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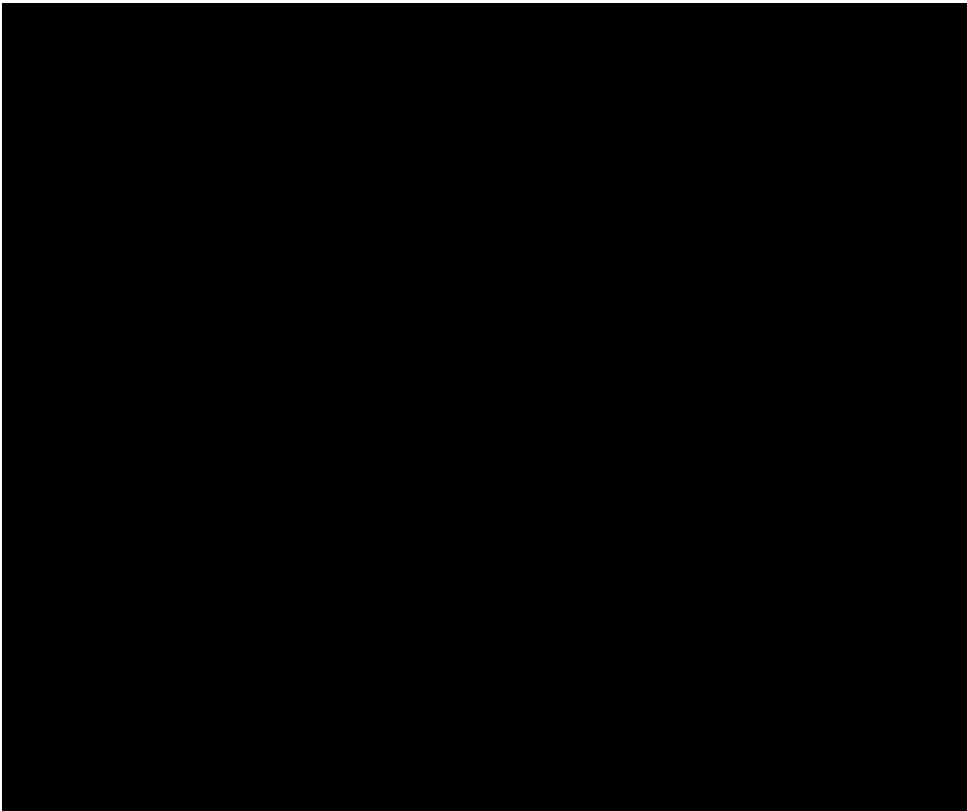
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Video by Rich Morallo. Not hooked up to YouTube at work? Watch at home at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R1AbWM1Yn4Y> NOTE: This YouTube link is being sent to you for the purpose of viewing the Metro video only. Metro employees are subject to the Employee Code of Conduct that generally restricts the use of company time/equipment to conducting Metro business. Please click on icon above to view the video.

Weathering Difficult Times Resources Conference: Metro promotes Wheelchair Marking and Safety Strap Program for Children’s Hospital

By Rich Morallo
Community Relations / Volunteer Coordinator

(March 2, 2010) Representing the Wheelchair Safety Program of Metro's ADA Compliance Unit, Juanita Cook is pleasant but direct. "Good Morning," Cook greets a visitor to the Metro information table set up Feb. 22 at the California Endowment Center. "Do you know anyone in a wheel chair?" she promptly asks.

Cook knows that visits to the table by attendees of the resources fair hosted by Children's Hospital of Los Angeles may be brief and she could have only seconds to pitch the Wheelchair Marking and Safety Strap Program.

This morning, however, many of the participants attending the fair geared at children with special needs and their families are interested in Cook's safety program.

"Metro offers expert pre-marking of tie-down locations on wheel chairs

and other mobility devices or new safety straps for the tie-down locations," said Cook who has used a wheel chair herself since 1999.

Cook explained that bright yellow tape is used to identify parts of a wheel chair or mobility device where a strap or hook can tie down the chair inside the bus and this helps an operator to quickly secure the patron for safe travel.

Technicians go to appointments at hospitals and senior center facilities where they evaluate and mark individual wheel chairs and mobility devices such as scooters. "We also brief the participants how bus operators will assist in lifting folding seats and attaching tie-down hooks to the chair's safety straps," Cook said.

In charge of an aggressive campaign, Cook aims to mark a thousand wheelchairs in the next five months.

"We want to help our patrons feel more comfortable, secure and safe," said Cook.

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Transit Operations Supervisor Donald McKenzie provided Sierra Canyon first graders with some important facts about Div. 8.

First Graders Learn About Metro Bus Safety During Visit to Div. 8

By Laura Kloth

Staff Writer

(March 2, 2010) An elated group of first graders went on their first Metro bus ride and picked up a lesson in safety during a recent visit to Division 8 in Chatsworth.

Sierra Canyon Elementary School children sat attentively Feb. 25 as Transportation Manager Maria Reynolds welcomed them, and talked about her 24-year career at Metro, which includes 10 years at Div. 8.

"Your school has been here to visit us about 20 years and I have been here for 10. I have been able to welcome you here, and that's been a joy. We're happy that you're here. We're happy that we get this opportunity," Reynolds said.

The children learned that Div. 8 has 350 bus operators with 215 buses that each make about 160

Safety Lessons at West Valley Division

Photos by Laura Kloth



Transportation Manager Maria Reynolds tells the first graders she has enjoyed working at Div. 8 for a decade, and has spent some 24 years with Metro.

stops a day.

"This is an award-winning facility. We have the lowest accident rate. We have the safest facility and it's because of all of the work they (employees) do that makes us such a good division here and a great place to work," Reynolds said adding that public transportation careers vary.

"You could drive a bus. You could fix the bus. You could supervise employees. You could manage the facility. You could work downtown and be the CEO. We have some 10,000 employees at Metro so we're a big agency," she said.

Transit Operations Supervisor Donald McKenzie gave the children a mini quiz about Metro facts and figures saying the agency carries some 1.2 million riders on buses daily, and Div. 8 transports passengers throughout the San Fernando Valley.

"We actually handle carpool lanes...bicycle lanes and the freeway patrol. Have you ever been on the freeway and seen a tow truck parked on the side?" McKenzie asked.

Bus Operator Shakana Contreras, a 10-year employee, provided the quote of the day when she asked the children if they knew the difference between a bus driver and a bus operator. "Anyone can drive a bus, but it takes a special person to operate it," Contreras said emphasizing also that "Safety is first at Metro so we always try to be aware of everything around us."

The highlight of the visit included a ride around the yard in an articulated bus complete with two trips through a mammoth bus wash. The children also got a demonstration of how a giant vacuum is funneled through the bus door to quickly suck trash off



Los Angeles County Sheriff's Deputy Darren Martin gave an entertaining lesson on safety, while Transportation Operations supervisors Lois Nesby and Donald McKenzie also emphasized the importance of paying attention while boarding a bus.



Mechanics Scott Lanski, Paul Lacanilao and Larry Remata (driving bus) along with Transit Operations supervisors Lois Nesby and Don McKenzie help board the children for their big ride around the yard.



Not only did Mechanic Scott Lanski prepare children for their bus ride, he filled them in on the steps Metro takes to maintain buses for operation.



The highlight of the trip was riding through the

the bus before its next route.

Sr. Safety Specialist David Miklic and Los Angeles County Sheriff's Dep. Darren Martin gave a lesson on safety.

"It's very important to stay back behind the curb when the bus is coming in," Miklic said before explaining other important safety measures Metro has taken like placing internal and external cameras on buses.

"If there's an accident, that will trigger the camera to take pictures.. and that helps determine the cause of the accident," Miklic said. Martin reminded the children to stay several steps away from a curb while standing near a bus stop.

Mechanic Scott Lanski played tour guide during their ride and talked about how buses must be properly maintained for safe operation, and how Metro strives to Metro helps the environment by using recycled water, and maintaining the nation's largest natural gas fleet.

"We have more than 200 buses here. Could you imagine if you're washing 200 cars, how much water you'd use if you used your garden hose?" Lanski said. Preparation is the key, he said. "We have to fill it up, clean it. We have to fix it. Sometimes they put new tires on. We have to change the oil and all of that stuff. We're open all day. We're open all night," he said.

bus wash twice.



TOS McKenzie thanks the children from their visit, and helps board them onto their school bus.



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Bus Operator Jim Pieper, at right in chain mail, wields shields and swords during weekend practice battles of the Legio VI Victrix Society. *Photos courtesy of Jim Pieper.*

Div. 15 Bus Operator Enjoys Time Off By Reenacting Early Roman Life, Battles

By Laura Kloth
Staff Writer

(March 4, 2010) When he’s not transporting Metro passengers safely across town, Div. 15 Bus Operator Jim Pieper enjoys reenacting 2nd century Roman life as a member of the Legio VI Victrix Society.

The unique and growing Los Angeles-based organization allows members to recreate Roman life complete with lessons in Latin, home-sewn costumes, authentic food and historically accurate weapons and artillery used to reenact famous battles that occurred during AD 122-138.

“Joining the group was easy,” says Pieper recalling how one day he happened to meet one of the group’s members during a visit to a Victory Boulevard computer store.

Pieper had already enjoyed participating in Civil War reenactments, and says he was looking for a new hobby after the disappointment of having his Civil War days “fizzle out” after members moved or



couldn't participate anymore.

"I just wanted something different and this is really different. It's fun. You go out there and portray Roman soldiers. You get out of this century, and are able to live through a different period," he said.

Complete with authentic Roman soldier garb, Div. 15 Bus Operator Jim Pieper says reenacting the battles is the highlight of his membership in the Legio VI Victrix Society.

The Society not only allows members to study, feel and taste early Roman soldier and civilian life, members also work to educate the public about Roman history by performing reenactments at schools, festivals, and informally at the Getty Museum.

Pieper says members dressed as Roman soldiers diligently play their role by walking around the Getty, answering questions about daily life in a typical Roman Army legion of almost two thousand years ago.



Strategic infantry formations replicate the battle scenes that occurred during the 2nd Century when Roman soldiers defended Hadrian's Wall.

To date, Pieper says the most interesting part of his experience has been reenacting the battles to defend Hadrian's Wall, located in Northern England, against the "barbarian horde."

The original Legio VI Victrix was stationed at the Wall after earning a reputation as one of the Roman Army's most reliable legions, seeing service in Spain and along the Rhine River.

Named after the Emperor Hadrian, the 80-mile long wall was built over a number of years starting in AD 122 and marked the northern-most boundary of the Roman Empire. Portions of the stone and timber wall still stand and provide a tangible link to the past for countless classical history buffs.

To further authenticate their monthly "battles," Legion members - complete with Roman garb and artillery - practice at Griffith Park staging tactical movements complete with military marches, a catapult and a variety of 2nd Century props.

Pieper admits, sometimes battles result in minor injuries since "real" swords are used, but members are careful not to cause any serious harm while they enjoy performing on an outdoor stage.



Onlookers can't help but stop to check out the battles reenacted by Legio VI Victrix Society at a neighborhood park.

One scene might involve a soldier charged with collecting leeches, while another could depict the life of a Roman guard on duty at placed at one of the many gates in the Roman Wall.

Members research every detail of their respective roles, while each is expected to create an actual persona unique to the period complete with costume and dialogue.

"I'm actually supposed to make my persona story and be judged during an upcoming competition," he said, adding that, on occasion, he's had to borrow some material from other members.

As rooted in the ancient past as they may be, Legio VI Victrix Society members have their feet firmly planted in the 21st century when it comes to generating interest in their pastime.

One has to smile, wondering what the Emperor Hadrian would have thought of their website and Facebook page.

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From left, Los Angeles County Supervisor Michael Antonovich, Palmdale Mayor James C. Ledford, Jr., CEO Art Leahy and Board Chair Ara Najarian. Photo by Jose Ubaldo.

Metro Delivers Measure R Sales Tax Funds to City of Palmdale

By Rick Jager
Media Relations

(March 4, 2010) Board Chair Ara Najarian joined Los Angeles County Supervisor Michael Antonovich and Metro’s CEO Art Leahy Wednesday in presenting the first six-month installment check of Measure R 15% Local Return dollars to the Palmdale City Council for use in improving transportation systems in the City of Palmdale.

The Measure R payment to the City of Palmdale totals \$531,008 collected through February, 2010. The City of Palmdale is projected to receive \$80.8 million over the 30 year span of Measure R.

Measure R, the half-cent sales tax approved by the voters in November 2008, is expected to generate approximately \$40 billion over the next 30 years.

Local cities within Los Angeles County receive 15 percent of the funding to use for major street resurfacing, pothole repair, improving traffic congestion, bikeways, pedestrian improvements signal synchronization and transit improvements.

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See [myMetro.net report](#): Metro honors those buried in long abandoned potter's field discovered during Eastside light rail construction



Accompanied by her daughter Susan, Gaye Buzbee, at right, flew in from Colorado for the March 8 ceremony at the Evergreen Cemetery in Boyle Heights. Both watched proudly as the memorial wall bearing her great uncle's tombstone was unveiled following several moving speeches, prayers and tributes. *Photos: Juan Ocampo*

Colorado Woman Shares Brief History of Memorial Wall Relative

By Laura Kloth

Staff Writer

(March 9, 2010) Watching Metro staff and dignitaries pay tribute to 174 people whose gravesites were uncovered during a Metro construction project, Gaye Buzbee smiled as she listened and wondered if her family would ever really know how her great uncle T. E. Buzbee, a teenaged Colorado native, wound up so far from home in a long-forgotten Southern California cemetery.

Buzbee, accompanied by her daughter, Susan, flew in from Colorado for the March 8 ceremony at the Evergreen Cemetery in Boyle Heights, and both watched proudly as the memorial wall bearing T.E. Buzbee's tombstone was unveiled following several moving speeches, prayers and tributes.

"It's fabulous," Gaye Buzbee said of the wall bearing painted images of residents of the community. "We were here in November and it (the wall) was just finished. I was just amazed and was blown away by it," she said.



Gaye Buzbee's photo from the family archives shows her Colorado-based ancestors who moved from Scotland to work in the coal mines. Her great uncle T.E. Buzbee was among those remembered during the memorial wall unveiling.

A family mystery solved

"T.E." or Thomas E. Buzbee was born Aug. 12, 1865 and died Feb. 1, 1883 at the age of 17.

The mystery of his tragically short unraveled when Metro staff first contacted Buzbee at her home in Empire, Colo. after T.E.'s tombstone was unearthed during construction of the Metro Gold Line Extension in 2005.

Buzbee, who considers herself her family's "historian," was more than intrigued when she learned that her great uncle was among those buried more than a century ago in what was then Los Angeles' Potter's Field.

"I was so excited because the family story was that Thomas and Newton (his older brother) ran away from Colorado after they stole some money in the little town I live in. They were rascals, and came to California," she said, laughing. "They got drunk and crashed a cable car in San Francisco. Then they got 'shanghaied' on a merchant ship bound for China and just disappeared."

"That was the family story and we never knew if it was true or not and we didn't know if it was family legend or lore, but those two boys were never heard from again," she said.

While no record of whatever became of Newton Buzbee has been found, Metro staff uncovered documents indicating that T.E. Buzbee died in Los Angeles of meningitis.

Before he left home at age 15, Thomas Buzbee was living with his relatives in Silver Plume, Colo., close to Denver, where they had migrated from Scotland during the 1800s to work as coal miners.

"You could tell my family were miners. They're all dressed up kind of shabby," Buzbee said, pointing to an old family photo she brought to the ceremony. Buzbee and her daughter gave interviews to the media during the event, and admitted that they really didn't know much more about their young ancestor.

At long last, dignity

As little as was unearthed of T.E. Buzbee of Empire, Colo., even less information was discovered about the others – mainly nameless Chinese immigrants – whose remains were uncovered during the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension project.

Perhaps the most moving part of the ceremony occurred when Congresswoman Judy Chu talked about the yet unidentified long-forgotten remains.

"It is so significant that those early immigrants who suffered so many indignities in life, will now through interment not have to suffer indignities through death," Chu said.

While they lived, "they were prevented from owning land, marrying non-Chinese, becoming naturalized citizens, and they were prevented from death and dignity," she said.

"When they died, their deaths were considered so insignificant that there were not even any tombstones," she said.

The families of the Chinese buried in the field were actually charged \$10, while others were buried free-of-charge.

"I thank everyone for doing this, and I'm so glad that the community raised their voices and that they were able to finally bring about justice for these early ancestors," said Chu, noting that many of those whose remains are to be re-interred were young men who had immigrated to make money to support their families in China.

All of the remains will be re-interred directly in front of the memorial wall beginning in April.

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U.S. Congresswoman Judy Chu, at left, and Los Angeles County Supervisor and Metro Director Gloria Molina, at right, lead unveiling ceremony flanked by community leaders, elected officials, and Metro executives. *Photos: Juan Ocampo*

Metro honors those buried in long abandoned potter's field discovered during Eastside light rail construction

- More on myMetro.net report: [Colorado Woman Shares Brief History of Memorial Wall Relative](#)

By Jose Ubaldo
Media Relations

(March 9, 2010) A memorial wall honoring poor immigrants and others from the last century, whose remains and artifacts were discovered in unmarked graves outside Evergreen Cemetery in Boyle Heights during construction of a retaining wall for the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension, was unveiled Monday in a ceremony headed by elected officials, community leaders and Metro executives.

The burial sites, some dating to the 1880's – were located in what was a potter's field. Metro did exhaustive historical research to try to identify the remains –many of them Chinese immigrants –and locate modern day relatives with limited success. However, the human remains and artifacts will be reburied inside Evergreen Cemetery next to the historic Chinese Shrine.

Many of the deceased were Chinese immigrant laborers who were denied burial in Evergreen Cemetery. Moreover, their friends and family had to pay \$10 just to bury them in a potter's field for paupers.

"When our construction crews found the human remains and artifacts in the forgotten potter's field, we did the right thing. Work was immediately

stopped. Then we painstakingly preserved what we found and tried to find the descendents," said Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority Board Chair Ara Najarian.

"Our project Ad Hoc Subcommittee worked for years with community organizations to decide what would be the best way to show respect to the deceased and what should be done with the remains and artifacts. Today, I am pleased that we are honoring these early laborers who helped build Los Angeles by righting an historic wrong."



The memorial wall pays tribute to the remains and artifacts discovered during construction of the Edward R. Roybal Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension.

The Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension, which opened on November 15, 2009, began construction in July 2004.

"I applaud the Ad Hoc Subcommittee's dedicated efforts in overseeing this project and I, along with the community, truly appreciate the hours of meetings, site visits and deliberations that took place to ensure the remains were reburied in a dignified, historically significant and respectful manner," said Los Angeles County Supervisor Gloria Molina.

Discoveries at First and Lorena

On June 22, 2005, construction crews at First and Lorena streets who were widening First Street to accommodate space for the light rail line's east portal began removing a retaining wall on the south side of the Los Angeles County Crematorium. There, buried underground, workers discovered human remains and artifacts.

"Today reminds us that in the City of Los Angeles, history matters," said Metro Director and L.A. City Councilmember José Huizar. "We are here to honor that history, and in particular our City's Chinese history. As we pay our respects today let us remember all that they have done for us."

Archeologist tracks artifacts, burial sites

Metro immediately suspended construction and brought in an archeologist to do historic research, document all discoveries and try to locate next of kin.

There were approximately 174 burial sites and countless artifacts such as buttons, coffin hardware, Chinese and American artifacts, clothing items, combs, glasses, Chinese porcelain, opium pipes, and other pieces, some dating back about a century.

Established in 1877, Evergreen Cemetery is the oldest secular cemetery

still operating in Los Angeles and is the final resting place of many prominent Los Angeles citizens.

At its inception, Evergreen Cemetery dedicated land outside their gates for a public cemetery for indigent residents and those with unknown next-of-kin. Between 1877 and 1924, approximately 13,000 residents with no known next-of-kin or means to afford a private burial were interred in this public potter's field.

A portion was designated for Chinese burials which, because of discrimination, were prohibited in Evergreen Cemetery. Records indicate that, ultimately, about 1,400 Chinese were buried at a required fee of \$10 each, while all others were buried at no cost.

Memorial shrine trumps discrimination

The Chinese community erected a memorial shrine there in 1888, which is now a Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument. By 1924, the public cemetery was replaced by a crematorium built by the County of Los Angeles. Subsequently, the grave markers were removed and the exact location of the "potter's field" was forgotten.

Part of the archaeological work was the identification of remains and artifacts. Metro staff made an extraordinary effort to locate next-of-kin.

One was [T.E. Buzbee](#), whose grave marker was recovered from the area of the potter's field discovered during Metro's construction. Buzbee was born on August 12, 1865 and died at age 17 on February 01, 1883.

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During the arrest, deputies took pictures of the suspect's bedroom and closet and found a Metro anti-tagging poster.

Sheriff's Special Problems Unit Catches Another Alleged Tagger

(March 9, 2010) An 18-year-old tagging suspect accused of causing \$110,000 worth of damage at three Metro bus divisions was arrested March 9, officials announced.

Hugo Garcia was picked up in his Los Angeles home around 7 a.m., and charged with felony vandalism after the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Special Problems Unit linked him to a series of tagging incidents on Metro buses at West Hollywood Div. 7, Los Angeles Div. 10 and the Arthur Winston Div 5.

Deputies Kyle Ynclan and Goro Yoshida found the suspect by tracking his street moniker – "Fewed" – to his MySpace page and following-up on several other leads.

During the arrest, deputies confiscated slaptags, or mini bumper stickers with his moniker, markers and other paraphernalia, said Sheriff's Dep. Ynclan, who



Sheriff's Dep. Kyle Ynclan said the suspect

said the suspect had allegedly
been tagging Metro buses for the
"past couple of years."

apparently practiced his tagging on his closet
wall.

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Message from the CEO

Streamlining the Agency, Restructuring Service, and Program Delivery



CEO Art Leahy

By CEO ART LEAHY

(March 11, 2010) The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority is at a critical juncture. In the midst of a major economic downturn, never has more been expected of this agency with regard to the delivery of capital programs and day-to-day services.

In order for us to successfully meet our broad set of programmatic and service commitments in a fiscally responsible manner, we must act now to streamline the agency, restructure our service delivery, and markedly improve the management of our capital programs.

Collectively, we are committed to three essential objectives:

- A sustainable operating model where we can afford to operate and maintain what we buy and build with consistently high quality;
- A world class transit system with the range, quality and speed to attract and keep the most discerning customers; and
- Accelerated expansion of our transit system through the planning and building of outstanding projects delivered on time, within budget, and with safety as job one.

Our challenge is to deliver this package of imperatives within the context of "The Great Recession." We are committed to planning and acting now in a manner which helps to prevent negative impacts on our customers and employees downstream.

In the course of the next three months, we will lay out a comprehensive plan to achieve our objectives with minimum draw upon the agency's reserves. We intend to enter FY11 with a new lean organization, a new service delivery model, and a focused agenda for capital programs delivery.

With the Board's concurrence, MTA will be reorganized into six strategic business units:

- **The Executive Office** will be responsible for government relations, labor relations, safety, security, the Office of Management and Budget, the Office of Equal Employment and Opportunity, and

Management Audit Services.

- **Operations** will be responsible for bus and rail transportation and bus and rail maintenance.
- **Programs** will be responsible for transit projects, highway projects, facilities projects, construction, engineering, planning, business development, and real estate.
- **Customer Services** will be responsible for service development, information services, external affairs, customer programs/services, and regional programs.
- **Financial Services** will be responsible for accounting, finance and treasury, revenue collection, and risk management.
- **Administrative Services** will be responsible for human services, procurement, materiel management, and economic opportunity.

Our intent in restructuring is to ensure we address the needs of our customers and the specific programmatic commitments prescribed in Measure R and our charter more efficiently and effectively.

In parallel, we will be eliminating up to 260 non-contract positions during the remainder of FY10. This reduction will constitute approximately 20 percent of our non-contract positions and will be accomplished by the elimination of unfilled lower priority positions plus the carrying out of a voluntary severance program and a reduction-in-force program.

In April, we will bring to the Board a Comprehensive Service Restructuring Plan based upon the guiding principles of service quality, systems integration, and network rationalization. With the Board's concurrence, this plan will be publicly vetted and fully implemented in FY11.

Concurrently, within the Programs Strategic Business Units (SBU), we will be integrating and refocusing our transit, highway, and facilities programs with the construction, engineering, planning, business development, and real estate units. A new Programs Management Office will be a key component of this structure. In combining these organizational elements, our goal will be to ensure accelerated project delivery, enhanced customer and safety focuses, improved application of lessons learned, consistent application of best practices, strengthened fiscal/control management, and enhanced operational and peer review.

In the coming months, we will also be recommending to the Board the elimination of specific programs and activities from across the agency as a means of further reducing our expenditures.

Working together, we will remake this agency to ensure that we successfully deliver on the myriad of expectations and commitments which exist for MTA. By planning and acting boldly today, we can bring our shared commitments to fruition in a manner which best serves our customers and our employees.

March 11, 2010

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CEO Art Leahy fields questions at first all-hands meeting Dec. 9.

Employees Can Now 'Ask the CEO' Online

Submit Questions & Comments For April 5 All-Hands Meetings

(March 11, 2010) In preparation for the April 5, 2010 All-Hands meetings here at Gateway Plaza, employees are encouraged to submit questions directly to CEO Art Leahy by clicking on the newly created "Ask the CEO" link on the myMetro.net homepage.

The link will connect employees to the [CEO's Forum webpage](#) where questions can be submitted with the employee's name and badge number, or anonymously.

On April 5, employees also will be able to place their written questions in a locked box located at the entrance of the Board Room the morning of the meeting. All questions submitted will be posted and answered on the CEO Forum webpage.

Art will address as many questions during the meeting as time permits. To accommodate as many employees as possible, there will be a meeting at 10 a.m. and a second meeting at 11 a.m. in the Board Room. Both meetings will cover the same topics.

Art encourages all employees to take this opportunity to submit a question for the upcoming CEO All-Hands meetings. Division Managers are requested to post information about the All-Hands meetings at their work locations.

The "Ask the CEO" link will remain permanently on the myMetro.net homepage and it can be accessed via Outlook email, providing employees with convenient access to contact the CEO.



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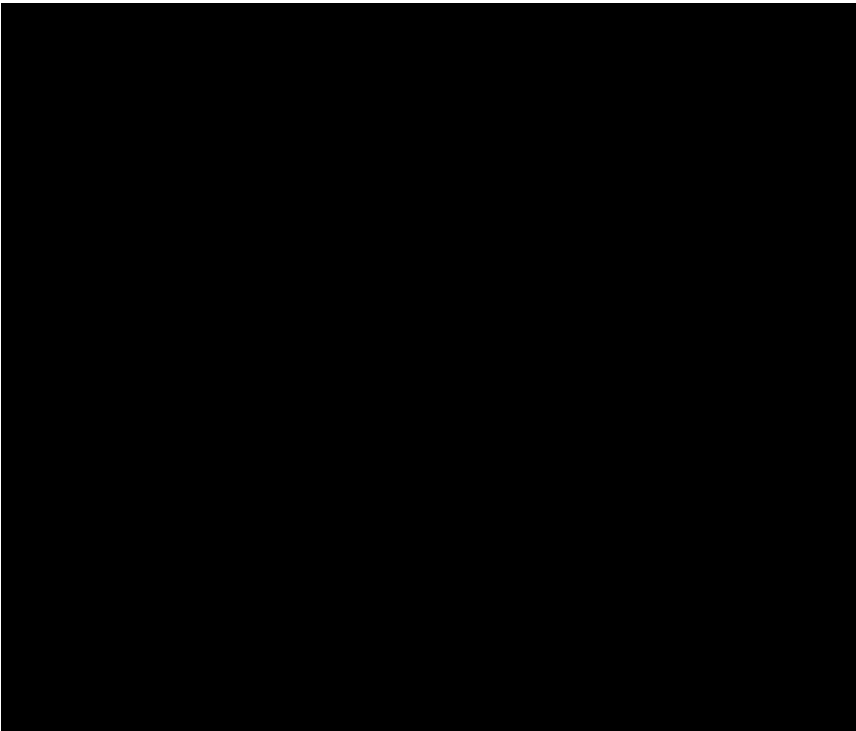
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Video by Rich Morallo. Not hooked up to YouTube at work? Watch at home at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FFmNm6sZO_0 NOTE: This YouTube link is being sent to you for the purpose of viewing the Metro video only. Metro employees are subject to the Employee Code of Conduct that generally restricts the use of company time/equipment to conducting Metro business. Please click on icon above to view the video.

Metro Employees Talk about Transportation Careers at Normandie Christian Career Day

By Rich Morallo
Community Relations / Volunteer Coordinator

(March 11, 2010) "Who rides Metro?" asked Makeba Rice in front of an excited first grade class at Normandie Christian School in Los Angeles.

A flurry of small hands flew up and Rice, an operator from Arthur Winston Division 5, smiled broadly. "Well I'm the operator of that orange or red city bus you see on the street and my job is to get people to their destinations safely," remarked Rice.

The Metro operator was one of several professionals participating in the school's Career Day last Friday and was making the rounds of elementary classrooms at the school near Normandie Avenue and Gage Street.

"Was the driver on the bus polite to you?" asked Rice and several students responded that they enjoyed the ride on Metro and started sharing their experiences.

Throughout the morning Rice talked before several classes, talking up Metro. "I like my job and I make good money, " she explained to the

students. Adding transit safety to her presentation, Rice held up a color poster of a bus and students playing on the curb she asked, "What are they doing wrong here?" Small hands shot up.

A volunteer for this community outreach assignment, Rice said it is important to talk to youth about careers. "We help give the young students structure and guidance to follow especially during this age when their minds are absorbing so much," said Rice.

Rice's own daughter, 13-year old Makia, took time from school break to accompany her mother. "Young students need to stay in school so when they grow up they'll have good jobs, " she said.

"I'm planning to be a lawyer or doctor or a brain surgeon," added Makia as she passed out Metro coloring books and crayons to the first graders.



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Metro Employees Urged to Participate in 2010 Census

By Michael D. White, *Staff Writer*

(March 11, 2010) The ancient Egyptians and Romans did it. So did the early Britons. And Americans joined in more than 200 years ago after becoming an independent nation.

It's "counting noses," or, as we know it, taking a census, something that Americans have been doing every ten years since 1790.

The 2010 "Rock the Count" campaign reminds everyone to fill out their census forms and return them to help determine how Congress apportions and distributes more than \$400 billion in federal funds annually to state, local and tribal areas.

"The importance of everyone participating in the upcoming U.S. Census can't be overstated," said Marisa Yeager, Metro Government Relations Administrator, noting that the demographic information collected during the census is "critical to Metro being able to plan, fund and complete critical new transportation projects which will help address Los Angeles County's projected population and economic growth."

An involved, multi-dimensional process, census taking has evolved dramatically as both the information gathered and the technology used to gather that information has evolved over the years.

Up until now, questionnaires were filled out in person on paper with workers tabulating the collected information by hand in offices across the country. The data was then sent on to Washington, D.C. where it was totaled and tallied by a small army of harried, eye-strained clerks.

Today, the latest technology is being brought into play with plans calling for the upcoming 2010 census to be conducted for the first time with sophisticated GPS technology. The census will still be conducted on paper forms, but in a form pared down to only ten questions. Census forms are mailed out rather than having to be filled out in person by temporary census takers trolling communities door-to-door.

Get Ready to 'Rock the Count'



Metro is inviting customers to the *Rock the Count: American Indian Music Festival* celebration, sponsored by the U.S. Census Bureau, on Saturday, March 27 from 12-5 p.m. at the Los Angeles State Historic Park. The first 100 riders to show a valid Metro pass, Metro Rail ticket or Destination Discounts card to the Census Booth at the entrance to the event will receive one free genuine leather personal planner.

By law, the Census Bureau must count everyone and submit state population totals to the White House by December 31, 2010. Individual states would then receive the results the spring of 2011.

Federal law establishes stiff penalties for the disclosure of the information gathered to entities or agencies including the IRS and the FBI. Another layer of protection is provided with all census employees required to sign a sworn affidavit of non-disclosure prior to their being approved for employment.

In addition, only after 72 years does the information collected become available to other agencies or the general public.

In a news release, Dr. Robert Groves, Director of the U.S. Census Bureau urges everyone to 'Rock the Count' saying, "We want the 2010 Census to be the most accurate yet, and we are again calling upon Complete Count Committees to help us achieve that goal."

And Yeager adds that like voting, "participating in the Census gives everyone the opportunity to take an active part in planning for the future of their community," said Yeager. "It's a great way to make sure we get federal highway, bus, rail, bike and pedestrian funds that we deserve to have here in Los Angeles County."

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ADA Compliance Administrator Chip Hazen helped arrange the training session for students with hopes of integrating the class into Metro's ongoing instructional efforts to assist visually impaired patrons.

Los Angeles Area Blind Students Get Tips on Taking a Bus

• Pilot Program Expected to Benefit Students, Bus Operators

By Laura Kloth
Staff Writer

(March 16, 2010) Several Los Angeles area students who are legally blind were given the opportunity to learn how to safely board Metro's buses and utilize the TAP program during a recent visit to Metro's Operations Central Instruction training site.

One by one primary grade students from the Frances Blend School for the Visually Disabled joined students from Irving and Widney public schools as they boarded Metro's buses, and listened to helpful tips from Metro instructors like Transit Operations Supervisor Francisca Montes-Jurado.

The nearly 100-year-old school is the only public school for blind children



west of the Mississippi, according to Terry Fields, Orientation and Mobility Instructor at LA Unified.

TOS Instructor Shonda Breland chats with a student from the Frances Blend School for the Visually Handicapped during a March 10 training session for the students.

"Right there where you're holding to your right that's the best place for you to sit because the bus operator can watch you from here to make sure that you get off where you're suppose to," Montes-Jurado explained to a couple of middle school students.

Systems Project Manager Vanessa Smith explained Metro's TAP program to the students and their mobility instructors, who are typically responsible for helping students with the application process. She said the disabled fare is \$14 a month and can easily be loaded onto a TAP card.

"The card is a smart card that contains a computer chip and an antenna. Instead of a paper pass, the technology allows the card to be electronically loaded. And it knows exactly what's available when you swipe it," she said.



LA Unified Mobility instructor Vince Fazzi helps students Rudolfo Zamudio (on ramp) and Daniel Enriquez board a Metro bus.

Students took time to examine the TAP fare box located next to the operator, and many walked along the bus checking out the rails, steps and seating while Mobility Instructors Tim Toomey and Vince Fazzi explained the arrangement.

"That's a strap for you to hold on if there's no place to sit and the bus is crowded, people hold on really tight to that and then as the bus moves, it kind of shakes a little bit and you're all safe and sound when you hold on to that real tight," Toomey explained to one student.

A joint Metro – L.A. Unified operation

ADA Compliance Administrator Chip Hazen said the lessons were scheduled at the request of Terry Fields, Orientation and Mobility Instructor at LA Unified, who called Metro for assistance late last year.

Many of the children enjoyed riding around the training lot in the articulated bus. They also enjoyed listening to the warning alarm that signaled the ramp was being deployed.

Special Education Instructor Joanna Isorena, who brought her kindergarten class, said the lesson provided the students with "a good daily living skill" while exposing them to public transportation which isn't always their parent's first choice of travel.



Balancing aboard a moving articulated bus was somewhat of a challenge for students and Mobility Instructor Tim Toomey as the teacher describes the internal workings of the vehicle.

She also noticed the younger children seemed to enjoy the sound of the bus engine.

"My kids have a lot of sensory needs, it's very surprising when they ride the bus, I guess the vibration, they like it or it calms them down," Isorena said.

By the end of the March 10 lesson, Fields was extremely pleased with the results.

Mutual benefit

"Our goal was for our kids to get oriented to several different kinds of buses. We've been having some problems on field trips getting the kids out into the community, getting them on and off the bus, and the bus operators have a timeline that they're trying to keep," said Fields.

"It was great for the kids," she added. "I think it was great for the bus operators and trainers to get to meet our kids and see what we deal with too. I think mutually it was great all around."





From left, Operators Victor Gonzalez and Div. 1, Mary Gillison Div. 5, join Instructors Shonda Breland, Kika Montes-Jurado, Audrey Turner, Vince Wilkes Frank Cecere, Assistant Operations Instruction Manager.

Hazen said older students would benefit from the lesson as they transition from high school to adulthood and need to get around on public transportation. Currently many of them rely on an expensive Access Paratransit program that costs \$32 a trip.

During their first meeting in November, Hazen suggested the piloted effort could become integrated into Metro’s overall effort to assist disabled individuals who use public transit.

At that meeting, Mike Turk, Assistant Manager at the OCI, suggested that “This may develop into something that’s an ongoing thing.”

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National Park Service cameras recorded this bobcat east of the I-405. Photo courtesy of National Park Service and California Department of Transportation.

Metro and Caltrans I -405 Sepulveda Pass Widening Project team take precautions to protect wildlife during 405 construction

By Rich Morallo
Community Relations Volunteer Coordinator

(March 16, 2010) At nightfall the stealthy bobcat loped down the mountain trail past Sepulveda Boulevard.

Creeping along the top of the dirt embankment under the 405 Freeway, the cat traveled west wandering on the opposite side of the busy interstate highway that, in the early 1960s, cut through the bobcat's natural roaming lands.

After a few days, the bobcat tired of its journey and backtracked, returning to the relative safety of Sepulveda Ridge with its thick vegetation and tall grass.

Liz Suh, a
California



Department of Transportation associate environmental planner, points to known animal crossing area on map.

Protect and preserve

The bobcat isn't alone.

The Metro and Caltrans I-405 Sepulveda Pass Widening Project team is actively designing plans to ensure the bobcat and hundreds of other animals in the wilderness can roam freely and safely in their natural wild lands of the Santa Monica Mountains.

"Taking care of our natural resources - the animals, trees and the natural wild lands - is part of our stewardship," said Liz Suh, a California Department of Transportation associate environmental planner.

Suh is part of the project team managing the construction of the northbound High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane on the segment of the San Diego Freeway (I-405) that runs between the Santa Monica Freeway (I-10) and the Ventura Freeway (U.S. 101).

Over the course of the next four years, the project will remove and replace three major bridges and widen 13 others spanning over several LA City streets, and reconstruct 25 freeway access ramps at a cost of \$1.034 billion.

"We're working closely with the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, the National Park Service, the Getty Center and other organizations to help keep the animals safe and unrestricted in their travels," said Kristin Fusello, another Caltrans associate environmental planner.

"We're being proactive in our efforts to maintain the native wildlife habitat of our region," said Fusello.



National Park Service cameras recorded this grey fox west of the I-405. Photo courtesy of National Park Service and California Department of Transportation..

"We are planning an eight-foot high culvert for the bobcat and the coyotes, raccoons, possums and other animals crossing near the Getty (Museum) View Trailhead," said Suh, adding that a projected on-ramp will be built over the wildlife pathway there.

The freeway widening project is still in the design phase and has provisions to ensure animals can reach their natural habitats on either side of the new on-ramp, she said.

Over the bridge and to the woods...

Near the Getty View Trailhead – located at the mid-point of the 10-mile freeway segment being widened – crews will alter the steep slope of the Sepulveda Boulevard Undercrossing and modify a fence near the freeway to make crossing easier for the area's wildlife.

Other fences near access ramps may be modified in the future to guide the wildlife toward the culvert tunnel under the new ramp, according to Suh.

Work is also underway to minimize the impact of the construction work at two other locations where animals cross - Skirball Bridge and Bel Air Crest.

Animals now scurry along the far side of the concrete Skirball Center Drive Bridge, which they share with both cars and pedestrians, a couple of miles north of Getty View Trailhead.

A perimeter fence is planned that will funnel the wildlife to the new overpass along a 10-foot wide travel path on the south side of the structure.

In addition, a three-foot high concrete wall on the east side will direct the animals to the bridge to keep them from having to cross busy Skirball Center Drive. More fencing will direct them both to and from the Sepulveda Trail area.

South of the Skirball Bridge at the Bel Air Crest Undercrossing, animals scurry behind the huge freeway pillars.

Fencing will be positioned to facilitate animal movement and crews will maintain the slope, in addition to preserving the crossing zones, while plans are also in the works to create "stepping stone" areas where animals can pause and watch the cars go by as they ponder their route across the busy I-405.

"Our plans include planting native vegetation such as trees, shrubs and ground cover in some places along the freeway, that would allow cover for the animals as they journey toward their destination," said Suh.

Both Metro and Caltrans, she said, "want the animals to travel freely and safely around the freeway and we are making plans to comply with all of the environmental requirements and monitor these animal crossings during and after construction."

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511 team members Anne Karna, Ken Coleman and Mauro Arteaga are asking Metro employees to try 511 and provide feedback.

Employees invited to test drive 511

- **Check it out.** Online: [go511.com](#). By phone: **Call 511.**
- **Suggestions?** Bugs? Love it? Hate it? Tell us by sending the [feedback form](#) on the [Go511.com](#) website or just say 'feedback' on the phone
- **More:** Get the [FAQs](#)!

(March 18, 2010) In advance of the public launch of 511 – the on-demand phone and web service that provides real-time transportation information for the five-county region of Southern California – Metro employees are asked to take Go511.com on the road for one last test drive.

"We're asking Metro employees to call 511 or visit Go511.com to try

511 is coming! Advertising campaign to get commuter's ready for Go511.com includes web videos, web advertising, print ads and billboards, says campaign manager Robin

out the system and leave feedback," says Communications

O'Hara, senior communications officer in marketing.

Manager Anne Karna. "All the comments received will help us improve

511."

"We are looking for feedback on usability," said Project Manager Mauro Arteaga. "We are working closely with the contractor to iron out bugs before the program goes live."

Now in its third phase of beta testing, the response has been extremely helpful, said Arteaga. Feedback ranges from "great!" and "thank you!" to technical issues, such as questioning trip planner routes or a suggestion for a live person on the other end of the line.

"511 is a one-stop information shop for everything you need to know for a better commute, said Karna. "You can call 511 on your cell phone or visit the web site and get real-time, on-demand information on traffic, transit, and commuter services. 511 will either give you the info or transfer you to someone who will help."

(I took Anne's word for it but called 511 as soon as I was out of earshot. I asked for bicycle information for Glendale in the 'commuter services' mode and 511 offered to transfer me to the LA County Bicycle. After two bars of music, a real person named Sal answered the phone and asked my starting location. I broke down and admitted I was a fake caller. But still, Sal was willing to tell me what he would have said: "I would ask your destination then give you the best route," he said with a smile (I can tell!) I asked, quite seriously, "What if there's construction somewhere or an accident ahead?" No worries. Sal would give me a detour.)

511 is nothing like your father's traffic report. Three characteristics make it totally unique and thoroughly modern, said program manager Ken Coleman.

- It's on-demand: You don't have sit through a litany of



Dave Sotero of Media Relations tests the system on the web at go511.com and on his desk phone. It works both ways on his iPhone, below. Go to go511.com or dial 511 on a phone, any phone. (Reminder: Hands-free laws and cell phone charges apply)



Sneak Preview:

Two scenarios prove promising:

- 1.** You're about to depart for somewhere. Should you take the bus, rail, carpool or, worse, drive? So many traffic jams and not enough time? Now, you can hedge your congestion bets with a new tell-all traffic info service called 511. Just turn on your computer and go.
- 2.** Or, say you've already gone but something has clogged the freeway you're sitting on. Should you get off and find another route or go back home? Well, get in phone-safe mode (your hands-free device is handy or you pull over to the side of the road) and dial 511.

The first time you're allowed to wonder – will this be like talking to my bank's automated system? Will I have to text my question and punch in code numbers or wait to select from a long narrative list? No, no, and no. After the

freeways on the radio to get to your trouble spot.

- It's real-time: Meaning, up to the minute, now.
- It's voice-activated. Get on the phone and answer the questions to get to the point of your call.

nice cyber-voice welcomes you to GO511.com (beta), she'll ask if you want help with "transit, traffic or commuter services."

From then on, you just answer the questions. And you can get to the point fairly quickly. Stuck on a freeway? Say 'traffic' to get in the traffic mode, then the voice will ask you to name the freeway or 'traffic hot spot'. After the two of you pin it down, you'll get a traffic report on the situation you're in. Nice.

"From the traffic management perspective, 511 gives the user a sense of where the congestion is occurring and then provides the opportunity to get information on alternate routes, and alternate modes of transportation, said Coleman, who lives in Whittier and frequently checks in on freeway travel times when he has to drive to work at Metro Headquarters.

511 traveler information services are provided by the Los Angeles County Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (LA SAFE), in partnership with the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, (Metro), Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA), the Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC), the California Highway Patrol (CHP) and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans).

Look familiar? The database is fed by RIITS, Caltrans, LADOT and the California Highway Patrol. And, the user-friendly program calls on metro.net's trip planner to provide transit information online and on the phone, making the trip planner the first-ever voice activated service available by phone.

LA SAFE is the contractor of this service, and, as such, the owner/operator/manager of go511.com on behalf of the tri-counties, said Coleman. "There is so much traffic in Los Angeles, including through-traffic from adjoining counties, that it's impossible to confine 511 service to Los Angeles County. It's got to be regional."

A topic of discussion making the rounds at agencies throughout the region since 2006, 511 found a home at Metro in 2008, when the Board awarded the contract to LA SAFE and stepped into provide leadership to reach the US DOT goal of a national program that ties in all travel information, including air, by September 2010.

With active programs in San Francisco and San Diego, the launch of Go511.com puts California among the 40 states that operate 511 programs.

At a time when traffic has reached its critical mass, bursting out of its roadmap confines, tearing travel time into shreds and mopping the freeways with remnants of leisure time and lost horizons, 511 is shining information on this huge, regional issue. By providing options, real-time information puts control back in the driver's seat.

In the long run, says Coleman, 511 will have an impact on traffic. "There will be change, the kind of change that comes with awareness. If we can get people out of their car into carpools and transit options by providing reliable, specific information that proves trustworthy and accurate, we're better able to entice someone to leave their car at home.

What's next?

- **Next Trip:** Currently, 511 recites the schedule for Metro buses but when is the bus is *really* coming? Next trip tells all.
- **Road works:** actual and planned road closures, for real.
- **511 en espanol:** In about one year from launch, the Spanish language interactive voice recognition system (IVR) will debut.

Currently, the beta testers are pumping out an average of 450 calls a day. "The recent storms sent the daily charts spiking to 1,000," said Arteaga.

But will the system hold up when the program goes live? Yes, says Coleman. "The 511 system is sized for a large metropolitan region like L.A. and it's scalable to drop in and out of ports in emergency mode." The program can handle 300 concurrent callers before a back-up system can pick up another 250 users all at the same time.

-- from Gayle Anderson



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[Check it out:](#) Forty-one plus Metro Bus Lines are detoured, at different times during race day.

Metro Laces Up Its Running Shoes

- **BOC Preps Bus Routes to Wind Around New Course**

By Michael D. White
Staff Writer

(March 18, 2010) This Sunday morning, the starting gun will sound and the annual Los Angeles Marathon will begin, again.

Boasting a record 25,000 runners from around the world, the point-to-point race route traverses the grueling 26.2-mile route from Dodger Stadium to the Santa Monica Pier, winding its way through four cities – Los Angeles, Santa Monica, Beverly Hills and West Hollywood.

The marathon is considered one of the top running events in the country and entails months of coordination on the part of event organizers who handle everything from organizing emergency medical services, to stockpiling the water bottles given to participants.

“It’s quite a challenge,” says Metro Assistant Operations Control Manager Stephen Rank. “Several months out, the Marathon



Steve Rank, asst. Operations control manager, is mapping out the bus scheduling plan for the annual Los Angeles Marathon, Metro’s largest planned service disruption.

organizers get together with us [Metro] and all of the other agencies and entities involved to start mapping out the overall plan."

According to Rank, who's coordinates Metro's efforts, the yearly event is the largest "planned service disruption" the agency experiences every year, but this year's "Stadium to the Sea" race is particularly challenging because of a new route that requires Metro to temporarily reroute more than 45 bus lines in nine Metro divisions.

"There's a template of sorts that we ordinarily work with for the event, but the new race route required us to work with a larger number of government agencies than we have in the past," he said.

"Each of the four cities impacted by the race has its own police, fire and transportation departments and, this year, the federal government also played a role because part of the race is being run on U.S. Government-owned property, namely the Veterans Administration complex in West Los Angeles."

Tasks and Targets

Taking his cues from a "Task and Target Date" sheet, Rank keeps tabs on the progress of every job that needs to be accomplished to achieve the goal of accommodating the Marathon's organizers and, at the same time, maintain an acceptable level of service for Metro riders who rely on the agency to provide them with timely service.

"We have target dates for getting the appropriate information to our Transit Operations Supervisors well in advance of the event," said Rank, adding that regular service on some Metro bus routes will be restored as the race progresses.

Full service on all the affected lines, however, isn't expected to resume until an hour or so after the last runners complete the course.

That "appropriate information" involves coordinating the multi-dimensional work of several Metro departments and includes, among a myriad of tasks both large and small, producing and distributing revised route maps, determining operator and support personnel assignments, organizing internal and external communications, submitting car pool vouchers, designating street closures and turn-around streets, positioning tow trucks, getting the word out to the public through the Metro website, posters, flyers, and making sure there's a sufficient supply of radios and charged batteries.

"There's a lot of work involved, but everyone at Metro who's involved in the Los Angeles Marathon project pitches-in on top of doing their regular work. We don't create a 'team' because we don't have to," said Rank, who's been involved on the annual event for the past nine years.

"It's a challenge, but I have to say I really enjoy working on it."



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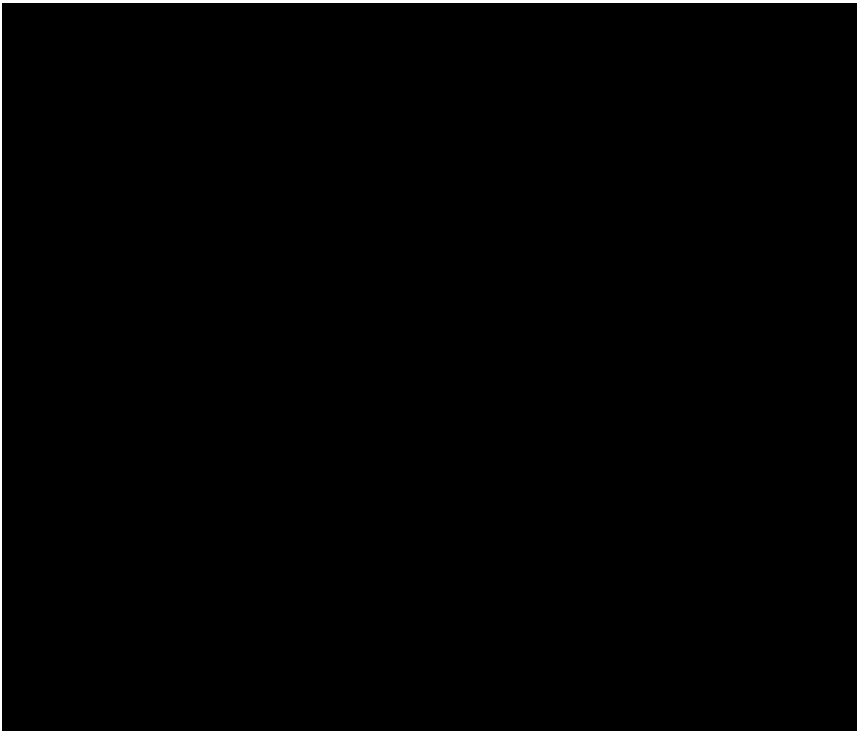
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Division 6 Operator’s Spanish Lessons Pay Off for Metro Bus Patrons

By Rich Morallo
Community Relations / Volunteer Coordinator

(March 18, 2010) "*Bienvenidos, subete*, welcome, step up," Div. 6 Bus Operator Tim Shephard greets the lady boarding his Metro Line 2 bus on Sunset Boulevard.

As other passengers board, Shephard requests that they move to the rear, "*Muevase para atrás*."

Shephard, a 25-year Metro employee who retired from the agency in 2007 and returned last year as a part-timer at Division 6, is comfortable talking with his Spanish-speaking customers.

"I like helping the patrons, answering their questions and giving them directions," said Shephard.

Adept at conversational Spanish, Shephard always keeps a pocket translator and English-Spanish dictionary on hand for the times when he needs a certain word.

Twenty-three years ago an elderly lady boarded Shephard's bus.

"She was Latino and I didn't know Spanish but she wanted to know where the bus was going," he recalled.

Enlisting the help of another passenger, Shephard managed to answer the lady's question, but promised himself to start studying the language.

Over the years, by constantly practicing and talking in Spanish, Shephard picked up the language.

"I would ask people in grocery stores and restaurant where there were from and start talking Spanish with them," he said.

Shepard has also become more involved with local communities as a member of the Regional Black Chamber of Commerce, which has plans to "do outreach to the Latino neighborhoods on some of our projects."

Learning new languages comes easy to Shephard, who's picked up a working knowledge of both German and Russian during several visits to Europe.

But, his first priority is helping his passengers, especially the elderly, he said, remembering his grandmother, who died in 1974 of a stroke she suffered after running to catch a bus.

"It is so rewarding to know people can understand me when I give them travel information," the bilingual operator said.

"I just need to practice on my accent because my patrons wonder if I'm Puerto Rican or Cuban," said Shephard, who was born and raised right here in Los Angeles.

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The Dodger Stadium Express is funded by a \$300,000 grant from the Mobile Source Air Pollution Reduction Review Committee, here celebrated by, from left, Los Angeles City Councilman Eric Garcetti, Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, Dodger Owner and Chairman Frank McCourt, Los Angeles County Supervisor Mike Antonovich, Board Chairman Ara Najarian and Los Angeles City Councilman Ed Reyes. *Photo by Luis Inzunza.*

Newly Launched Dodger Stadium Express Begins Moving Baseball Fans April 1

- Online at metro.net: <http://www.metro.net/around/dodger-stadium-express/>
- [Just in time](#) for Northrop Grumman Family Night at Dodger Stadium

By Laura Kloth
Staff Writer

(March 23, 2010) Hoping to get more baseball fans to ditch their cars when they go to a game, CEO Art Leahy teamed up with Los Angeles County Supervisor and Metro Board Member Michael Antonovich Monday to introduce Metro's Dodger Stadium Express, a convenient new bus service that will provide a link from Union Station to the stadium.

A beaming Antonovich said he hoped the pilot program would become permanent, and noted that he spent about a decade trying to get service funded. Antonovich said he was elated to learn it would be paid for with a \$300,000 grant from the Mobile Source Air Pollution Reduction Review Committee (MSRC) where he serves as a member.

Antonovich thanked the MSRC saying he hoped the new service would urge baseball fans to "think blue and act green."

Metro Board Chair and Glendale Mayor Ara Najarian, who officiated the event, said, "This is a great service and we hope fans from all over the region will take advantage of this link from Union Station to Dodger Stadium to enjoy the ride and the game."



Dodger fan CEO Art Leahy meets up with former Dodger Ron Cey for a tour of the Dodger Stadium Express bus on display at the press event. Cey played for the Dodgers from 1971 to 1982.

Photo by Luis Inzunza.

Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa said providing public transportation to the stadium would help clean the air and alleviate the gridlock around the stadium on game days. "We're going to have to get out of that automobile once in a while and why not do it going to a ball game?" the mayor said. He applauded Metro's on-going "greening" efforts noting that the agency now has the largest clean air bus fleet in the world.

Beginning with pre-season games April 1, baseball fans will be able to use their Dodgers game ticket to ride the Dodger Stadium Express to and from Union Station. The service leaves Union Station every 10 minutes, starting 90 minutes before game time for all home games.

Leahy said he planned to use the new service on Opening Day April 13, encouraging fans to perform their own "double play" by using public transit to get to Union Station, and, then, the new Dodger Express service to get to the stadium.

Dodger Owner and Chairman Frank McCourt thanked everyone involved calling it a "great first step" toward creating alternatives to gridlock, and he pledged his ongoing support, specifically in helping Metro market the service to create "robust public transit." Others who spoke and applauded the service included LA City Council President Eric Garcetti and Councilman Ed Reyes.

**Annual Northrop Grumman
Family Night at Dodger Stadium**

*Saturday
May 1, 2010 at 7:05 p.m.*

Please check the Dodger schedule for last minute change in the time of the game.

Right Field Pavilion "All You Can Eat"

\$25.00
(regularly \$35)

Special "All You Can Eat" price in the Right Field Pavilion: \$25.00 includes Hot Dogs, Peanuts, Popcorn, and Soda. (Beer, Ice cream and parking NOT included.)

Tickets can be purchased at Northrop Grumman Federal Credit Union at Gateway or use the form on the back to request your tickets by mail. All tickets will be sold on a first come, first sold basis and there are NO REFUNDS on any pre-sold tickets.

Click [here](#) or on image for mail-in ticket form (PDF)

The announcement will also be welcome news to credit union members who plan to attend Northrop Grumman Family Night at Dodger Stadium on May 1 at 7:10 p.m.

The discounted \$25 "All You Can Eat" tickets will pay for a seat in the right field pavilion and include an endless supply of hot dogs, peanuts, pop corn and soda.

Tickets for Northrop Grumman Family Night at Dodger Stadium can be purchased at the credit union offices at Gateway headquarters, or by mail using the [form on the back of the Dodger Night flyer](#).

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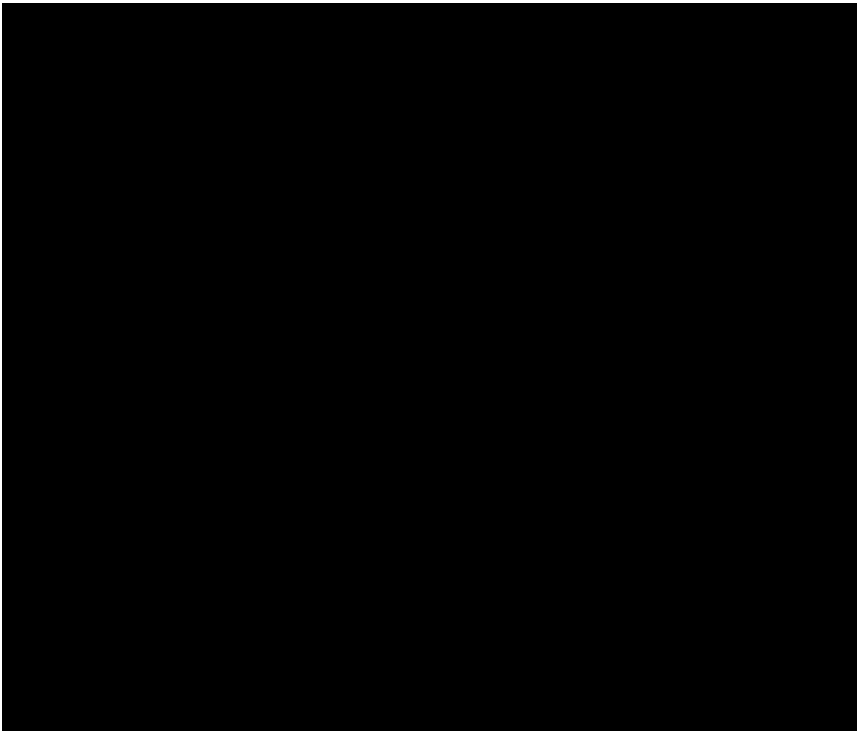
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Metro Family Members Join Agency’s Own Legacy Runner at LA Marathon

By Rich Morallo
Community Relations / Volunteer Coordinator

(March 23, 2010) In the Sunday morning darkness at Dodger Stadium Parking Lot G, a pumped-up Pablos Rios limbers up, dancing and swaying his arms. It’s 5:15 a.m., a little more than two hours before the start of the 26.2 mile Los Angeles Marathon.

“This is my first LA Marathon. I’m excited and a little nervous. This is a new challenge for me -- one of my goals,” says Rios, 29, son of Metro Red Line General Clerk Rosa Rios. The younger Rios works as a special education teacher at the L.A. Academy. “Four and a half hours is my goal to finish the marathon,” he says.

Rios spent four months of rigorous training to prepare for this momentous event, and now he heads for the starting line accompanied by a fellow teacher, a parent and two students. There, he will meld into a vast horde of 25,000 other runners gathered from all over the world to participate in Southern California version of the ultimate foot race.

“My goal is 6 ½ hours,” says Everett Wilson, “I’m having some feet

problems and this will be one of my hardest races."

Wilson, 63, is a Metro Assistant Auditor and has participated in all prior 24 Los Angeles Marathons – a feat making him one of the event's 233 Legacy Runners. "Today will be my 80th...I've been a marathon runner since 1986."

Wilson slept all day Saturday and started Sunday with an early morning breakfast of cereal and soy milk. "I'll be running marathons as long as I can," he says.

For Metro Division 2 Bus Operator Stephen Drury, the "big race" was his sixth LA Marathon. "I run for fun and fitness," he says, relying on the lessons learned in plenty of cross country conditioning and a reliance on his experience as a hiker and mountain climber.

Running was a cherished hobby for Div. 18 Bus Operator Division Vanessa Maldonado. "I loved to run but never had a chance to run marathons," she said. "I didn't have my family's support, but today I'm here for my daughter Excarlet, who is running the marathon."

Maldonado's 15-year old daughter participates in the race as a member of Students Run L.A., a community group that encourages LAUSD middle and high school students to cultivate positive habits.

Excarlet first gave up junk food and soda and started training in September running twice a week in a circuit around USC, the LA Coliseum and the Staples Center. "I want to accomplish something," says the ninth grader.

"Any parent who can feel this moment the way I feel...it's something beautiful," her mother says. "My daughter has accomplished my dream."

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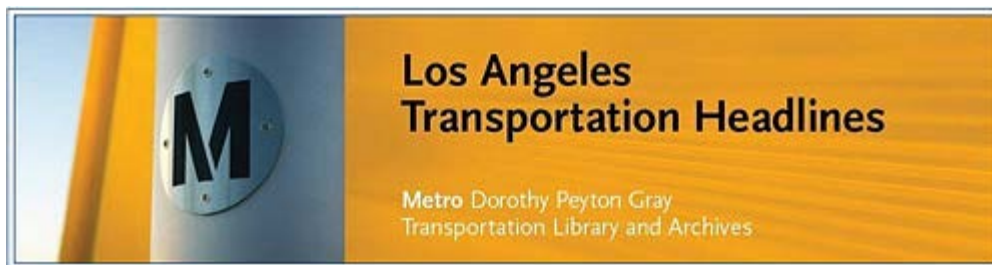
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The news as it pertains to Metro is delivered fresh daily at

<http://losangelestransportation.blogspot.com>



- Metro's Dorothy Peyton Gray Transportation Library and Archive began using social media tools in 2005, setting an example for other local government and public agency sites to follow in improving access at low cost. Now its far-reaching Transportation Headlines informs an important regional and national audience, racking up 1,500 daily posts on its Transportation Headlines blog, 1,200 subscribers to its daily email and has more than 1,000 followers on Twitter.



Metro Library
Administrator
Matt Barrett and
Digital
Resources
Librarian Kenn
Bicknell blog,
tweet and link
transportation
headlines on the
world wide web.

Check it out at the Metro Library. It's only a click away.

- Visit the blog anytime to receive the current day's items, as well as any from the past:
<http://losangelestransportation.blogspot.com>
- You can also receive the Transportation Headlines via email subscription every morning:
<http://headlines.metroprimaryresources.info>
- Facebook: Link takes you straight there, without signing in!
<http://www.facebook.com/LACMTALibrary?v=wall>
- [The Source](#) on the homepage of metro.net features the Transportation Headlines' links daily and provides commentary on some of the most intriguing ones.

By Kenn Bicknell
Digital Resources Librarian

(March 25, 2010) Long before public agencies and government offices even discovered interactive websites, Metro Library Administrator Matt Barrett was experimenting with social media in an effort to increase awareness of transportation issues and the library's assets.

The Dorothy Peyton Gray Transportation Library and Archive was among the very first in our field to develop a blog to communicate vital information to staff and the public.

The goal was to pull together news about transit and transportation in Los Angeles all in one place, as well as national and international stories relating to issues in Southern California in order to facilitate cost effective dialogue about the region's mobility agenda on a broad scale. Following its creation in 2005, it was presented at the January 2006 Transportation Research Board's annual meeting in Washington DC to a packed house. At the time, it was a challenge to find examples of blogging about transportation.

As local bloggers took note and began using the Transportation Headlines as source material for their own publications, the Transportation Headlines blog not only succeeded in communicating news to its readers, but played a vital role in fostering discussion in many information channels both near and far. As a result, we have seen our news items repurposed for numerous local and national audiences.

Subscribers include a diverse array of transportation enthusiasts and advocates, as well as members of the Los Angeles' Mayor's office, City Council, County Board of Supervisors, state and local officials, our municipal operator partners and transportation lobbyists in Sacramento and Washington.

Assembled from a variety of sources, news headlines are aggregated with more than 200 keyword alerts from newspapers, magazines, scholarly journals, press releases, public policy institutes, local and national blogs. These publications cover many transportation-related subjects including sustainability, urban studies, architecture, public finance, engineering, and geography.

The library aims to provide timely information in a number of ways that our users would want to receive information. They can access the blog directly on the web, subscribe to receive headlines via emails, or receive the RSS feed

Hey there!
MetroLibrary is
using Twitter.



<http://twitter.com/metrolibrary>

The Library began tweeting in November 2007, to reach an untapped audience through their smart phones or daily computer use.

"We have used our Twitter account to make timely announcements about the Library and to link to high-profile news stories," said Kenn Bicknell, Digital Resources Librarian.

Followers on Twitter have climbed well past 1,000 subscribers and includes numerous transit fans, local, state and federal elected officials (including U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood), other transportation agencies and many Transportation Headlines subscribers.

Twitter embodies some of the most powerful characteristics of social media. It relies on immediacy, a highly-valued characteristic in our instant-gratification way of life. It involves personalization by pushing information directly to those who want it, and allowing them to access it as they prefer.

And it's viral, meaning that information can be immediately passed on to others by "retweeting" the Library's posts or broadcasting the news items within our tweets to ever wider audiences.

Like the Transportation Headlines, the Twitter feed is channeled into the Library's Facebook page in order to reach broader readership.

[Check it out!](#)

from a daily email digest.

Performance statistics show that the blog page has been accessed over 260,000 times since its inception, with readers consuming more than 1,500 daily blog posts containing links to more than 30,000 news articles. The current subscriber list results in over 300,000 headlines emails sent annually.

Assembling the Transportation Headlines involves many steps and several online tools. Content aggregators collect stories from keyword alert lists. Library staff sifts through news alerts as well as reliable sources for the best information on each topic making news in order to provide the most complete information available.

The most important or interesting stories are assembled in blog software as well as email management software. Additionally, blog posts feed directly into the Library's Facebook page to reach others who are interested in transit and transportation issues.

The Library has also benefited from The Headlines serving as a vehicle for highlighting and promoting valuable transportation research publications and databases which may not be well-known.

Metro staff members who have moved on with their careers continue to subscribe to the Transportation Headlines, and many current colleagues provide feedback and make suggestions.



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Locksmith Rod Oden launched his Southwest Entertainment Theatre Group (SET) to entertain and generate discussions about today's important issues. *Photos courtesy of Tom Mendoza*

Metro Locksmith Opens “Hot Topics” Theater in Santa Clarita

- Online at [setheatre.com](#): [Southwest Entertainment Theatre Group](#)

By Laura Kloth
Staff Writer

(March 25, 2010) Wayside Locksmith Rod Oden is diligent about testing the locks he installs to keep Metro’s doors secure and its people and property safe.

In fact, days before the Gold Line East Side Extension opened in November, Oden and the rest of the Metro Key Shop were busy “switching out” scores of locks to make them accessible to Metro employees.

“Switching out” locks, he explained, is standard procedure when a project is completed by a contractor and officially turned over to Metro.

Earlier this month, Oden secured his locksmith tools gear and launched the Southwest Entertainment Theatre (SET) Group, a “black box” theatre venue he created to showcase “relevant, powerful and entertaining productions that start and continue discussions about social and political themes.”



Oden and Managing Director Jon Ross put their construction skills to work on the 800 square-foot facility before this month's opening.

A former theatre technical director, Oden, who completed courses in theatre arts from Ferris State University in Michigan, said he wanted to construct a venue to provide relevant stage works for younger audiences who have grown tired of a never-ending stream of plays like *Annie*.

"People ask me, 'Why aren't you doing Neil Simon? Why aren't you doing comedy?' And the reality is that those are shared entertainment plays. You'll laugh while you're there, and then you're done," he said. "The plays I do, you'll walk away learning something about yourself, and about what you've watched, and that stays with you for a while."

Shockingly good reviews

Currently, two single-act plays produced by the SET Group have been met with "shockingly good" reviews from area critics, said Oden.

The first – *Sister Mary Ignatius Explains it All* – is an absurdly humorous play about a dogmatic nun who gives the audience her own somewhat skewed perspectives on life and all things spiritual and is taken-aback when some of her former students show up to confront her.



Oden says audiences are sometimes brought to tears when they watch

Japhy Frolick (Thomas) and Janice Crow-Christensen in the twisted comedy
Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All For You.

The second – the *Actor's Nightmare* – zeroes-in on the challenges faced by a man who unwittingly wanders onto a theatre stage only to be immediately shanghaied by the cast and crew to act out scenes he knows nothing about.

"He doesn't know what play it is, and doesn't know any of his lines," said Oden.

"We're doing well playing to full houses and everyone is interested," Oden said noting that performances end March 27 and that a new season with a new playbill will open in June.

With no expectations of becoming a wealthy superstar, Oden said the payoff is "providing a venue for original or unique works that focus on important issues" at extremely reasonable rates. He also makes the space available to rent for student groups or others who want to rehearse in a "real setting."

"When I was young, I always asked myself I wish there was a place that I can go and practice all these things but I couldn't," he said noting that they would have full access to the theatre's lighting and support equipment.

"My 3 year goal," said Oden, who lives with his wife Mimi and their two daughters in Santa Clarita, "is to have a strong thriving theater that benefits not only the players but also benefits the community and the audience at large."

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Division 10
Bus Operator
José Aguirre
gets to the
Metro Store
to purchase
tickets to
Metro Family
Day April 17.
Administrative
Intern
Gabriela
Ortega makes
the sale.

Metro Family Day Ticket Limit Increased

- Get More Than 5 Tickets For April 17 Six Flags Magic Mountain Event

(March 30, 2010) Starting Wednesday, March 31, employees can purchase more than 5 tickets for additional friends and family members to participate in Metro Family Day on Saturday, April 17.

Tickets are \$18 for adults and children and include park admission, lunch, entertainment, a keepsake photo, valuable coupons for use inside the park and a Hurricane Harbor ticket valid for use in September 2010.

Tickets are available for sale at the Metro Store in the Gateway Bldg. through April 14 or until sold out, and an employee badge is required for purchase. No tickets will be sold on the day of the event.

The park will be open from 10:30 a.m. – 10 p.m. *(subject to change)*

Lunch will be served in the Picnic Area, which is open from 11:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Fun for all ages

Bugs Bunny World offers big fun for the little ones, with a number of *Looney Tunes*-themed rides for kids and parents. Or, more fitting to children of a Metro employee, visit *Thomas Town* and take a ride on *Thomas the Tank Engine* – a cheeky, fussy, true-blue engine who proudly wears the No.1 on his side (similar to Metro trains and buses!) and makes tracks to great destinations on the Island of Sodor.

All in all -- little ones will have 25 rides to choose from at Six Flags Magic

Mountain.

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Metro Basketball League News

- Schedule of Upcoming Games: [PDF](#)

(March 30, 2010) Metro's RRC met underdog Orange Crush last week, hoping for a repeat of its March 7 season opener victory when it popped the top on the Orange Crush with a 40 - 34 victory.

But revenge proved to be as sweet as its team namesake with the Orange Crush inflicting a surprise 42 - 33 drubbing to the No. 2-ranked RRC squad.

The RRC squad led by 2 points with 9 minutes left in the game, but the Orange Crush crew refused to fold, finally putting the game in the cooler with a strong scoring effort from Jayvonte Jackson (Div. 18), who led the OC pack with 12 points in the paint. (Div. 01) Curtis Shelby's 9 points and 7 points each from both Chris Roberson (Div. 2) and Myron Robinson (Div. 2) clinched the win.

The RRC was led by the steady hustle of Henry Largaespada (Rev. Coll.), who sank 13 points and Sal Buenrostro (Rev. Coll.) pounding the boards with a game high 8 rebounds.

In last week's other Metro round ball match-up, the Black Magic pounded cellar-dweller Gateway 45 - 32, while the league-leading Div. 3207 five had the week off. No games are scheduled for April 4



TOS Richard Wright, West Hollywood Division Instructor, Transportation, is the Metro Basketball League Commissioner.



League Standings as of 3/29

| | |
|--------------|-----|
| Div 3207 | 3-0 |
| RRC | 2-2 |
| Orange Crush | 2-2 |
| Black Magic | 1-2 |
| Gateway | 0-3 |



TEAM: Div. 3207



TEAM: RRC

due to the Easter holiday.

The next pair of match-ups is scheduled for April 11 when Div. 3207 will meet the Black Magic and the Orange Crush shares the court at the Hawthorne High School gym at 5 p.m. with Gateway.

-- from Richard Wright

Richard Wright
Director/Commissioner
(323) 449-3604 – cell
(310) 854-3142 – work
Email: rwmentor@att.net /
wright@metro.net



TEAM: Orange Crush



TEAM: Gateway