking donors to make donations in time for his daughter's surgery in order to replenish the hospital's blood supply.

"It's another way to support our daughter through this surgery," he said.

Employees and friends who are able to make donations can call Kaiser Permanente Woodland Hills Medical Center at 818.719.4329 to make an appointment or the Kaiser Permanente Los Angeles Medical Center at 323.783.6667.

Any blood type can be donated and donors are asked to make their appointments as soon as possible in order to allow time for the

necessary blood testing procedures to be carried out.

The Woodland Hills facility is closest to Division 8, while the Los Angeles Medical Center on Sunset Blvd. is located in Hollywood near the Metro Red Line Sunset/Vermont Station, said Remata, noting that several employees

at Div. 8 have already donated.

When making an appointment, he said, please indicate that the donation is on behalf of Tiffany Remata, birth date 8.28.91, whose operation at the Kaiser Sunset facility is scheduled for Feb. 1.

Although some communities often have more blood than they need, other more densely populated areas, such as the Los Angeles region, are constantly in need. A blood shortage that the Red Cross describes as critical in Southern California has severely reduced the blood supply of area hospitals, which sometimes have less than a day's supply of certain types of blood crucial to an emergency room situation.

The need is for a healthy and reliable blood supply is constant. Health care officials are reporting that most blood centers have difficulty keeping any more than a three-day supply of blood for transfusions.

-- from Gayle Anderson



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Resources

- [Safety](#)
- [Pressroom](#) (web)
- [Ask the CEO](#)
- [CEO Forum](#)
- [Employee Recognition](#)
- [Employee Activities](#)
- [Metro Projects](#)
- [Facts at a Glance](#) (web)
- [Archives](#)
- [Events Calendar](#)
- [Research Center/Library](#)
- [Metro Classifieds](#)
- [Bazaar](#)

Metro Info

- [30/10 Initiative](#)
- [Policies](#)
- [Training](#)
- [Help Desk](#)
- [Intranet Policy](#)

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Photo: Gary Leonard

Metro Gold Line train approaches Union Station over a dense infrastructure.

How It Works: Rail Manager Explains How Earthquake Sensor Network Operates

By Michael D. White
Staff Writer

(Jan. 21, 2010) Southern California is no stranger to “seismic incidents.”

In 1769, the first genuinely strong earthquake to strike the region was recorded by the expedition led by the explorer Gaspar de Portola about 30 miles southeast of Los Angeles near the San Andreas Fault.

Since then, every day, hundreds of minor temblors, most of which can’t even be felt, and a few not so minor, have shaken the world under our feet and caused many a resident to seriously consider relocating to Montana.

Quakes can happen any time and it’s that unpredictability and the possible catastrophic impact of a major quake on Southern California’s transportation infrastructure that motivates Metro to employ a sophisticated seismic event sensor network.

The network consists of highly-sensitive motion detectors that are calibrated to send out either a warning or an alarm depending on the movement of the earth caused by a seismic anomaly.

The sensors are sited along the Metro Blue, Green, and Red Lines and on the Eastside extension of Gold Line.

Metro Rail Operations Control monitors the devices 24/7 using remote supervision and control software and Metro Wayside Rail Communications handles routine maintenance and regular testing of the seismic motion detectors.

"The sensors aren't set off by Richter scale movement, but by spikes on a g-force scale," says Metro Rail General Manager Mike Cannell.

"A warning would trigger at about .1g, [a seismic event about 5.0 on the Richter scale] while at .2g [roughly equivalent to an earthquake of about 6.0 in magnitude] would result in a full-fledged alarm," said Cannell.

A .1g warning would not be enough to stop service, but would call for Metro engineers and maintenance staff to conduct a field investigation to determine the effect of the event. "We'd be looking for damage to track, equipment, overpasses, tunnels structure, and facilities," he said.

A .2g alert would be an entirely different matter.

If an alert sounds, Metro SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) calls for a priority radio alert to be sent to all train operators who would be instructed to stop their trains, conduct a visual inspection of the track in front of them, and if possible to advance their train to the next station at a reduced speed where all passengers would be de-boarded. "Service would be completely shut down with such an alarm until we could determine the full extent of any damage," said Cannell. "Trains would remain in place and not move until it would be safe to do so."

The safety of both passengers and train crews "is critical," he said, alluding to the responsibility of overseeing the operations of 55 Metro passenger trains running during peak hours every day.

"The network we have in place to monitor them and alert our operators are highly sophisticated and specifically laid-out to ensure the safest means of action are immediately taken should a large seismic event occur," he added.

[Home](#)[CEO Hotline](#)[Viewpoint](#)[Classified Ads](#)[Archives](#)[Metro.net](#) (web)

Resources

- ▶ [Safety](#)
- ▶ [Pressroom](#) (web)
- ▶ [Ask the CEO](#)
- ▶ [CEO Forum](#)
- ▶ [Employee Recognition](#)
- ▶ [Employee Activities](#)
- ▶ [Metro Projects](#)
- ▶ [Facts at a Glance](#) (web)
- ▶ [Archives](#)
- ▶ [Events Calendar](#)
- ▶ [Research Center/Library](#)
- ▶ [Metro Classifieds](#)
- ▶ [Bazaar](#)

Metro Info

- ▶ [30/10 Initiative](#)
- ▶ [Policies](#)
- ▶ [Training](#)
- ▶ [Help Desk](#)
- ▶ [Intranet Policy](#)

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Los Angeles Sheriff's Deputy Ted Broadston says Americans have a tendency to let their guard down when it comes to staying alert about terrorism.

Sheriff's Deputy Broadston Combats Complacency with Transit Terrorism Awareness Class

By Laura Kloth
Staff Writer

(Jan. 21, 2009) Training employees to stay alert and report suspicious looking people or incidents on Metro property is just one of the tasks Los Angeles County Sheriff's Deputy Ted Broadston sets out to accomplish during his Transit Terrorism Awareness Training Class.

Broadston has been training Metro employees and consultants for years at transit- sponsored classes and feels strongly that Metro's employees "are really on the front line when it comes to protecting Metro's customers and passengers."

Using a dummy pipe bomb and simulated radioactive powder as props, Broadston is very specific during his training sessions, explaining in detail what Metro employees should be on the lookout for.

The highly-trained deputy provides his students with potential scenarios with the first lesson being that those who want to cause harm are usually pretty smart.

"If you're a bomber and you want to get a bomb some place, what are you going to make it look like," he asks. "You're not going to have sticks of dynamite taped together with a battery and a clock taped to the top of

it and try to set it some place, and have nobody notice it."

Situational awareness

Similarly when you see a suspicious person, "he or she won't be that obvious."

"Sometimes information that seems insignificant might be part of a larger important event," said Broadston.

If a tourist is taking pictures of a bus depot, that's different than if a person is taking pictures of a bus depot three days in a row. "Pay attention to your surroundings and report things that are suspicious," he advises.

Broadston uses examples as he teaches, noting that fortunately most reports turn out to be false alarms.

In one instance, an employee intercepted what appeared to be a bomb in a Metro mailroom. The supervisor evacuated the mailroom and called for help.

The entire building was evacuated before someone pointed out that the suspicious device was actually an obsolete bus transponder from the RTD days. "If you don't know that and this shows up on your desk, it's suspicious," Broadston said pointing to the plastic tube-like device that triggered the alert.

Broadston's class includes a 20-minute video offering important suggestions for employees such as reporting security weaknesses like broken fences, open gates and defective locks. The video urges employees to follow Metro standard safety procedures every day when conducting routine vehicle and area inspections and encourages employees to always wear the proper uniforms and security badges assigned for their positions.

"As transit employees, we are the first line of defense against those who wish to disrupt and disable America's public transportation system," the voiceover says. "So it's imperative that we know what to do if and when we encounter the warning signs of transit terrorism."

Complacency has a cost

A commonly heard recording on Metro's rail lines and stations, for example, encourages passengers to keep an eye out for unattended bags and packages.

The taped message has spurred many passengers to call and report suspicious activity with the call volume actually increasing following major events such as the recent foiled Christmas Day terrorist bombing attempt on a Detroit-bound passenger plane.

"If there's a big event somewhere here or in another country, then our suspicious package calls and suspicious stuff calls will go up because people are scared and concerned," he said.

However, complacency is one of the main reasons why such incidents occur in the first place.

People let their guard down, Broadston notes and terrorists and criminals are always on the look-out for the easy target.

"They're not looking for the person who appears to be paying attention.

They're not looking for the biggest guy. They're not looking for the transit system with the best security," Said Broadston. "They're looking for the easiest place to get into."

The next Metro Transit Terrorism Awareness class is scheduled for March 9 at the Gateway Building.

| [Home](#) | [Phone Directory](#) | [Forms Online](#) | [FIS Online](#)



[Metro.net](#) (web)

Resources

- [Safety](#)
- [Pressroom](#) (web)
- [Ask the CEO](#)
- [CEO Forum](#)
- [Employee Recognition](#)
- [Employee Activities](#)
- [Metro Projects](#)
- [Facts at a Glance](#) (web)
- [Archives](#)
- [Events Calendar](#)
- [Research Center/Library](#)
- [Metro Classifieds](#)
- [Bazaar](#)

Metro Info

- [30/10 Initiative](#)
- [Policies](#)
- [Training](#)
- [Help Desk](#)
- [Intranet Policy](#)

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Metro Freeway Service Patrol to the rescue. Check it out: [MFSP online](#)

Metro Board Approves 21 Contracts with Tow Truck Operators to Boost Metro Freeway Service Patrol

By Luis Inzunza
Media Relations

(Jan. 28, 2010) The Board of Directors today approved 21 contracts with tow truck operators to patrol congested Los Angeles County freeways and reduce traffic by getting disabled cars to run again or remove stranded autos before traffic backs up.

The contracts, totaling \$30.5 million, will support the Metro Freeway Service Patrol (MFSP), a free service for motorists sponsored by Metro, CHP and Caltrans.

MFSP helps minimize freeway traffic congestion on approximately 450 freeway miles by helping motorists get their disabled cars and trucks moving after they have stalled because of minor incidents such as flat tires or running out of gas , or if necessary, towing, the disabled vehicles off the freeway. Stalled vehicles cause more than 50 percent of traffic congestion.

There are a total of 152 MSFP tow trucks that patrol Los Angeles County freeways with service operating from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. on weekdays and 10 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. on weekends. Service on weekends and mid-day 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. are provided with a reduced number of tow trucks compared to the normal weekday morning and afternoon commute rush hour traffic.

The MFSP currently assists an average of 25,000 motorists each month, approximately 300,000 a year. Statistics show that on more than 70 percent of the assists made, the wait time for tow truck service is less than five minutes.

The Metro Freeway Service Patrol was started in 1991 and is jointly managed by Metro, CHP and Caltrans and is funded by state highway funds and local Proposition C transportation sales tax monies.



[Metro.net](#) (web)

Resources

- ▶ [Safety](#)
- ▶ [Pressroom](#) (web)
- ▶ [Ask the CEO](#)
- ▶ [CEO Forum](#)
- ▶ [Employee Recognition](#)
- ▶ [Employee Activities](#)
- ▶ [Metro Projects](#)
- ▶ [Facts at a Glance](#) (web)
- ▶ [Archives](#)
- ▶ [Events Calendar](#)
- ▶ [Research Center/Library](#)
- ▶ [Metro Classifieds](#)
- ▶ [Bazaar](#)

Metro Info

- ▶ [30/10 Initiative](#)
- ▶ [Policies](#)
- ▶ [Training](#)
- ▶ [Help Desk](#)
- ▶ [Intranet Policy](#)

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Metro Basketball League News

Metro Basketball League Deadline Is Feb. 15



Richard Wright

(Jan. 28, 2010) Spots are still open for anyone who'd to join the Metro Basketball League, said coordinator Transit Operations Supervisor Richard Wright.

"I just want to put it out there that the Feb. 15 deadline is coming up, and we still need about 20 people so we could have five teams," Wright said.

Metro employees were actively involved in several teams some years ago, and Wright notes that this is a great time to start up a league again.

The new league will carry the Metro name, but would be funded by participants, and practices will be held from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. Sundays at Hawthorne High School in Hawthorne.

For more information, contact Wright at (310) 854-3142 or (323)449-3604 or e-mail him at rwmentor@att.net.



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Resources

- ▶ [Safety](#)
- ▶ [Pressroom](#) (web)
- ▶ [Ask the CEO](#)
- ▶ [CEO Forum](#)
- ▶ [Employee Recognition](#)
- ▶ [Employee Activities](#)
- ▶ [Metro Projects](#)
- ▶ [Facts at a Glance](#) (web)
- ▶ [Archives](#)
- ▶ [Events Calendar](#)
- ▶ [Research Center/Library](#)
- ▶ [Metro Classifieds](#)
- ▶ [Bazaar](#)

Metro Info

- ▶ [30/10 Initiative](#)
- ▶ [Policies](#)
- ▶ [Training](#)
- ▶ [Help Desk](#)
- ▶ [Intranet Policy](#)

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Deputies confiscated this photograph allegedly depicting the suspect at work. Lt. Erik Ruble notes “career” taggers “like to document their work.”

Sheriff’s Special Problems Unit Nabs Another Alleged ‘Career’ Tagger

By Laura Kloth
Staff Writer

(Jan. 28, 2010) A couple days before Metro’s Gold Line Eastside Extension was due to open in November, one tagging suspect was allegedly keeping himself busy defacing a shiny new Metro train and nearby equipment with his street moniker - “Aloy.”

That’s when Sheriff’s deputies Paul Cervantes and David Ybarra, both members of the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Special Problems Unit, stepped in and began their hunt for the mysterious “Aloy.”



Los Angeles County Sheriff's Lt. Erik Ruble, at right, congratulates Special Problems Unit deputies David Ybarra (left) and Paul Cervantes after they inventory the tagging paraphernalia confiscated from the suspect's Alhambra residence.

On Jan. 22, their efforts paid off when deputies linked the moniker to suspect Christopher Arredondo, 32, of Alhambra.

A search warrant for Arredondo's home was promptly served, and though Arredondo wasn't around at the time, deputies searched the residence and uncovered stacks of graffiti art, cans of spray paint, markers, a Mac computer, and various other "tagger"-related paraphernalia.

Three days later, accompanied by his attorney, the suspect turned himself in and was charged with felony vandalism, according to Transit Unit Sgt. Augie Pando, adding that the suspect's bond was set at \$100,000.

Damage to the Metro train and adjacent power poles amounted to about \$3,500, but "the suspect may be tied to other incidents on LA County property, and damages could escalate to as much as \$30,000," said Pando.

"He [the suspect] is one that believes in the movement of free expression and art, except that he does it everywhere but where he's suppose to – on private property and public property," said Lt. Erik Ruble, pointing to a display of the confiscated tagger paraphernalia at the Metro Gateway parking garage.



Deputies recovered more than three dozen cans of spray paint along with scores of tagging evidence including sketches and "slap tags" or mini bumper stickers bearing the suspect's moniker.

Admiring the slick paintings, and fancy "slap tags," Ruble added, "You can't take that away from these guys, they are talented in their abilities to put up art. Unfortunately, they just do it in the form that's illegal."

Arredondo's arrest, said Ruble, is a coup for the Sheriff's Department as the suspect is one of a select few taggers who have developed a reputation by vandalizing both public and private property in the U.S. and abroad in the name of "art."

"This is the type of culture that we're experiencing even with 30 year olds," said Ruble. "A lot of them have money. Some of them sell their art and there are some true taggers that are in the 30s, and this is what they do. They travel to different places across the country."

In January, several taggers came all the way from the East Coast to use the Metro Red Line as a canvas for their uncontrollable urge for free artistic expression.

Their quest came to nothing when they found themselves under arrest and handcuffed in the back of several Sheriff's squad cars.

Last November, Jason Williams, 32, a graffiti artist known on the street as "Revok," was arrested when some of his "street art" was spotlighted at a downtown Los Angeles art show.

After his arrest, Williams told officials he was making a living from his art, and had been paid \$1,000 to attend the art show.