

Metro Report Archives

June 2002 Articles

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San Gabriel Valley, San Fernando Valley Sectors Set to Roll July 1 (June 28, 2002) The MTA is ready to implement new community-based transit sectors in both the San Gabriel Valley and the San Fernando Valley beginning July 1.

MTA's Hollywood Bowl Shuttle Back for Third Season Encore (June 28, 2002) Metro Bus Line 163 Special provides non-stop service to the Hollywood Bowl from the Metro Red Line Hollywood/Vine station throughout the venue's summer season.

LA City Councilman Hal Bernson Elected MTA Board Chairman (June 27, 2002) Los Angeles City Councilman Hal Bernson will become the new MTA Board chairman beginning July 1, 2002. He succeeds outgoing Chairman John Fasana, who has held the position since July 2001.

Board OKs Motions on Station Developments, Safety Device (June 27, 2002) The MTA Board approved motions, today, giving CEO Roger Snoble authority to negotiate exclusively with two firms that have proposed developments at Metro Rail stations. The motions require the projects to be built as currently proposed.

Eastside Light Rail Project Reaches Milestone With FTA Action (June 27, 2002) The MTA's Eastside Light Rail Project reached another milestone, last week, when the Federal Transit Administration signed a Record of Decision (ROD).

MTA Bus Rodeo 2002: Fun, Exciting and Rewarding Competition (June 25, 2002) The competition was tough, but the competitors were tougher. Bus operators and mechanics gave it their all, last Saturday, under a blistering sun and the watchful eyes of the judges at the MTA's 27th Annual Bus Rodeo.

Board to Consider Developments at Hollywood/Vine and Wilshire/Vermont Stations (June 21, 2002) Proposed commercial developments at the Hollywood/Vine and Wilshire/Vermont Metro Rail stations could take a significant step forward this month.

"Oh, My Gosh..." Was Huell Howser Surprised, or What! (June 21, 2002) TV personality Huell Howser certainly got more than he bargained for, Tuesday, when he videotaped a segment at the Metro Blue Line's Artesia station for his popular "California Gold" TV show.

GM Rich Rogers Started His Transit Career as a Teenaged Bus Washer (June 20, 2002) The summer Rich Rogers was 15 years old, he got a job washing and servicing buses at a company in Orange County. The year was 1975 and – although he didn't realize it –that job was the start of a career in public transit.

101 Freeway Overpass Built with No Lost-Time Injuries to Workers (June 19, 2002) The MTA's new 101 Freeway overpass opened, last week, after two and a half years of construction – with no lost-time injuries.

Not You Again! LAPD Catches Transit Pass Counterfeiter (June 18, 2002) LAPD Transit Group detectives have arrested a transit pass counterfeiter who was up to his old tricks again. The arrest will save thousands of dollars in lost revenue for the MTA.

Metro Blue Line Carries Record Number of Passengers in May (June 18, 2002) The Metro Blue Line set a record in May by carrying more than 70,000 boarding passengers on an average weekday.

'Dangerzone Deflector' Can Save Lives in Bus vs. Pedestrian Accidents (June 13, 2002) Every year, people across the country are injured – sometimes fatally – by falling under the rear wheels of transit buses.

New Poet Laureate's Work Was Featured on Metro Buses (June 13, 2002) Quincy Troupe, a poet whose work was recognized earlier this year as part of the MTA's Poetry in Motion series, has been named California's poet laureate.

Metro Rail Operators Win at International Rail Rodeo (June 11, 2002) For the first time since it began Metro Rail service almost 12 years ago, an MTA team has won the American Public Transit Association's International Rail Rodeo operator's competition.

[New overpass on Ventura Freeway is thru-way](#) to Metro Rail Station, Ventura Boulevard and Universal City attractions. (June 11, 2002) A Metro Rapid Bus with officials on board breaks through a celebration banner to signal the opening of a \$34.6 million overpass across the 101.

[MTA Opening 101 Freeway Overpass, Monday, at Universal City](#) (June 7, 2002) The MTA will join elected officials, Monday, to officially open a new 101 Freeway overpass adjacent to the Metro Red Line subway station and Metro Rapid Bus stop at Universal City.

[Metro Red Line Station Welcomes Back Missing Artwork](#) (June 7, 2002) Metro Red Line riders getting off or on the train at the Hollywood/Vine station may have the feeling that something was missing for the past few months.

[Employees, Managers Must Share Common Goals for Sectors to Succeed](#) (June 5, 2002) They come from different backgrounds and have had different experiences in their transportation careers, but new sector general managers Jack Gabig and David Armijo agree: frontline employees and managers must communicate better and share common goals if community-based transit is to be successful.

[Three New Metro Rail Directors Get Things Rolling](#) (June 4, 2002) As newly appointed Director of Rail Activation, Melvin Clark stood in his eight-week-old office at Metro Red Line Division 20 among piles of paper and unopened boxes and joked, "I have a favorite saying around here: 'I'm not from Dallas.'" "

[Los Angeles Times Profiles Metro Rapid Supervisor Derick Mahome](#) (June 4, 2002) Was it Transportation Operations Supervisor Derick Mahome's smile, his customer service attitude, his dedication to keeping the Metro Rapid buses rolling that attracted the attention of the LA Times?

[Guide Dog Puppy Rail Training A 'Howling' Success](#) (June 4, 2002) Guide dog puppies in training, part of the Los Angeles Southwest Guide Dog Raisers group, converged on the Transit Mall in Long Beach, last Saturday.

Bulletin Board

- [San Gabriel Valley Sector Employees Move Into New Digs](#) (June 28, 2002) On the heels of their San Fernando Valley counterparts, San Gabriel Valley sector management and staff moved into new digs, Thursday.
- [Graduation Celebration](#) MTA's June grads make the metro.net honor roll.
- [Eyewitness Account](#): I Drove a Bus for the MTA.
- [Annual Bus Rodeo Was a Day for Family Fun, Food and Competition](#) (June 25, 2002). It was the MTA's annual Bus Rodeo – an event that drew perhaps 500 employees, family members and friends.
- [Catoe to Review Employee Injury Reports; Will Demand Followup](#) (June 21, 2002) Beginning July 1, no injury to any employee of Metro Operations will go unnoticed - even at the highest levels of the MTA.
- [San Fernando Valley Service Sector is Ready to Roll](#) (June 21, 2002) Employees moved, last Friday, into a Chatsworth building located just minutes from West Valley Division 8.
- [Arthur Winston](#) to Speak at AAEA's Juneteenth Celebration
[Plus! Juneteenth Celebration](#) at Gateway Division.
- [Operators' Mirror Suggestion](#) Reflects Concern for Safety
- [Modernization Scheduled for MTA Headquarters High-Rise Elevators](#) (June 19, 2002) Beginning in July, elevator mechanics will take high-rise elevators in the MTA Headquarters building out of service, one-by-one, for modernization with new, heavy-duty door operators.

[MTA Bus Roadeo and Car Show This Weekend](#) (June 19, 2002) – All MTA employees and their families are invited to come and enjoy the day and a variety of entertainment this Saturday at the MTA Bus Roadeo and Car Show.

- [MTA's Kindergartners Score at Top of Nationwide Test](#) (June 13, 2002) Six Gateway Child Development Center kindergarten students recently took the Terra Nova, a nationally administered standardized test. Four students placed in the 99th percentile.
- [MTA's Non-Contract Pay for Performance](#) Program Continues
- [MTA to Train 600](#) Managers and Supervisors in Alcohol and Drug Policies
- [Metro Red Line's Roman Alarcon Cherishes Ties with Homeland](#) (June 11, 2002) Although being the assistant transportation manager at Metro Red Line Division 20 can consume a lot of time and energy, Roman Alarcon always finds time to stay in touch with his roots.
- [Metro Community](#): MTA joined in Cypress Park's Cinco de Mayo celebration.
- [With no tax bite, 401\(k\) and 457 Plans are even a better deal](#) (June 6, 2002) If you're socking away money in the MTA's 401(k) and 457 savings plans, you can breathe a little easier. You're not going to get slapped with a big tax bill from the state.
- [Obituary: Services Set for Division 10 TOS Gregory Hooks, MTA Veteran](#) (June 6, 2002) Services have been scheduled for Division 10 Transportation Operations Supervisor Gregory Hooks, 53, who died May 30, after 26 years' service with the MTA and SCRTD.
- [CEO Approves Changes to HR Policies on Recruitment and Selection, Compensation](#) (June 4, 2002) The changes were made following recommendations from consultant Booz Allen, as well as from focus groups held with hiring department heads from across the agency.

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Advance Tickets are on Sale in Metro Café for Farmer's Market and Outdoor Barbecue

- **Season opener is set for Wednesday, July 10, on the Plaza.**

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(June 2, 2002) Employees can purchase tickets in advance to the outdoor barbecue and Farmer's Market cooked up by Metro Café and set to be served on the Plaza on Wednesday, July 10.

Tickets can be purchased at the cafeteria cash register in advance and on the day of the event.

Live music and fresh produce

Barbecue will served in the Plaza and inside Metro Cafe during lunch hours from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Gateway Jam, an R&B/Country Rock band composed of local talent, will rock the Plaza beginning at 11:45 a.m. G & G Produce, a local produce company, will sell fresh fruits and vegetables, and cut flowers.

Five drawings for prizes

Employees can participate in drawings for a number of items donated by Metro Café, its parent company Sodexo and vendors. No purchase is required; entry forms will be available at the event. Prizes include hats, pocket calculators, duffle bags, coolers, t-shirts and more.

Since the the first Farmer's Market and barbecue picnic began the tradition back in June of 2001, employees look forward to soaking up the sun and barbecue sauce during the summer months. Employees have given rave reviews to the Farmer's Market selection of fresh fruits, vegetables and cut flowers.

Cafeteria manager Bruce Ueno said he expects to top the success of previous events with user-friendly improvements, including a more spacious arrangement of food service stations and produce display as well as selling advance tickets to shorten lines.

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That's the
Ticket!



Tickets include BBQ of choice, one side and a beverage:

Hamburger \$4.50

Half chicken \$6

Pork ribs \$6

[Revisit the First Farmer's Market on metro.net \(June 2001\)](#)

LA Times Profiles Metro Rapid Supervisor Derick Mahome

(June 4, 2002) Was it Transportation Operations Supervisor Derick Mahome's smile, his customer service attitude, his dedication to keeping the Metro Rapid buses rolling that attracted the attention of the LA Times?



Derick Mahome

Certainly all three, going by the admiring profile of Mahome on Page 2 of Tuesday's California Section. Written by staff writer Kurt Streeter, the story describes how the 15-year employee greets passengers and helps them board the buses each morning from his location at the corner of Wilshire and Western.



Mahome, who works out of West Hollywood Division 7, says he's just doing his job and he credits his colleagues who work just as hard on other shifts. As he told the Times, "I live for trying to make this thing work."

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TOS Derick Mahome checked tickets and passes, Tuesday morning, as he ushered passengers into the backdoor of a Metro Rapid bus.

PHOTOS: BILL HEARD



Guide dog puppies and trainers gather outside Union Station. Center front in white shirt: Metro Rail Instruction Coordinator Robert Johnson. PHOTO BY ERIC RAPP

Guide Dog Puppy Rail Training A 'Howling' Success

(June 4, 2002) Guide dog puppies in training, part of the Los Angeles Southwest Guide Dog Raisers group, converged on the Transit Mall in Long Beach, last Saturday. The puppies were there to get accustomed to traveling on Metro Rail. After traveling to Union Station using the Metro Blue Line and Metro Red Line, the puppies and their trainers made their way to Olvera Street for fun and puppy socialization.

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CEO Approves Changes to HR Policies on Recruitment and Selection, Compensation

> Direct Links

HR Policies are available on the Intranet at http://intranet1/hr/HTML/Policies/TOC_Policies.htm

(June 4, 2002) CEO Roger Snoble has approved revisions to the MTA's Recruitment and Selection and Compensation policies. The changes were made following recommendations from consultant Booz Allen, as well as from focus groups held with hiring department heads from across the agency.

Click on the links below to go directly to the policies and revisions referred to above.

[HR 3-1 Recruitment and Selection Policy Revision Summary](#)

[HR 3-8 Compensation Policy Revision Summary](#)

These changes empower the hiring departments and give them much more flexibility and control in the hiring process.

Key revisions to HR #3-1 Recruitment and Selection Policy include:

- The minimum time required to post bulletins was reduced to expedite the process,
- The requirement to fill *acting* assignments from a Qualified Candidate Profile (QCP) was eliminated to give hiring departments more flexibility, and
- The requirement to interview lateral transfers was changed to give the hiring departments the option to interview laterals or to only interview from the QCP.

The new HR #3-8 Compensation Policy includes the addition of new policies such as: Reclassification, Performance-Based Compensation, Hours of Work (including overtime) for Non-Exempt and Exempt Employees, Record Keeping and Time Claims.

Key revisions to HR #3-8 Compensation Policy include:

- The requirement of an employee meeting the minimum qualifications in an acting assignment was removed to give hiring departments more flexibility;
- The process of signing salary proposals was streamlined;
- Salaries of employees voluntarily demoting to a lower-level classification within 12 months of their promotion will be reviewed instead of automatically reducing the salary by the amount received at the time of promotion; and
- A promotion occurs not only as a result of a successful selection process but also as a result of direct appointment by the CEO.

Implementation of these policy changes is effective July 1, 2002. The revised policies and details of all the changes can be accessed via the Intranet on the HR Department web page. Mandatory management training is tentatively scheduled for the month of June. Invitations for hiring department representatives will be sent out by Human Resources.

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V Rail Services Director Dave Kubicek, at left, will implement programs to improve service and cut costs. Director of Rail Activation Melvin Clark, center, is devising a way to integrate the Pasadena Gold Line into the current train system. Light Rail MOW and Communications Director Rob Chappell, at right, plans on empowering all employees under his direction to achieve his goal of being the No.1 maintenance operation in transit.



Dave Kubicek



Melvin Clark



Rob Chappell

Three New Metro Rail Directors Get Things Rolling

By CHRISTINA ESPARZA

(June 4, 2002) As newly appointed Director of Rail Activation, Melvin Clark stood in his eight-week-old office at Metro Red Line Division 20 among piles of paper and unopened boxes and joked, "I have a favorite saying around here: 'I'm not from Dallas.'"

Perhaps it is his favorite saying because he is the only one of three new rail directors who did not come from Dallas Area Rapid Transit. And although boxes remain unpacked and a fresh batch of paint is still drying on office walls, the three directors are quickly moving things along to make Metro Rail a force to be reckoned with.

"We will be the Number 1 maintenance operation in transit, I think within a year, year-and-a-half," said Rob Chappell, Light Rail Maintenance of Way and Communications director. "We have a lot of work to do, but it's not just myself, it's a team effort. It's everybody on the team."

Chappell worked at the MTA for eight years prior to taking a job at DART in 1999. His new responsibilities include directing all MOW, rail communications, Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA), rail facilities and rail custodial.

"The biggest change I need to do is to start empowering first-level supervisors, start empowering the hourly personnel," Chappell said. "I probably have the best talent pool of hourly staff and supervisor staff of anywhere in the MTA. I plan on empowering at the lowest level as much as I can to make this a team effort, and put our focus back on our customers."

Empowering the staff

Chappell said he plans on empowering his staff by opening up the lines of communications between himself and every single person working in wayside systems. He also is going to start listening and implementing good ideas from his staff.

Change also is on the mind of Dave Kubicek, Director of Rail Services, who is the former Senior Manager at DART and has about 14 years' experience in maintenance and nine years in rail.

"I'm going to start developing different programs to address the cars' needs," he said. "It's our job to make sure that cars are rolling and that we provide a safe and clean car to the public."

Kubicek is planning to implement a formal training program within rail and an engineering support group, which will centralize sector inspectors, mechanics, supervisors and managers so they can share information and gain a better understanding of the train's design and performance.

"You have to understand what's causing the problem and what types of repairs we have to focus in on that will have a long-lasting impact on the fleet, and increase the reliability of the car," Kubicek added. "You can address things short-term to keep cars in revenue service, but by addressing the long-term needs, it increases reliability and reduces the expenses of operating a car."

Communication is key to success

Clark, whose main job, at this point, is integrating the Metro Gold Line with the current rail system, agrees that communication is essential in running a successful rail system.

"One of my biggest goals is to open communications to express the needs of the rail operations group to the rest of the agency," said Clark, who has 21 years' experience in rail and worked as an engineer at a consulting firm that worked on the Metro Blue Line. "They'll know what our needs are and I'll be the point of contact so that there's one voice that speaks for rail."

"The thing I like about the MTA is that there are a lot of challenges here, but the direction from management is to meet those head-on," Clark continued. "We need to work together for a solution that is achievable, cost-effective and safe."

Excited to be back home, Chappell has a promising perspective for the future of rail.

"Now that rail is going to be independent, we have a chance to shine where we maybe not have been able to shine previously," he said. "And we're going to show everybody how we shine."

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For David Armijo, New San Fernando Valley Sector Challenge is Déjà Vu

(June 5, 2002) For David Armijo, prospective San Fernando Valley general manager, the challenge of starting up a service sector from scratch is like – as Yankees catcher Yogi Berra once put it – “déjà vu all over again.”

In 1992, Armijo was hired to develop a transit agency for Santa Fe, N.M., a town that had no bus system. At the beginning, he was the only employee and city officials, who had seen three private companies fail, weren't optimistic that he would succeed. A year and many community meetings later, however, he rolled out a transit services plan.

Now, Armijo is faced with a similar situation, but this time he'll have a team of managers, schedulers and service planners, community relations people, safety specialists and others at his back, along with two Metro Bus divisions staffed by experienced operators, maintenance employees and office personnel.

“This is different and more challenging,” he says. For one thing, it will mean refocusing from a perspective of providing regional transit service to one of providing community-based transit services.

“Our goals are to improve on-time performance, reduce workers' compensation costs and improve rollouts to 100 percent, among others,” Armijo says. With the San Fernando Valley as the focal point of sector efforts, he expects to improve customer service and ridership.

Preparing the sector office

Things will begin happening this month when furniture begins arriving and phones and computers are installed in the new sector office building at Topanga Canyon Boulevard and Marilla Street, about a mile north of West Valley Division 8. Staff will arrive starting mid-month to prepare for the opening of the sector, July 1.

“The first year will be a very challenging one for the staff because so many of the things we'll do will still be tied to Gateway,” says Armijo. “I think it will be a good six months before we'll see a full transition to the sector.”

Along with establishment of the sector office, San Fernando Valley employees can expect other changes.

With the opening of bus rapid transit service between the North Hollywood Metro station and Warner Center in about three years, Division 8 will be upgraded to accommodate some 72 articulated buses. With 158 buses already stationed at the division, the addition of the 60-foot vehicles will bring it to capacity.

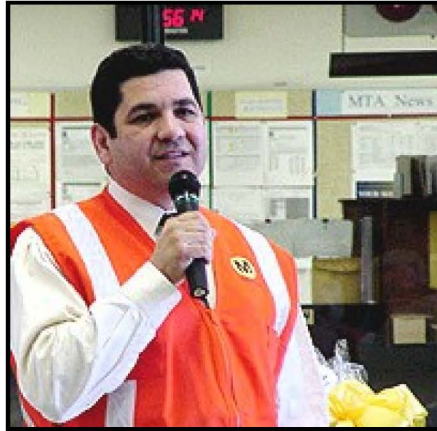
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For the past six years, David Armijo has served as director of operations for the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) where he managed the agency's bus and paratransit services, Metrolink commuter rail services and the Orange County Taxi Administration Program.

During Armijo's tenure at OCTA, bus ridership increased by 40 percent and commuter rail ridership doubled. He oversaw the start-up of a 232-vehicle liquid natural gas (LNG) bus fleet, as well as the design and implementation of a \$14 million computerized radio dispatch communication system with satellite automated vehicle location.

East Valley Division 15, meanwhile, is receiving the final coaches in the current CNG bus order and is winding down operation of diesel buses. The diesels could be replaced within the next three years by 30-foot coaches.



v Armijo leads 'Safety's First' rollout March 14 at East san fernando Valley Division.

May deploy 30-foot buses

"When you look at the edges of our service area where people are trying to make connections with Metrolink," Armijo notes, "we might do better to have 30-foot buses. We found the smaller buses to be very effective in Orange County and less intrusive to the community."

Armijo's concern for linking customers with other transit services meshes with his broader responsibility for overall MTA service planning and scheduling. The group charged with planning "Tier 1" systemwide bus service – Metro Rapid, long-distance bus lines, bus rapid transit – reports to him.

With these demanding tasks ahead, Armijo will be actively looking for ideas and employee participation. He envisions, for example, a route monitoring task force headed by a senior bus operator with other operators as team members. The group would meet regularly with schedulers to plan changes in bus routes and to ensure that schedules are customer-friendly.

Armijo also expects to talk frequently with employees "at tailgate meetings, on the shop floor" and in meetings with operators. "We need to understand each other."

"Employees are going to learn more about the goals and objectives, the core values, the things that are important to the MTA," he says. "Most importantly, what their role is and how they'll affect our mission. We'll all do this together." --*Bill Heard, Editor*

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GMs Gabig and Armijo Agree: Employees, Managers Must Share Common Goals for Sectors to Succeed



Jack Gabig

General Manager Jack Gabig plans to make his presence felt among MTA employees in the San Gabriel Valley. And as sector operations gather steam, he's banking on employees to be "part of the team focused on the needs of the customer." [Entire story](#)

David Armijo

For David Armijo, prospective San Fernando Valley general manager, the challenge of starting up a service sector from scratch is like – as Yankees catcher Yogi Berra once put it – "déjà vu all over again."

[Entire story](#)

PHOTOS: GAYLE ANDERSON

By **BILL HEARD**, Editor

(June 5, 2002) They come from different backgrounds and have had different experiences in their transportation careers, but new sector general managers Jack Gabig and David Armijo agree: frontline employees and managers must communicate better and share common goals if community-based transit is to be successful.

Gabig, named to head the San Gabriel Valley sector, and Armijo, proposed to lead the San Fernando Valley sector, already have begun building their teams in preparation for the July 1 kickoff of the two new sectors.

Management staffers are being hired from among Headquarters personnel with experience in human resources, service planning and scheduling, public affairs, safety, budget and other specialties. They'll work at sector offices in Chatsworth and El Monte.

Working with a consultant, the two GMs also are conducting small group meetings with operating division employees. They're discussing the sector concept and plans, while questioning employees about what the MTA does well – and

what it does poorly.

"The goal is to share ideas, our mission and goals and to get feedback from the employees," says Armijo. "From there, we'll create strategies and tactics for how to address the issues they raise with us."

To date, meetings have been conducted at El Monte Division 9, at the Regional Rebuild Center and at North Los Angeles Division 3. Others are being scheduled at Chatsworth Division 8 and East Valley Division 15, as well as at all other operating divisions.

"This will be an on-going process, not a one-time effort," says Gabig. "The strategic plan is intended to be a collaborative effort involving all 7,000 employees in Operations. We hope to have our strategic plan completed by August to serve as our roadmap for the next several years."

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Gabig Plans to be Visible as Leader of Sector Team Focused on Customers

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(June 5, 2002) General Manager Jack Gabig plans to make his presence felt among MTA employees in the San Gabriel Valley. And as sector operations gather steam, he's banking on employees to be "part of the team focused on the needs of the customer."

"I intend to be very visible at the operating divisions and available to all our employees," he says. "I want to talk about issues that are important to them, where we're going and the progress we're making."

And, it won't just be Gabig who'll be making the rounds. Employees are likely to talk frequently with staff members who are responsible for service planning and scheduling, for safety, maintenance and public affairs, among many others who will be working out of newly renovated offices in the old Office of Central Instruction building in El Monte.

"They'll be in the train rooms and shops, or riding the buses," he says. "They'll solicit ideas and suggestions from operators and maintenance employees and will address their concerns and problems."

Responsible for RRC

Gabig, who also is responsible for the Regional Rebuild Center, wants to improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness and accountability. As a first step, a team from the RRC and the Finance Department will develop an accounting method to charge back to the operating divisions for services provided.

This summer, Gabig and his staff will develop a master plan to upgrade the transportation and maintenance facilities at Division 9 and the El Monte station. They then will take a hard look at Division 3, which he says is "pretty well maxed out" for bus and employee parking.

Another reason to focus on Division 3 is that it will house one of the five regional bus dispatch centers. A portion of the operators' lounge on the second floor of the transportation building will be remodeled for that purpose and equipment will be installed beginning next spring.

To fulfill service demands, Gabig expects to accommodate 50 more buses at Division 9, which already has about 200 coaches. These additional buses will require more shop space, which will have to be built for a maintenance operation that already is stretched to capacity.



Jack Gabig served as general manager of Montebello Bus Lines for the past 12 years, supervising a staff of 200 employees and overseeing a 75-vehicle bus and paratransit service. His prior positions include director of maintenance and director of planning and marketing for Long Beach Transit.

Gabig's major accomplishments at Montebello Bus Lines include the implementation of effective cost controls, a strong maintenance program, and construction of a regional rail station and transit center.



▼ Jack Gabig on site at San Gabriel Valley Division bus yard. PHOTO: JOSÉ UBALDO

Inadequate parts storage

"We don't have enough service bays, we need additional lifts, there's inadequate parts storage and we need to improve the tire shop," he says.

And, because the entire division needs more space, Gabig wants to reclaim a small parcel of land leased to an adjacent car dealership when the lease expires in 2004. He's also looking at other adjacent properties as possibilities for division expansion.

As he describes these plans and discusses goals, Gabig emphasizes that each employee will be part of the sector team, a team whose members will be expected to contribute ideas as well as skills to get the job done.

"Our objective is to provide much more customer-responsive, quality service to our communities," he says. "I hope to get lots of ideas from our employees on how to accomplish that objective." --*Bill Heard, Editor*

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With No Tax Bite, 401(k) and 457 Plans Are Even a Better Deal



Plan ahead

(June 6, 2002) If you're socking away money in the MTA's 401(k) and 457 savings plans, you can breathe a little easier. You're not going to get slapped with a big tax bill from the state.

Until Governor Gray Davis signed new legislation, recently, California's tax laws were out of sync with federal tax regulations offering substantial relief to taxpayers over the next several years. Now, state law mirrors federal law and gives savers a tax break.

"This measure will help Californians prepare for their retirements," Davis said in signing the bills. "It will increase the contributions permissible to their IRAs and 401(k) plans...."

As of Jan. 1, 2002, employees enrolled in the 401(k) or 457 plans were allowed to defer up to \$11,000 annually from salary. The current cap for 401(k) is \$10,500 and \$8,500 for the 457 plan. Employees age 50 and older by Dec. 31, 2002, can defer an additional \$1,000 in each plan.

This year, for the first time, employees also may be enrolled in both plans and may defer the maximum amount in each plan for a total of \$22,000. The age 50 provision also permits employees to defer an extra \$1,000 in each plan for a grand total of \$24,000.

Both the 401(k) and 457 plans also have "catch up" provisions for those who are eligible for retirement within three years. That provision increases the permitted deferral to a total of \$33,000 -- \$22,000 for the 457 plan and \$11,000 for the 401(k) plan. Those eligible for the over 50 provision can add still another \$1,000.

For enrollment or more information about these plans and the permitted deferrals, contact MTA Benefits at 922-7184. Erick Spencer of ICMA also is available to advise employees at 310-253-9798 or at 800-735-7202 (Ext. 5941).

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Services Set for Division 10 TOS Gregory Hooks, MTA Veteran

(June 6, 2002) Services have been scheduled for Division 10 Transportation Operations Supervisor Gregory Hooks, 53, who died May 30, after 26 years' service with the MTA and SCRTD.

Visitation will be held Friday, June 7, from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. at Eternal Valley Memorial Park and Mortuary, 23287 North Sierra Highway, Newhall. A memorial service will follow from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. At the family's request, the funeral service will be private.

Hooks joined the SCRTD in April 1976 and worked as a bus operator for 23 years, retiring in August 1999. He was later rehired as a Transit Division Dispatcher and was promoted to Transit Operations Supervisor.

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Done deal: Move your mouse over aerial photo of completed overpass to compare 1998 computerized artist's rendering. **UPDATE:** June 11, 2002. Aerial photo by John Mazzarella.

MTA Opening 101 Freeway Overpass, Monday, at Universal City



By RICK JAGER

(June 7, 2002) The MTA will join elected officials, Monday, to officially open a new 101 Freeway overpass adjacent to the Metro Red Line subway station and Metro Rapid Bus stop at Universal City.

The six-lane bridge spans the 101 Freeway to link Ventura Boulevard with the Universal City Metro Red Line station via a new access street now known as Campo de Cahuenga Way. The overpass also features a pedestrian walkway and on-and-off-ramps from the 101 freeway.

"Construction of this new overpass...is now complete and will help ease traffic flow in and out of the station, as well as alleviate traffic congestion on surrounding streets," says MTA Board Chairman John Fasana.

Brutoco Engineering and Construction Company built the overpass under contract to the MTA as a cost of \$34.6 million. Construction, which began in December 1999, includes the Universal City Station Bus Plaza, additional parking lots and the widening of Lankershim Boulevard.

Increase in parking spaces

The Universal City station now has a total of 790 parking spaces, an increase of 400 spaces since the Metro Red Line station opened. There is a new parking facility at Lankershim and Ventura boulevards for 75 vehicles, a county park-n-ride lot along Ventura Boulevard with 162 spaces and a new parking lot northeast of the overpass with 163 additional spaces.

Metro Rapid buses also will benefit from the opening of the new overpass. They now will use the overpass from Ventura Boulevard to access the Universal City Bus Station Plaza, reducing travel time by 5 to 10 percent, depending on the time of day. Regular local MTA bus lines 150 and 240 will begin utilizing the overpass, June 30.

“This will greatly enhance operation of the Metro Rapid buses now operating along Ventura Boulevard,” says CEO Roger Snoble. “Both Metro Rapid and regular Metro buses will now be able to access the station via the new overpass in both directions, saving commuters time in their commute across the Valley.”

The bridge was financed with local, state and federal dollars as part of the expansion of the Metro Red Line from Hollywood and Highland to North Hollywood.

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New overpass is thru-way to Metro Rail Station, Ventura Boulevard and Universal City attractions.

PHOTOS BY LUIS INZUNZA



MTA Board Chairman John Fasana, flanked by Los Angeles City Councilman Tom LaBonge, at right, and MTA Board Member County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, leads opening ceremonies for a new freeway overpass across the Ventura Freeway that links the Universal City Metro Red Line Station to Ventura Boulevard. Below, officials break through a celebration banner aboard a Metro Rapid Bus to signal the official opening of the \$34.6 million overpass. Construction that began in 1999 includes the Universal City Station Bus Plaza, additional parking lots and the widening of Lankershim Boulevard.

MORE >

See metro.net story
June 7:
[MTA Opening
101 Freeway Overpass, Monday,
at Universal City](#)



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Metro Red Line Station Welcomes Back Missing Artwork

By CHRISTINA ESPARZA

(June 7, 2002) Metro Red Line riders getting off or on the train at the Hollywood/Vine station may have the feeling that something was missing for the past few months.

From palm tree sculptured columns to the flicker of an antique movie projector, the station has captured everything that makes Hollywood special. But for the past four months, one essential ingredient in the station's LA mixture has been missing — the cars.

Car sculptures that once sat on the benches of the train platform were removed in January to be repaired because of damage from etched and scratched-on graffiti. Tuesday night, however, the cars came back to the station as good as new.

"I was wondering what happened to them," said patron Juan Manuel Criollo, who has been riding the Metro Red Line for the past five months. "They're nice. They look a lot better. It looks kind of flat without them."

Epoch Industries, the company that repaired the cars, used polyester resin to fill in deep cracks and chips, said Ralph Wanlass, an MTA conservation consultant. The cars were then completely sanded down and repainted by an artist named — appropriately — Barbara Grill.

Easier to clean, harder to scratch

The cars also were painted with a graffiti release clear coat, which makes it possible for paint and marker ink to wash off easily. The coat is also thicker, which makes it harder to scratch.

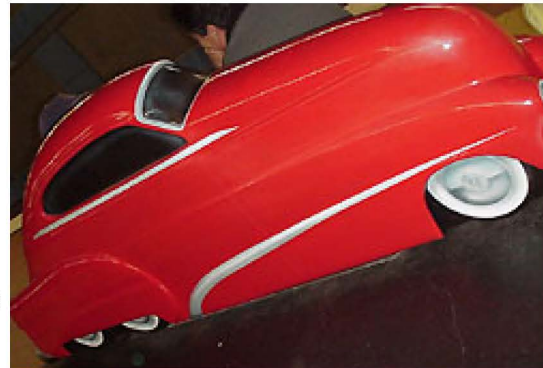
However, vandals can still get the better of the cars.

"There's no such thing as a bullet-proof coating," Wanlass said. "It's harder and thicker, but it can still be damaged."

The benches, which were in place for less than three years,

V Bench artwork was returned to the Hollywood and Vine Metro Red Line Station Tuesday night following about four months of refurbishing.

PHOTOS: CHRISTINA ESPARZA



cost the agency \$14,504.72 to refurbish. And less than three days later, a tagger had already struck.



A vandal scrawled graffiti on a United States Postal Service sticker – called a “slap tag” – then stuck it on one of the cars’ windows.

✓ Graffiti vandals used knives and sharp objects to scratch the cars. It cost the MTA nearly \$15,000 to fix the damage.

Carefully peeling off the sticker, Wanlass commented, “It’s going to take more than that to mess these up.”

EDITOR’S NOTE: Christina Esparza, a Transit Operations Correspondent Intern, graduated this month from Cal State Long Beach with a degree in Journalism. June 7 is her last day with the MTA. She will now begin an internship with the LA Times’ Valley edition.

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Everyone from this Durango town is never far away from home...



Roman Alarcon devotes an extensive website to his hometown of Presidios Tepehuanes in the Mexican State of Durango. Enjoy a virtual fiesta courtesy of Roman Alarcon at www.tierrademispadres.homestead.com/La_Loma.html

Metro Red Line's Roman Alarcon Cherishes Ties with Homeland

By CHRISTINA ESPARZA



Roman Alarcon

(June 11, 2002) Although being the assistant transportation manager at Metro Red Line Division 20 can consume a lot of time and energy, Roman Alarcon always finds time to stay in touch with his roots.

In fact, he set up an Internet web site so others from his hometown of Presidios Tepehuanes in the Mexican State of Durango, can keep in touch, too. That's important because, like the residents of many small towns, the townspeople have scattered to large cities to find education and work.

"I saw that everybody, when we got to the U.S., started to drift apart," Alarcon says, noting that many of the villagers now live in LA, Las Vegas, Chicago, Atlanta and elsewhere in the United States.

"I put the web site together so their sons and their sons' sons can know where they come from," says Alarcon, who left the village at age 12. "This means a lot because I help keep the town together and everybody is informed of the current events of the town."

Presidios Tepehuanes is a rural village that lies in an area of pine forests off a well-traveled road at the foot of the Durango sierra. With a current population of 1,000, the village has retained its natural setting, with dirt roads, apple orchards and corn fields, and a sparkling, blue river.

"It's a free environment," says Alarcon, who visits the village almost every year. "You could walk around and not have to worry about crime. My fondest memories are going horseback riding to the sierra. There were no roads, just forest."

A three-day fiesta

The town also celebrates its patron saint, San Nicolas de Tolentino, every year, with a three-day fiesta. This year, Alarcon is one of three members of the fiesta committee.

Starting Sept. 9, the people of the Presidios Tepehuanes will gather to watch a fireworks display. The next day, they'll celebrate a main mass for their patron saint, followed by a luncheon.

A dance kicks off the night's festivities, which culminate in the coronation of the town's King and Queen. On the third day, townspeople will participate in a traditional Coleaderas, or rodeo.

"I enjoy it every time I go there. It's a pleasure," he says. "I go back to my childhood."

Members of the committee begin fundraising for the fiesta the day after the previous one ends, Alarcon says. They fundraise through raffles, dances and solicit donations via the Web site. "This year, I hope to have more funds left to rebuild the town's church and cemetery."

If not, however, Alarcon can still walk away with a smile on his face because he instilled in his children the importance of knowing their history.

"I tell them it's fun," he says. "I want them to know where their roots are and where they came from."

Christina Esparza, a Transit Operations Correspondent Intern, graduated this month from Cal State Long Beach with a degree in Journalism. June 7 was her last day with the MTA. She is beginning an internship with the LA Times' Valley edition.

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Metro Rail Operators Win at International Rail Rodeo!

By ERIC RAPP

(June 11, 2002) For the first time since it began Metro Rail service almost 12 years ago, an MTA team has won the American Public Transit Association's International Rail Rodeo operator's competition.

Metro Red Line operators Tu Phan and Robert Rodriguez bested operators from 16 other transit properties during competition last week in Baltimore to bring home the top prize. Operators from Toronto and Baltimore placed second and third.

The MTA's team of rail maintenance specialists – Ronnie Burt, Juan Ruvalcaba and Eric Petersen – also made a good showing, finishing seventh in the fierce competition.

When operators' and maintenance specialists' scores were combined, the MTA placed third, overall, in the international event. All of the MTA's representatives "absolutely did an outstanding job," says Jess Diaz, director of Rail Operations.

"We went to Baltimore as a team," says Rodriguez. "We went not only for ourselves but we were there to represent all the rail employees of LACMTA."

"Our challenge was to take our Red Line training and skills and to apply them to the heavy rail system of Maryland MTA," says Phan. "We share this first-place win with our friends and co-workers."

One of the biggest challenges for the MTA team was operating unfamiliar equipment, according to Diaz.

Although Baltimore has a heavy rail system similar to the Metro Red Line, the vehicles come from a different manufacturer and operate different from the rail cars Phan and Rodriguez are used to.

After three days of classes and over-the-rails practice with the unfamiliar equipment, the MTA team was ready to go. "They're a dedicated crew," says Diaz. "They focused on their goal and got there."

TOP OPS



Metro Red Line operators Tu Phan, right, and Robert Rodriguez out maneuvered operators from 16 other transit agencies in international competition.

Below, the MTA's team of rail maintenance specialists – from left, Eric Petersen, Ronnie Burt, and Juan Ruvalcaba – also made a good showing. PHOTOS: GAYLE ANDERSON



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v **Metro Community**

Division 9 Operator Juan Augspurger (left), Los Angeles Councilmember Ed Reyes and his daughter, Division 10 Operator Rosa Fresnedo, and San Gabriel Valley Communication Manager Helen Ortiz attended Cypress Park's community Cinco de Mayo celebration. MTA employees participated in the celebration, May 4, for the eighth consecutive year. The festivities included a parade, featuring a CNG bus provided by North Los Angeles Division 3, that Aragon Elementary School students spent two days painting for the celebration. (6/11/02)



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MTA to Train 600 Managers and Supervisors in Alcohol and Drug Policies

See > [Training Schedule](#) on the **Human Resources Department Web Site**

(June 12, 2002) Over the next month or so, some 600 MTA managers and supervisors of "safety-sensitive" employees will receive training in how to maintain an alcohol- and drug-free workplace.

The mandated training is in line with recent changes in federal drug and alcohol regulations for the transit industry. At the MTA, safety-sensitive employees include bus and rail operators, mechanics, service attendants, armed security officers and any employees who are required to drive or dispatch vehicles that carry paying passengers.

"As a leader and partner in the national transportation substance abuse prevention campaign," says CEO Roger Snoble, "the MTA is committed to operating and maintaining an alcohol-free and drug-free workplace."

The four guiding principles of the MTA's Alcohol and Drug-Free Work Environment Policy, Snoble said, are deterrence, detection, rehabilitation and enforcement.

The principles are intended to encourage employee participation and compliance, while ensuring a fair and consistent application of the policies for all employees.

The training, to be conducted by a team of experts, will include the impact of drug and alcohol abuse on society and industry, MTA and federal requirements, prohibited behaviors, education and training, drug and alcohol testing.

The first session is scheduled from 7 until 11 a.m., Monday, June 17, in the RRC lunchroom. The final scheduled session is from 1 until 5 p.m., Thursday, July 11, in the Windsor Conference Room, 15th floor of MTA Headquarters. Eight sessions are scheduled, thus far.

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UPDATE**MTA's Non-Contract Pay for Performance Program Continues**

- **Non-Contract Merit Increases Will Start at 2.85% This Year**

(June 12, 2002) The announcement that merit increases will be provided for non-contract employees, this year, continues the MTA's emphasis on linking performance to compensation, says Carolyn Flowers, executive officer, Administration.

The merit increases, sponsored by senior management, were approved during the Board meeting in May as part of the FY 2003 budget. The increases will be based on departmental distribution of performance ratings.

It should be noted that the merit increases received by employees this year will become part of their base pay, unless an employee's pay already is above the range for their grade.

Human Resources recently completed an employee satisfaction survey about the performance based compensation program. Distributed in April, it had a response rate of more than 55 percent. HR currently is compiling the results of the survey.

Non-Contract Merit Increases Will Start at 2.85% This Year

Non-contract employees whose performance for the past year rates "effective" or better will receive a merit increase of at least 2.85 percent under the Performance Based Compensation program.

Employees whose performance is rated "commendable" are eligible for a larger merit increase, while those who received an "exceptional" performance could receive an increase up to the six percent cap.

Supervisors have until July 15 to complete performance appraisals of employees. Appraisal forms are available on the Human Resources Intranet web site.

Following a series of management reviews, the merit increases will be scheduled for the Aug. 23 paycheck. Retroactive checks will be issued no later than Sept. 6 for the period of July 1 to Aug. 10.

Supervisors can contact Aida Lagrimas at 922-7150 or Carmen Sison Mayor at 922-5214 for assistance.

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'Dangerzone Deflector' Can Save Lives in Bus vs. Pedestrian Accidents

By ERIC RAPP

(June 13, 2002) Every year, people across the country are injured – sometimes fatally – by falling under the rear wheels of transit buses.

The MTA is responding to this problem with a new device, the "Dangerzone Deflector," which can push a fallen pedestrian out from under the rear wheels of a moving bus.

All new buses being delivered to the MTA are equipped with the Dangerzone Deflector. The Board is scheduled to vote in June on retrofitting existing Metro Buses with the \$1,300 devices. They would be installed on the MTA's fleet over the next 12 to 15 months, starting with approximately 400 in the 2002 fiscal year.

The danger usually occurs as buses are making right-hand turns. A pedestrian who is not fully on the sidewalk or who falls into the street is at risk of being run over by the right rear wheel of the bus. Nationwide, 40-100 people are seriously injured every year in this way.

Out of harm's way

Called the "S-1 Gard" by the manufacturer, the Dangerzone Deflector is a sturdy, curved piece of plastic that is bolted to the underside of the bus just in front of the right rear wheel. The curved portion of the guard may be able to push a person out of harm's way.

Installation is easily accomplished, without welding, in about 30 minutes. Measuring approximately two feet wide by one foot high, the deflector has a quick-release mechanism that enables mechanics to easily remove them during bus maintenance.

Many transit agencies across the country and locally are installing the S-1 Gard on their buses. Santa Monica's Big Blue Bus has installed the deflectors on their fleet. Washington D.C.'s WMATA recently retrofitted 1,300 buses with the device. Other agencies from Chicago to Orange County are already using the deflector or are in the process of testing it on their buses.



Joe Quintero, Division 9 equipment maintenance supervisor, points out the Dangerzone Deflector that can push a fallen pedestrian out of harm's way. Below, stills from a Dangerzone Deflector video show the deflector pushing aside a fallen pedestrian.



When installed on all Metro Buses, the Dangerzone Deflector design will help minimize potential injuries in bus vs. pedestrian accidents, says Operations Deputy Executive Officer John Roberts.

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MTA's Kindergartners Score at Top of Nationwide Test

By AMY HOWELL

(June 13, 2002) Six Gateway Child Development Center kindergarten students recently took the Terra Nova, a nationally administered standardized test. Four students placed in the 99th percentile.

"We've always had at least one student in the 99th percentile, but never four," said Chiquita Waters, Executive Director of the center.

Kindergartners Danielle Duran (daughter of center teacher Blanca Gutierrez), Garibalde Figueroa (son of Division 3 operators Ronald and Martha Figueroa), Anai Finnie (granddaughter of Waters), Raquel Freeman (granddaughter of Program Control Senior Secretary Darleen Flores), Aaron Martinez and Kevin Nugent (son of Personnel Medical Standards Compliance Administrator Mary Nugent) took the Terra Nova.

Danielle, Anai, Raquel and Kevin placed in the 99th percentile on the test, which included vocabulary, language arts, math and science sections.

Each section of the test focused on "everything [that was taught] throughout the school year," said kindergarten teacher Lisa Johnson.

"She strategically went about preparing them for the exam," Waters said of Johnson. "She got them ready. They were ready."

The test was administered at the center over a three-day period. The students were given one hour to complete each section. Center Assistant Director Esmeralda Ortiz served as proctor during the test.

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Gateway Child Development Center kindergarten teacher Lisa Johnson, along with kindergartners Aaron Martinez, Garibalde Figueroa, Kevin Nugent, Anai Finnie, Raquel Freeman and Danielle Duran, take over the playground. PHOTO: BILL HEARD



Poetry in Motion™ placard installed on Metro Buses features poetry of Quincy Troupe. See [excerpt](#) below.

New Poet Laureate's Work Was Featured on Metro Buses



Quincy Troupe

(June 13, 2002) Quincy Troupe, a poet whose work was recognized earlier this year as part of the MTA's Poetry in Motion™ series, has been named California's poet laureate.

MORE> Read poetry by Quincy Troupe at [lancanian ink](http://lancanian.ink) website. Go to > <http://lancanian.com/frameIII5.htm>

Governor Gray Davis named Troupe to the two-year post, June 11, in a ceremony at the state capitol. A La Jolla resident,

Troupe has published six volumes of poetry and has won two American Book Awards.

An excerpt from Troupe's poem, "Avalanche," appeared on Metro Buses and was printed on MTA-sponsored bookmarks during National Poetry Month.

from **Avalanche**

this poem waits for you to cross over
to cross over the heartbeat touch of your healing
hands, touching hands, touching hearts
this poem waits for you to cross over
to cross over love, this poem waits for you
to cross over, to cross over love
this poem waits for you to crossover
too crossover, too, love

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Metro Blue Line carries record number of boarding passengers during May

By RICK JAGER

The downtown Los Angeles to Long Beach Metro Blue Line -- part of the Metro Rail system -- set a record by carrying more than 70,000 boarding passengers on an average weekday in May 2002.

The light rail line carried 70,020 average weekday riders, up from May 2001 when 63,925 boarding passengers rode on an average weekday and breaking the previous record of 69,400 weekday riders set in August 2001. The Metro Blue Line began service in July 1990.

"The popularity of the Metro Blue Line and the growth in ridership over the years is solid proof of how successful Metro Rail has been in meeting the transportation needs of the community," said MTA CEO Roger Snoble. "The extension of the Metro Blue Line platforms to accommodate the addition of three car trains on the system has helped increase capacity on the line."

MTA spent approximately \$11 million last year extending the platforms at 19 Metro Blue Line stations to accommodate 3-car trains along the 22-mile route that serves Watts, Compton, Willowbrook as well as Long Beach, Los Angeles and other communities. Last November, MTA began operating 3-car trains on the Metro Blue Line.

The Metro Red Line subway system recorded a slight increase in May by carrying 135,460 boarding passengers on an average weekday, up from May 2001 when 134,675 rode. However, subway ridership has more than doubled since May 2000 when 65,150 boarding passengers rode on an average weekday.

The Metro Green Line was slightly down with 27,348 boarding passengers compared to May 2001 when 30,350 average weekday boarding passengers rode.

MTA's Metro Bus system and contracted bus services remained constant last month carrying 1,189,175 boarding passengers on an average weekday compared to 1,196,113 during May 2001.

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Not You Again! LAPD Catches Transit Pass Counterfeiter

By ERIC RAPP

(June 18, 2002) LAPD Transit Group detectives have arrested a transit pass counterfeiter who was up to his old tricks again. The arrest will save thousands of dollars in lost revenue for the MTA.

Near the end of 2001, the LAPD's Revenue Protection Detail determined that a significant amount of counterfeit fare media was circulating throughout the transit system. Their next challenge was to locate the source of the fakes.

In April of this year, investigations led detectives to repeat offender Pedro Sotelo, recently released from prison after serving 16 months for counterfeiting.

He had been arrested in January 2000 for operating a counterfeit transit pass ring that may at that time have cost the MTA over \$2 million annually in lost revenues.

"[Sotelo] has targeted the MTA for years," says LAPD Detective Steven Reyes.

Detective work paid off

Detectives had to keep up surveillance on Sotelo for two months before they had the evidence they needed. Finally, the work paid off and officers were able to confirm that Sotelo's actions were consistent with those of a counterfeiter.

Because Sotelo is on parole, detectives were able to enter and search his premises without a warrant. The searches turned up large amounts of counterfeiting material and counterfeit passes.

According to the LAPD, Sotelo has not cooperated with investigations. However, the Revenue Protection Detail estimates that he was making approximately 3,000 semi-monthly passes every month since September 2001.

That amount represents a revenue loss to the MTA of about \$63,000 since Sotelo resumed operation last fall.

Photos by LUIS INZUNZA



^ Officer Jose Martinez studies counterfeiting evidence seized in an LAPD search.



^ Counterfeit transit passes.



^ LAPD Detectives Jeffrey Brugger, left, and Doug Raymond and Officer Jose Martinez of the Revenue Protection Detail examine discarded cuttings from counterfeit passes.

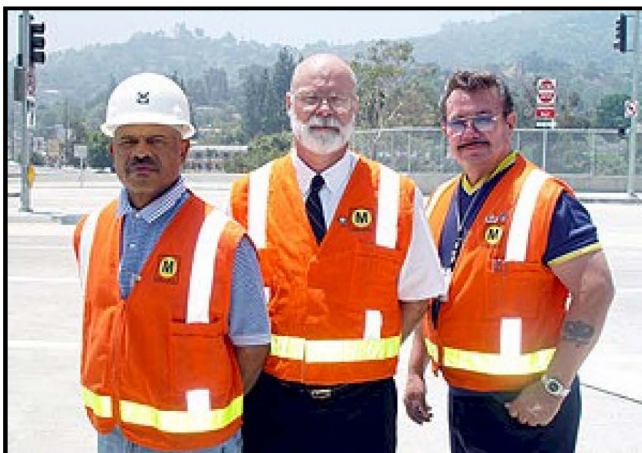
Sotelo is currently in police custody, awaiting trial on a new charge of counterfeiting, as well as violating parole.

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101 Freeway Overpass Built with No Lost-Time Injuries to Workers

(June 19, 2002) Bridge building is one of the riskiest occupations in the construction industry.

So, when the MTA's new 101 Freeway overpass opened, last week, after two and a half years of construction – with no lost-time injuries – that was an accomplishment any engineer could be proud of.



^ MTA Construction Safety Manager James Brown, left, with construction safety engineers Steve Nix, center, and Ruben Maldonado. PHOTO BY LUIS INZUNZA

And, proud they are. MTA Construction Safety Manager James Brown credits the contractor, Brutoco Engineering Construction Company (BEC) with closely adhering to federal, state and MTA safety regulations and with correcting safety hazards before anyone could get hurt.

"We live Safety's First and we are elated that BEC lived it with us," says Brown.

He also applauds the efforts of construction safety representatives Steve Nix and Ruben Maldonado who helped monitor the project on a daily basis. MTA Construction Management staff Roger Dames, Fred Smith, Bobby Hupp and JMA Consultants staff Scott McConnell, Bob Grinely and Bruce Bemis also supported the safety effort.

As the representative primarily responsible for safety on the overpass job, Nix met weekly with construction managers, held "toolbox" safety meetings with workers and took other measures to help keep injuries down.

Positive safety culture

"The teamwork created a positive safety culture that influenced craft-level workers," says Brown.

Over 29 months of construction beginning in January 2000, BEC amassed 215,000 hours free of lost-time injuries. The company achieved that goal even though trades on the job included ironworker, carpenter, driller, laborer, operating engineer and electrician.

BEC also had only 2.8 "recordable" injuries per 200,000 manhours, compared with the national average of 7.8 such injuries per 200,000 manhours. During one 19-month period, there were no incidents at all.

BEC's sterling performance will have earned the company a total of \$254,000 in monthly safety bonuses by the time the contract is closed. Construction workers also received individual awards, including caps and jackets, for working safely.

"Everybody wins," says Nix. "The workers don't get hurt. The contractor receives a bonus and the MTA doesn't have to pay a higher premium on our liability insurance."

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MTA Bus Roadeo and Car Show This Weekend

By ERIC RAPP

(June 19, 2002) – Come one, come all! The MTA Bus Roadeo and Car Show is this Saturday, June 22, at Santa Anita racetrack. All MTA employees and their families are invited to come and enjoy the day and a variety of entertainment.

Bus operators and mechanics will be testing their talents against one another throughout the day, beginning at 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.

Operators will negotiate an exciting and difficult driving course, be quizzed on their knowledge of procedures and safety, and have their customer service skills put to the test. Teams of mechanics also will complete the driving course, as well as other events that will test their proficiency at bus repair.

Prizes will be awarded to the top scorers, who will go on to represent the MTA at the International Bus Roadeo in Las Vegas in September.

In addition to the main event, plenty of entertainment is scheduled. Families can enjoy a Continental breakfast, live music, a barbecue lunch, and a raffle drawing. Kids will have fun playing for prizes in the carnival-style game booths, or eat fresh-made caramel popcorn while watching clowns perform.

The car show, located in the parking lot adjacent to the Bus Roadeo, will showcase classic autos and trucks. Any fan of cars shouldn't miss it.

Come enjoy a day of fun with your family at the Bus Roadeo this Saturday at Santa Anita Park, located at 285 W. Huntington Drive in Arcadia. The entrance will be at Gate 6. Maps and directions to the park can be found at <http://www.santaanita.com>.

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Modernization Scheduled for MTA Headquarters High-Rise Elevators

(June 19, 2002) Beginning in July, elevator mechanics will take high-rise elevators in the MTA Headquarters building out of service, one-by-one, for modernization with new, heavy-duty door operators.

"The work will result in improved elevator performance," says Phyllis Meng, the General Services supervisor in charge of the project, "and should speed up use of the elevators."

Mitsubishi Electric Corp. mechanics have been working for some months to modernize the low-rise elevators. They expect to begin work on the last of those elevators next week before moving to the high-rise bank.

During an approximately 10-week period, only four of the five high-rise elevators will be in service each day as the mechanics modernize the units.

They'll perform their work on the 25th floor and will keep noise to a minimum by scheduling the noisiest tasks prior to 9 a.m.

Depending on the work, only three elevators may be available during parts of some days – although will always be in operation during morning and afternoon peak periods – says Meng.

The modernization not only involves installation of the new door-operators, it requires equipment adjustments at every floor, says Mitsubishi Mechanic Nick Trujillo.

But, the new heavy-duty equipment, he says, will outperform the old door operators. "They'll be here as long as the building's here."

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^ Mechanics Mike Mershon and Nick Trujillo of Mitsubishi Electric adjust a new heavy-duty door operator on an elevator in the low-rise bank at MTA Headquarters. Modernization of elevators in the high-rise bank is scheduled to start in July. PHOTO BY BILL HEARD.

[MORE>](#) Arthur Winston to Speak at AAEA's Juneteenth Celebration

Gateway Division 10's Juneteenth Celebration was in the capable hands, Wednesday, of (from left) Frances Alford, Liz Chuntaranakorn, Danita Miller and Shenita Coleman. The four women – joined here by their friends – always take the lead in planning the division's events. Below, organizers display articles of African-American history. Photos by LUIS INZUNZA.



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Arthur Winston to Speak at AAEA's Juneteenth Celebration

By TIM GODFREY

(June 20, 2002) The MTA's most senior employee, Arthur Winston, is the scheduled inspirational speaker for the MTA African American Employees Association (AAEA) Juneteenth Celebration.

[MORE>](#)
Juneteenth
celebration at
Gateway
Division.

The event is scheduled from 11 a.m. until 6 p.m., Saturday, June 22, at Ladera Park in Los Angeles (one block west of La Brea Avenue on Slauson Avenue).

In addition to Winston's talk, the celebration will include a wide range of foods and activities synonymous with Juneteenth celebrations. These will include a special oration, drumming, music, barbecue, watermelon and red soda. There will also be Bid Whist and Domino Tournaments.

Tickets are \$15 for Adults and \$8 for Children under 15. For information, contact: Nery Watson, Kathleen Johnson, Tim Godfrey, Kathy Powell-Drayton, Fifi Burns, DonCosta Seawell or any AAEA member to purchase tickets. The AAEA invites all to come and be a part of the celebration.

Juneteenth is the oldest known celebration of the ending of slavery. It was on June 19, 1865 that Union soldiers, led by Major General Gordon Granger, landed at Galveston, Texas with news that the war had ended and that all slaves were now free.

Even though the slaves were officially freed by President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, it took more than two-and-a-half years for most slaves to experience freedom.

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- **GM Rich Rogers Started Transit Career as a Teenaged Bus Washer**

By BILL HEARD, Editor



General Manager
Rich Rogers

(June 20, 2002) The summer Rich Rogers was 15 years old, he got a job washing and servicing buses at a company in Orange County. The year was 1975 and – although he didn't realize it –that job was the start of a career in public transit.

[MORE>](#)
'Operators'
Mirror
Suggestion
Reflects
Concern for
Safety'

Today, 27 years later, Rogers is putting together a staff and making preparations to become general manager of the Gateway Cities service sector. Planned for activation October 1, the sector will include Central City Division 1, Crossroads Depot Division 2 and a new division to be built in future years.

Rogers' summer job washing buses led to an apprenticeship as a bus mechanic when he graduated from El Modena High School in Orange. By the time he turned 20, he was supervising the work of 10 to 15 mechanics and was in line for a position as maintenance manager.

Before he left the company six years later, Rogers had gained experience as a licensed bus operator and had progressed to the position of operations manager overseeing daily operation of 50 fixed-route and paratransit buses under contract to the Orange County Transit District.

"Although I only drove a bus when an operator was out sick, it was very challenging," Rogers recalls. "I enjoyed it because it helped me relate to the operators' problems. You could really value the work they did day in and day out, because it's not easy."

Participatory management style

From his experience working with mechanics, Rogers developed a strong belief in a participatory style of management and teamwork, in being visible

and communicating with employees at all levels.

"There's a misconception that transportation and maintenance are in two different worlds, but in reality they're both serving our customers," he says. "I want to break down those barriers and have everyone work together to accomplish our goals."



^ In addition to his prospective job heading the Gateway Cities sector, Rogers will have agency-wide responsibility for contract bus lines.

In subsequent years, Rogers continued to build his understanding of transportation and maintenance, serving as maintenance manager of a 125-bus fleet, as operations manager of a 100-bus fleet and in similar management positions for a succession of Orange County transit companies.

During 10 years with Dave Transportation Services in Anaheim, Rogers rose from project manager of an 80-unit paratransit contract in Pomona Valley to regional general manager responsible for more than 40 transportation contracts throughout the western United States. Most recently, he was vice president of Transportation Concepts, headquartered in Irvine.

At the MTA, in addition to his prospective job heading the Gateway Cities sector, Rogers will have agency-wide responsibility for contract bus lines. Could his background in contract transportation cause concern among sector employees?

His role at the MTA

"There should be no concern," he says. "When I was on the private side, my business was to provide the highest level of quality transportation service in the most cost-efficient way. That also applies to my role here at the MTA."

Rogers strongly believes that the sector concept can forestall any local movement toward transit zones. "The service sectors are designed to provide service that's more community-based, to be more responsive to our customers' needs and to be more cost-efficient. I feel that by working as a team, we can achieve that goal."

As he continues preparations for the October opening of the Gateway Cities sector, Rogers has a number of things on his mind: completing his staff, finding office space outside MTA Headquarters and looking for ways to improve working conditions at divisions 1 and 2, among them.

Assessing his sector's needs, Rogers notes that both divisions have reached capacity for maintenance and storage of buses. Both also need additional employee parking and, although

ideas for off-site parking have been advanced, they're "not what you'd call an optimum situation for either division."

On a positive note, Division 1 will be getting a new bus wash and a new vacuum system. And, Rogers will be looking at locations for construction of a third division for the Gateway Cities sector.

Getting acquainted with staff

Meanwhile, Rogers is getting acquainted with his new sector staff, with the division transportation and maintenance managers, and with the division employees who will work with him. They're also getting to know him.

Safety is one of the things he's concerned about. "I've found throughout my career that you have to constantly talk about safety, otherwise it only comes up when an event triggers it. We want to create a safety culture...and it starts with me. I have to demonstrate that it's important, because it is a priority."

And, he describes his management style this way: "I'm a hands-on manager, but not a micromanager. I'll give advice and suggestions to my managers, but I won't dictate to them. I see myself as someone who will be there to support and develop a quality team."

Rogers and his wife, Erin, a homemaker and part-time transit consultant, have been married 10 years. They live in Santa Ana with their three daughters, Rachel, 9, Sarah, 7, and Claire, 16 months. He also has a 12-year-old son, Shawn.

In his off hours, Rogers enjoys spending time with his family, reading, sports and physical fitness.

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Operators' Mirror Suggestion Reflects Concern for Safety

(June 20, 2002) During a recent meeting with bus operators, General Manager Rich Rogers heard a safety suggestion that just couldn't be ignored.

"Several operators complained that the new NABI buses don't come equipped with an interior spot mirror," Rogers recalls. On older, high-floor buses, operators use the mirrors to monitor passengers climbing the steps at the front door.

The operators had raised the issue when the NABI buses first arrived, but an analysis concluded that – since the NABIs are low-floor coaches and have no steps – the mirrors weren't needed.

"But, the operators said they rely on the mirror during heavy loading to ensure they don't close the door on a passenger," Rogers says, equating the mirror to a tool operators need to do their jobs safely.

"I've discussed the mirrors with the staff and we're going to retrofit the buses with spot mirrors," he says. The specifications for new low-floor buses also will be changed to include the spot mirrors.

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"Several operators complained that the new NABI buses don't come equipped with an interior spot mirror," said new GM Rich Rogers.

[MORE>](#) GM Rich Rogers Started His Transit Career as a Teenaged Bus Washer

Board to Consider Developments at Hollywood/Vine and Wilshire/Vermont Stations

(June 21, 2002) Proposed commercial developments at the Hollywood/Vine and Wilshire/Vermont Metro Rail stations could take a significant step forward this month.

The MTA Board will be asked to approve motions at its meeting, June 27, giving CEO Roger Snoble authority to negotiate exclusively with Legacy Partners of Irvine for development of 2.8 acres at the Hollywood/Vine station and with Urban Partners of Los Angeles for development of approximately 7 acres at the Wilshire/Vermont station.

The Board's Planning and Programming committee acted favorably, Thursday, on both motions.

Legacy Partners has proposed a mixed-use, transit-oriented development with some 300 hotel rooms, 200 apartments, 46 condominiums, 30,000 square feet of retail space and 732 parking spaces on the Hollywood/Vine site.

Valued at \$282 million, the project will include a transit plaza on Hollywood Boulevard that will accommodate seven buses, shuttles and a "kiss 'n ride" commuter lot.

Generate job opportunities

With the development, the MTA hopes to "re-establish the identity of the Hollywood and Vine district as a premier business center for the entertainment industry..." and generate job opportunities.

The plan proposed by Urban Partners at Wilshire/Vermont calls for development of a three-story middle school for some 800 students on a 2.6 acre portion of the site.

On the other portion of the property, the developer would build 380 apartment units, 30,000 square feet of commercial space, a childcare center and 700 parking spaces.

One of the goals of the development at Wilshire/Vermont is to "continue the revitalization of Wilshire Boulevard and the entire redevelopment area...."

Construction currently is under way at the Hollywood/Western station on a two-phase development that will include 120 units of affordable housing, retail space and a childcare center. The MTA also is negotiating with a developer who wants to build commercial space and apartments at the Wilshire/Western station.

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Catoe to Review Employee Injury Reports; Will Demand Followup

(June 21, 2002) Beginning July 1, no injury to any employee of Metro Operations will go unnoticed - even at the highest levels of the MTA.

Because, starting on that date, Deputy CEO John Catoe will personally review with his General Managers the reports of injuries to any Metro Operations employee.

And, he'll demand action. At his staff meetings, Catoe will ask for the most recent injury reports, investigations findings, and the proposed action plans to prevent similar injuries from re-occurring.

"I expect every supervisor and every manager to follow up on every injury," he declares. "To make sure that occurs, I'm going to be following up on their actions."

Four key areas

The increased attention to injuries is part of a larger program aimed at creating a safe work environment. The program has four key areas: preventing accidents and injuries through the Safety's First program, improving management of injury cases, returning employees to work and preventing and prosecuting fraud.

These efforts also should help reduce losses from accidents and injuries. In FY 2002, the cost of workers' compensation claims is expected to reach almost \$60 million.

A major new initiative for the coming fiscal year is an agency-wide Occupational Health Services program that will include a focus on personal health risk assessments, disease prevention or management, quality of life and work-life balance.

Most valuable resource

"Our employees are our most valuable resource," stresses Catoe, "and we need to ensure their health and well being."

The MTA also will be re-vamping its claims management. A multi-department panel will review occupational illness and injury claims to keep track of the employees' progress.

An Injured Worker Advocate - Suzanne Marshall - recently was hired as a neutral third party to help injured employees resolve worker's comp problems and to help expedite claims processing. Her work has the support of all three of the MTA's largest unions.

At the same time, the MTA has begun working with the District Attorney's Fraud Prevention Unit to investigate and prosecute employees who abuse the workers' compensation system.

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**Was Huell Howser
Surprised, or
What!**



(June 21, 2002) TV personality Huell Howser certainly got more than he bargained for, Tuesday, when he videotaped a segment at the Metro Blue Line's Artesia station for his popular "California Gold" TV show.

Howser was interviewing Lynn Aldrich, the artist whose tile mosaics of water images decorate the station. As the two were discussing the blue concrete pavers on the walkway leading to the station, a snake emerged from the grass.

"Oh, my gosh, there's a snake!" Howser exclaimed in his deep Southern drawl, instructing his cameraman to film the serpent as it crawled across the sidewalk.

When the startled snake wriggled away and things settled down, Howser and Aldrich resumed the interview – only to be interrupted again by another surprise.

"A man came riding down the freight train tracks on a beautiful Arabian stallion," Aldrich reported in a phone call to Maya Emsden, deputy executive officer, Creative Services. "Huell said 'Oh, my gosh, there's a horse!' and, of course, he had to interview the guy. It was a very exciting morning for Huell."

Just another episode of "California Gold," airing soon on your local PBS station.

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San Fernando Valley Service Sector is Ready to Roll

By AMY HOWELL

(June 21, 2002) San Fernando Valley service sector management and staff now have a place to call home.

Employees moved, last Friday, into a Chatsworth building located just minutes from West Valley Division 8.

"We are here and in place and ready to open on July 1," said Community Relations Manager Marta Maestas, who was one of about six employees who moved.

General Manager David Armijo also moved into the building on Friday. "He had his office perfectly in place by the time we arrived Monday morning," said Maestas.

Finance Manager Kathy Drayton and staff members Myrna Aranda, Rufus Francis and Bruce Moore also moved on Friday.

More moves to come

All service sector employees have not situated themselves, however. Maestas said that while some employees have been determined, the sector is "still hiring." Schedule checkers are expected to move sometime next week.

Although the service sector's doors have been open since Monday, the official operational start date is July 1. This date is consistent with a commitment the MTA made to residents of the San Fernando Valley and, said Maestas, "that commitment is being kept."

The San Gabriel Valley service sector's official operational start date also is July 1. The move into the service sector building is scheduled for Wednesday, June 26.

Service sector management and staff will work in the building that previously served as the location for Operations Control Instruction (OCI) at San Gabriel Valley Division 9 in El Monte.

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Community Relations Manager Marta Maestas, above, was one of about six employees who moved into the wide open spaces below. Photos by AMY HOWELL.



Annual Bus Rodeo was a Day for Family Fun, Food and Competition

By BILL HEARD, Editor

- More! GO TO> [MTA Bus Rodeo: Fun, Exciting and Rewarding Competition](#)

(June 25, 2002) It was a day of fun, food and fierce competition. It was the MTA's annual Bus Rodeo – an event that drew perhaps 500 employees, family members and friends.

The sun-drenched parking lot at Santa Anita was a carnival, last Saturday. Huge tents sheltered competitors and family members who enjoyed heaping plates of barbecue with all the fixin's, or caught up on old times with friends and co-workers.

Thirty-nine volunteer cooks, led by Alex DiNuzzo, Arthur Winston Division 5 maintenance manager, barbecued more than 300 pounds of carne asada, 25 cases of hotdogs and 25 cases of hotlinks. Added to that were 100 cases of soda, mounds of refried beans and potato salad, plus hundreds of ice cream cups.

"I've been enjoying myself watching the competition and I saw a couple of friends from Division 9 I hadn't seen in a while," said Rosalind Tuckson, a service attendant at Division 5, who arrived with her son, Jabias Smith, nephews Quinton and Donavin Rusk, and niece Caprisha Gladden.

"The kids were playing at the booths," she said. "They cleaned up on all the little toys!"

Lot of activities for kids

Over at one of the booths Sector General Manager Rich Rogers' daughter, Rachel, aimed a dart at the balloons pinned to a board. "There's a lot of activities here today for the kids and the families," he said.

The activities came to a temporary halt, however, when a Sheriff's Department helicopter swooped in and hovered above the parking lot. As the whirling blades whipped up a small storm of dust and pebbles, three deputies rappelled out of the chopper and dropped to the ground.

PHOTOS BY BILL HEARD



San Gabriel Valley Bus Operator Ramon Reilly is on the field.



East Valley Division mechanics team - John Drito, Cliff Thorne and Henry Diaz - work the brake board.



Arthur Winston Division Service Attendant Rosalind Tuckson, center, shares the day with son Jabias Smith, nephews Quinton and Donavin Rusk and niece, Caprisha Gladden.



CEO Roger Snoble and DEO Richard Hunt take their chances for a raffle from East Valley Bus Operator Les Vance.

All eyes were on the action as a rescue basket was lowered. A crewman was strapped in and the basket was winched back aboard the aircraft. Applause from the crowd signaled the success of the demonstration.

Watching warily from a corner of the parking lot were the owners of a number of classic cars who guarded their sparkling paint jobs. Rich Mensel was one whose four-wheeled baby – a two-toned 1957 Chevrolet station wagon – was displayed for the annual Car Show.

“It was in pretty rough condition when I bought it from a friend,” Mensel said. It took him two and a half years to restore and add some high-tech equipment to the car, but it was worth it. Spectators voted it the Car Show favorite.

Concentrating on the task

Meanwhile, in a secluded spot behind the food tents, teams signed up for the maintenance Rodeo were concentrating on the difficult task of diagnosing engine and brake problems.

“Our brains went blank,” laughed Mechanic Cliff Thorne of the East Valley Division 15 team, when he and his teammates Henry Diaz and John Dirito emerged from the brake board event. It was the first year of competition for all three and they worked hard to prepare.

Under the tents, meanwhile, a number of operators waiting for their turn behind the wheel, tried to relax.

Operator James Hazelitt, Jr., of Gateway Division 10, paced nervously back and forth, watching as bus after bus drove the circuitous course. He competed in four previous MTA Rodeos and in three others while a driver at Foothill Transit.

“It’s a dream of mine I’ve been chasing for seven years now,” Hazelitt said. “Hopefully, this will be the year for me.”

Former MTA champion

One of the leading competitors, Operator Sam Morales of Central City Division 1, waited calmly nearby. A former MTA champion who represented the agency at International Bus Rodeos in 1991 and in 2000, the sleeves of his crisp uniform shirt bore the patches from those events.

This year, Morales placed first in the preliminary competition but, unfortunately, finished out of the money in the finals.

Frank Cecere, the transportation operations supervisor who directs the yearly Bus Rodeo, was impressed with this year’s competitors.



Organizers Rick Hittinger, right, and Frank Cecere announce a raffle winner.



Rich Mensel's 1957 Chevy station wagon was voted the Car Show favorite.

MTA Bus Roadeo 2002

Fun, Exciting and Rewarding Competition



Winner's Circle - Top operators, foreground from left, 2nd place winner Gateway Division Operator Candelario Gomez, top scorer North Los Angeles Division Operator Daniel Keosababian and 3rd place winner San Gabriel Valley Division Operator Ludovico Castro, are joined by, back row, from left, UTU General Chairman James Williams, CEO Roger Snoble, and General Manager Jack Gabig. PHOTO: GAYLE ANDERSON

Below, CEO Snoble presents trophy to winning South Bay Division mechanics team, from left, Javier Soria, Mina Ros and Luke Logan. Looking on: Competition organizer Steve Mullaly, center background, and, at right, General Manager Dana Coffey and South Bay Senior EMS Sergio Rubalcava. PHOTO: BILL HEARD



By ERIC RAPP

- GO TO> [Competitors](#): Winners All
- Plus! [Annual Bus Roadeo](#) Was a Day for Family Fun, Food and Competition

(June 25, 2002) The competition was tough, but the competitors were tougher. Bus operators and mechanics gave it their all, last Saturday, under a blistering sun and the watchful eyes of the judges at the MTA's 27th Annual Bus Roadeo.

Through it all, competitors, judges and spectators never lost sight of the

real purpose of the Roadeo – to have fun.

“It’s always fun and exciting,” said El Monte Division 9’s Susan Tompkins, who has competed in the Roadeo almost every year since 1991. For CEO Roger Snoble, the day is a good way “to see everybody and enjoy the competition.”

But no matter how much fun they were having, competitors always kept their eyes on the prize and did their best to come out on top.

Bus operators had to demonstrate not only their knowledge of safety, regulations and bus equipment, but negotiate a tight obstacle course as well.

Operators had to perform such precision maneuvers as a serpentine course, left and right-hand reversing, and a high speed precision stop.

PHOTO: GAYLE ANDERSON



A tricky course

The 30 competitors from various divisions showed why they were some of MTA’s most skilled operators. Even volunteer judge Jose Medrano of Montebello Bus Lines, who judged the “Mystery Obstacle” part of the course, was impressed with the quality of driving he had seen. “Nearly everyone has been perfect on this obstacle,” he said.

Frank Cecere, Central Instruction TOS and Field Marshall for the Roadeo, agreed. “The competition gets better and better every year,” he said, “and if we make the course any tighter than it is now, it will be impossible.”

Operators had to perform such precision maneuvers as a serpentine course, left and right-hand reversing, and a high speed precision stop.

In the end, it was North Los Angeles Division 3’s Daniel Keosababian who had the best score, a near-perfect 634 points out of 650 possible. For him, the secret to success in the Bus Roadeo is simple: “Skill and a little bit of luck,” he said.

Hot on Keosababian’s heels were Candelario Gomez from Gateway Division 10 with 618 points, and Ludovico Castro of El Monte Division 9

with 601 points.

Keosababian will go on to represent the MTA at the regional Southern California Bus Roadeo, competing against operators from Montebello Bus Lines and Foothill Transit, as well as other local transit properties. He also will represent the MTA at the International Bus Roadeo in Las Vegas this September, going up against operators from around the United States and Canada.

Put all their skills to use

The teams of mechanics from every division, including the RRC, also had to navigate a bus through a slightly modified version of the operators' course. In addition to that, mechanics had to put all their skills to use in a series of difficult events designed to test their knowledge of brake and air systems, bus inspection, and engine repair.



The mechanic teams were required to correctly diagnose 7 faults with a Compressed Natural Gas engine in the engine competition.

PHOTO: GAYLE ANDERSON

The engine event was especially difficult. The mechanic teams were required to correctly diagnose 7 faults with a Compressed Natural Gas engine. One of the faults kept the engine from running properly. The fault had to be repaired and the engine started. And it all had to be completed within 10 minutes.

"Under pressure, everything just goes blank and you have to rely on second nature," said Division 15 team captain Cliff Thorne. "Everything you practiced is forgotten and only your years of experience come through."

The team from South Bay Division 18, consisting of Javier Soria, Mina Ros, and Luke Logan, took top honors this year with 859 points. Also with a strong showing were teams from Gateway Division 10 (last year's winners Alan Wong, Doug Creveling, and David Klinkenborg) with 818 points and Crossroads Depot Division 2 (John Tena, Andy Filimaua, and Ed Hernandez) with 800.

Division 18's team also will represent the MTA at both the regional and international events.

San Gabriel Valley Service Sector General Manager Jack Gabig may have said it best. The Bus Roadeo is not only an opportunity for "the best of the best to compete," he said. "It demonstrates the excellence and professionalism of all MTA's operators and mechanics."

Congratulations to the winners and all the competitors of this year's Bus Roadeo!

Winners All: 2002 Bus Roadeo Competitors

Operators**First Place**

Daniel Keosababian
North Los Angeles
Division 3 - 634 Points

Second Place

Candelario Gomez
Gateway Division 10
618 Points

Third Place

Ludovico Castro
San Gabriel Valley
Division 9 - 601 Points

Ricardo Martinez

San Gabriel Valley
Division 9 - 573 Points

Juan Navarro

North Los Angeles
Division 3 - 569 Points

Jose Villanueva

San Gabriel Valley
Division 9 - 559 Points

Samuel Morales

Central City Division 1
558 Points

James Hazelitt

Gateway Division 10
548 Points

Christopher Doan

Central City Division 1
536 Points

Marcos Mejia-Portillo

Central City Division 1
535 Points

Joe Acosta

North Los Angeles
Division 3 - 535 Points

Ramon Reilly

San Gabriel Valley
Division 9 - 528 Points

Marcial Garcia

Central City Division 1
520 Points

Jeffrey Ralph

Arthur Winston Division 5
497 Points

Alfonso Quezada

Gateway Division 10
496 Points

Martin Schempp

San Gabriel Valley Division 9
- 483 Points

Francisco Gomez

Gateway Division 10
481 Points

Jaime Martinez

Crossroads Depot Division 2 -
471 Points

Cain Portillo

Arthur Winston Division 5
468 Points

Peter Ortega

Gateway Division 10
465 Points

Luis Rodriguez

Crossroads Depot Division 2
444 Points

Juan Serrano

Crossroads Depot Division 2
440 Points

Francisco Escobedo

West Hollywood
Division 7 - 439 Points

Ramiro Mota

Central City Division 1
438 Points

Nipon Pasaphunthu

North Los Angeles Division 3 -
435 Points

Miguel Colmenares

San Gabriel Valley Division 9
- 418 Points

Darren Doucette

South Bay Division 18
398 Points

Mechanic Teams**First Place**

South Bay Division 18
Javier Soria
Mina Ros
Luke Logan
859 Points

Second Place

Gateway Division 10
Alan Wong
Doug Creveling
David Klinkenborg
818 Points

Third Place

Crossroads Depot
Division 2
John Tena
Andy Filimaua
Ed Hernandez
800 Points

Arthur Winston Division 5
Alfonso Dealba
Fermin Mora
Daniel Galindo
787 Points

North Los Angeles Division 3
Tim Wong
Jose Gomez
Roy Ramos
730 Points

Central City Division 1
Fredrick Hines
Gustavo Sanchez
Sergio Barron
711 Points

West Hollywood Division 7
Oscar Flores
Gabriel Valdivia
Jesse Guerra
681 Points

San Gabriel Valley Division 9
Ricardo Hernandez
Omar Nomuru
Steve Goytia
594 Points

East Valley Division 15
Cliff Thorne, Henry Arias,
John Drito

Maximiliano DeAngelis
West Hollywood Division 7
515 Points

Susan Tompkins
San Gabriel Valley
Division 9 - 511 Points

560 Points

West Valley Division 8
Tom Lucas
David Lugo
Frank Cruz
466 Points

Venice Division 6
Naren Desai
John Edrich
Edgar Grazzianni
428 Points

Regional Rebuild Center
Tony Herumin
Cal Tran
David Rodriguez
405 Points

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Eyewitness Account I Drove a Bus for the MTA

By AMY HOWELL

(June 25, 2002) Okay, I admit it. I'm guilty. When driving and in close proximity to a bus (Metro or otherwise), I've let more than my fair share of swear words escape from my mouth.

As far as I was concerned, the only thing the operator cared about was maneuvering his behemoth vehicle around Angelenos in their cars—thousands and thousands of obstacles in a county-sized course.

I walked a mile in a bus operator's shoes (or maybe drove a fraction thereof in his bus), Friday, on the eve of this year's Bus Rodeo. Despite my penchant for swearing at bus operators in the privacy of my own vehicle, I was certain that maneuvering a 40-foot bus was not the easiest task to perform.

In the parking lot of Santa Anita Racetrack, I boarded a Metro bus, this time as a novice driver instead of a passenger. Reporters from local television channels and newspapers also had the opportunity to drive a bus. An obstacle course, comprised mainly of orange cones, as well as several tennis balls and ten trash can-sized white barrels, was set up nearby.

"It's a very tight course," Transit Operations Supervisor Kika Montes-Jurado later would say. "Bus operators do encounter some of these things out on the street."

Frank Cecere, the Bus Rodeo coordinator, showed me how to adjust the seat and steering wheel, press down on the brake pedal while touching a button that would put the bus into drive and push down on the parking brake lever.

A lot harder than it looks

PHOTOS BY JOSÉ UBALDO



Things that go bump in the Bus Rodeo..



Drivers wanted.



Just like in the movie: "Speed"...

Once these steps were taken, I was allowed to accelerate. In doing so, I noticed a significant difference between driving a bus and a car—the second I took my foot off the gas pedal, the bus began to lose speed.

Inching my way forward and making slight turns here and there, I realized I wasn't going through the obstacle course, but around it instead. After watching a few reporters, as well as a cameraman, I was somewhat relieved I didn't have to do this.



...and "Speed 2."

"It's a lot harder than you think," said Channel 11 cameraman Robert Varela. "I thought I was going to nail it and not hit anything, but I did."

I did take another spin around, but not through, the majority of the obstacle course. Only this time, I attempted to conquer the ten trash can-sized white barrels, lined up in two rows of five, with about two inches of clearance on each side for a bus to pass through.



On the road, again.

In the Roadeo, operators must pass through the barrels at 20 mph. They're not supposed to knock down any of the barrels—even grazing the barrels yields a point deduction from an operator's score.

My attempt at this feat was in vain: I knocked down five barrels, most likely grazed the other five and was nowhere near the 20 mph requirement.

In the obstacle course of the Bus Roadeo, points are deducted from an operator's score. In the obstacle course that, collectively, is the streets of Los Angeles County, the consequences are more severe.

I'll take that into consideration the next time I think a bus is in my way. And I'll try really, really hard not to swear.

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THE STARLIGHT EXPRESS



Destination: The Hollywood Bowl

PHOTO: GAYLE ANDERSON

MTA's Hollywood Bowl Shuttle Back for Third Season Encore

By ED SCANNELL

(June 26, 2002) The MTA's Hollywood Bowl Shuttle is back for an encore this year, having opened for a third season to serve patrons of the popular amphitheater.

Metro Bus Line 163 Special provides non-stop service to the Hollywood Bowl from the Metro Red Line Hollywood/Vine station throughout the venue's summer season.

Shuttle buses run about every 20 minutes, starting three hours before scheduled performances. The last pre-show bus leaves the Hollywood/Vine station 30 minutes before showtime.

Return trips to the Hollywood/Vine Station start 20 minutes after the show and continue until approximately 11:30 p.m. Metro Red Line trains are scheduled to depart every 20 minutes at night.

The last train to North Hollywood is scheduled to depart at 11:56 p.m. The last train to downtown Los Angeles is scheduled to depart at 12:05 a.m.

For a complete listing of all Hollywood Bowl summer 2002 season performances, visit www.hollywoodbowl.com or call (323)850-2000.

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Congratulations to all MTA graduates!

EDITOR'S NOTE: (June 26, 2002) The Graduation Celebration list was coordinated, compiled and prepared by Eric Rapp, Transit Operations Communications Intern.

Graduates are organized by the division or department of the employee. Click on division or department name to see specific list.

Central City Division 1	Contracts Administration
Crossroads Depot Division 2	Diversity & Economic Opportunity
North Los Angeles Division 3	Communications
Arthur Winston Division 5	Facilities Maintenance /Engineering/Systems
Venice Division 6	Highway Programs Development
West Hollywood Division 7	Human Resources
West Valley Division 8	Information & Technology Services
San Gabriel Valley Division 9	Maintenance of Way
Gateway Division 10	Marketing
Metro Blue Line Division 11	Office of the Ceo
East Valley Division 15	Operations Central Instruction
South Bay Division 18	Payroll
Metro Red Line Division 20	Planning & Development
Metro Green Line Division 22	Procurement
Accounting Department	Programing & Policy Analysis
Audit Department	Rail Operations Control
Board Research Services	Regional Rebuild Center
Building Services Department	Revenue Department
Bus Operations Control	
Construction Safety	

Central City Division 1

College Graduates

- **Daniel Padilla**, son of Division 1 Bus Operator Richard Padilla, graduated from CSU Los Angeles with a BS in Industrial Technology (Management Minor), Dean's List, Golden Key International Honor Society.

High School Graduates

- **Judith M. Lopez**, daughter of Division 1 Bus Operator Luis Lopez, graduated from East Los Angeles Skill Center in Los Angeles.

Crossroads Depot Division 2

College Graduates

- **Jason M. Turk**, son of Division 2 Sr. TOS Michael Turk, graduated from Cal Poly with a BS in Biology.
- **Paula M. Franden**, wife of Division 2 EMS-I Richard Franden, graduated

from CSU Los Angeles with a BVE, Dean's List, National Honors Society, Phi Kappa Phi.

- **Robert L.S. Walker**, son of Division 2 Bus Operator Robert Walker, graduated from University of Arizona with a BS.
- **Maria R. Rocha-Gomez**, wife of Division 2 Bus Operator Ricardo Gomez, graduated from CSU Los Angeles with a BA in Children's Education.
- **April M. Delgadillo**, daughter of Division 2 and Division 20 Mechanic A and Rail Secretary Marco and Lupe Delgadillo, graduated from Cerritos College with an AA in General Studies.

Employee Graduates

- **Joboe Dargbe**, Division 2 Bus Operator, graduated from American Intercontinental University with a BS in Business Administration.

High School Graduates

- **Lowell B. Baptiste**, son of Division 2 Service Attendant Antoinette Baptiste, graduated from West High School in Torrance.
- **Rashida Bell**, daughter of Division 2 Bus Operator Walter Bell, graduated from Fontana High School in Fontana.
- **Nicolas Thomas**, son of Division 2 TOD Jerolyn Thomas-Grajeda, graduated from Dorsey High School in Los Angeles.
- **Melissa M. Vasquez**, daughter of Division 2 Bus Operator Edward Vasquez, graduated from Eisenhower High School in Rialto, Honor Roll.
- **Mark C. Reyes**, son of Division 2 Bus Operator Manolo Reyes, graduated from Del Paso High School in Walnut.

North Los Angeles Division 3

College Graduates

- **Martha C. Mendez**, daughter of Division 3 Mechanic A Carlos Curiel, graduated from LA City College with an AA in Business Administration/Liberal Arts, Cum Laude.

High School Graduates

- **Markus Kyle**, son of Division 3 Division Stenographer Nikki Bentley, graduated from Quartz Hill High School in Quartz Hill.
- **Patricia C. Aguinaldo**, daughter of Division 3 Mechanic A Wilson Aguinaldo, graduated from Norte Vista High School in Riverside, Class Valedictorian, CSULB President's Scholarship.
- **Richard Ramos**, son of Division 3 Mechanic A Roy Ramos, graduated from Alhambra High School in Alhambra.

Arthur Winston Division 5

College Graduates

- **Deryl Walker**, son of Division 5 Bus Operator Chivala Walker, graduated from LA Sheriff's Department Academy as a Deputy Sheriff.
- **Varis E. Green Jr.**, son of Division 5 Bus Operator Varis Green Sr., graduated from LA Sheriff's Academy as a Deputy Sheriff.
- **Patricia K. Ornelas**, daughter of Division 5 Bus Operator Jose Ornelas, graduated from UCLA with a Master's Degree in Education, Specialization in Race & Ethnic Study.

Employee Graduates

- **Laurie Martindale**, Division 5 Bus Operator, graduated from West LA City College with an AA in Liberal Arts Class Valedictorian, graduated with great distinction.

High School Graduates

- **Varis Green Jr.**, son of Division 5 Bus Operator Varis Green Sr, graduated from St. Bernard in Los Angeles, Cum Laude.
- **Keisheana T. Wright**, daughter of Division 5 Bus Operator Lisa Nettles, graduated from Lakewood High School in Lakewood.
- **Deryl Walker**, son of Division 5 Bus Operator Chivala Walker, graduated from Inglewood High in Inglewood.

Venice Division 6

High School Graduates

- **Jennifer A. Hale**, daughter of Division 6 Bus Operator Evan Hale, graduated from Venice High School in Venice.
- **Kathy Villarreal**, daughter of Division 6 Bus Operator Laura Villarreal, graduated from Pioneer High School in Whittier.
- **Keenan D. Kelsey**, son of Division 6 Division Stenographer Gail Ligon, graduated from Culver City High School in Culver City, voted Most Athletic and Most Friendly by Senior Class.

West Hollywood Division 7

College Graduates

- **Cindy Turcios**, daughter of Division 7 Bus Operator Jose Turcios, graduated from Modern Technology College with a Certificate in Medical Assisting.

Employee Graduates

- **Jesus Guerra**, Division 7 Mechanic, graduated from LA Trade Tech with an AS Degree in Diesel Technology.

High School Graduates

- **Nathan H. Oliver**, son of Division 7 Bus Operator Gregory C. Oliver, graduated from Verbum Dei in Los Angeles.
- **Anita L. Avila**, daughter of Division 7 Bus Operator Pete Avila Jr., graduated from Sacred Heart High School in Los Angeles, Principal's Honor Roll, Honors in Women's Studies and English IV.

West Valley Division 8

College Graduates

- **Catherine J. DeGuzman**, daughter of Division 8 Bus Operator Cesar DeGuzman, graduated from UC San Diego with a BS in Biology.
- **Paulette Fontanez**, daughter of Division 8 Bus Operator Louis Fontanez, graduated from UCLA with a BA.
- **Marcial E. Nieto**, son of Division 8 Bus Operator Marcial Nieto, graduated from UC Santa Barbara with a BA in Global Studies.
- **Kenya Corley**, daughter of Division 8 Schedule Checker and Bus Operator Dennis and Laura Corley, graduated from UC Berkeley with a BA in Psychology.

Employee Graduates

- **Oscar Estrada**, Division 8 Bus Operator, graduated from West Valley Occupational Center with a Certificate in Emergency Medical Technician.

High School Graduates

- **Adam C. Romero**, son of Division 8 Bus Operator Thomas W. Romero, graduated from Walnut High School in Walnut.
- **Raven Wilson**, daughter of Division 8 Senior Instructor Noe Cortez, graduated from John F. Kennedy in Mission Hills.
- **Laura Felix**, daughter of Division 8 Bus Operator Gilbert Felix, graduated from Calabasas High School in Calabasas, 8 Semesters on Honor Roll.
- **Michelle P. Hernandez**, daughter of Division 8 Bus Operator Miguel Hernandez, graduated from Smithson Valley High School in Texas.
- **Mayra Cuevas**, daughter of Division 8 Bus Operator Alfreda Cuevas, graduated from John F. Kennedy High School in Granada Hills, Honor Roll, Principal's Award, Gray Davis Scholarship, Gold Cord award.
- **Sharlene Hayes**, daughter of Division 8 Bus Operator Mary Montgomery, graduated from Birmingham High School in Los Angeles, Certificate of appreciation from LA City Council, Certificate "Most Improved Music

Student".

San Gabriel Valley Division 9

College Graduates

- **Amanda LaPatka**, daughter of Division 9 TOS Thomas LaPatka, graduated from University of La Verne with a BS in Business Administration, Magna Cum Laude, Department Honors.
- **Charmaine Mitchell**, daughter of Division 9 Bus Operator Warren Mitchell Jr., graduated from Cal Poly Pomona with a BS in Biology.
- **Samuel A. Blanche**, son of Division 9 Bus Operator Yvette Blanche, graduated from University of Washington with a BS in Anthropology.
- **Jennifer Lee**, daughter of Division 9 Maintenance Equipment Supervisor Jackey Lee, graduated from UC Santa Barbara with a BS in Biology.
- **Ebonie Perkins**, daughter of Division 9 Bus Operator Willie Mann, graduated from Riverside Community College with an AA in Business.
- **Steven O. Purcell**, son of Division 9 Mechanic Lead Ruck Purcell, graduated from USC with a BA in Industrial System Engineering.

High School Graduates

- **Christian Enser**, son of Division 9 Bus Operator Dennis G. Enser, graduated from California Lutheran High School in Wildomar, CA.
- **Kelly Hardway**, daughter of Division 9 Bus Operator Cathy Hardway, graduated from Etiwanda High School in Etiwanda.
- **Johnathan M. Salinas**, son of Division 9 Bus Operator Cynthia Gomez, graduated from Arroyo High School in El Monte, Outstanding Achievement, Outstanding Senior Athlete.
- **Ryan D.M. Fulcher**, grandson of Division 9 Bus Operator Annie Hunter, graduated from Etiwanda High School in Etiwanda.

Gateway Division 10

College Graduates

- **Denitrea F. Vaughan**, daughter of Division 10 Transit Security Sergeant Herbert Vaughn, graduated from Xavier University of Louisiana with a BS in Psychology.

High School Graduates

- **Daniel Nembhard**, son of Division 10 Bus Operator Robert Nembhard, graduated from Pasadena High School in Pasadena, Athletic Scholarship.
- **Theresa A. Pasos**, daughter of Division 10 Bus Operator Alma Albarran, graduated from West Covina High School in West Covina, Magna Cum

Laude, CSF Life Member.

- **Amanda J. Powers**, daughter of Division 10 Dispatcher Gary Powers, graduated from Rowland High School in Rowland Heights, National Honor Society, National Thespian Society, International Baccalaureate Program Diploma.

Metro Blue Line Division 11

College Graduates

- **Srikant Duggirala**, son of Division 11 Rail Equipment Maintenance Supervisor Prem Duggirala, graduated from UC San Diego with a BS in Biochemistry.
- **Natalie B. Villagomez**, daughter of Division 11 Train Operator and Division 3 Bus Operator Nena Barrios and Manny Villa, graduated from Sonoma State with a BA in Sociology.

High School Graduates

- **Jason R. Kennedy**, son of Division 11 Rail Equipment Maintenance Manager George R. Kennedy, graduated from Arcadia High School in Arcadia.
- **Onesha B. Valentine**, granddaughter of Division 11 Train Operator Rose Haynes, graduated from Rancho Verde High School in Moreno Valley.

East Valley Division 15

High School Graduates

- **Mitchell Harger**, son of Division 15 Maintenance Equipment Records Specialist Carol Kimbrough, graduated from Kaiser High School in Fontana.

South Bay Division 18

College Graduates

- **Monica Valdivia**, daughter of Division 18 Equipment Maintenance Supervisor Miguel Valdivia, graduated from UCLA with a BA in Psychology.

High School Graduates

- **Shannon Janaye Hamlett**, daughter of Division 18 Bus Operator Merduice Reed, graduated from Westchester High School in Westchester.

Metro Red Line Division 20

College Graduates

- **Wendi Bagwell**, daughter of Division 20 Train Operator Fredrick Bagwell, graduated from UCLA with a BA in Linguistics.
- **Jennifer M. Kong**, daughter of Division 20 Maintenance Specialist Sze

Kong, graduated from Oakland University (Michigan) with a Master's Degree in Chemistry.

- **Mayuko S. Harper-Owens**, granddaughter of Division 20 Secretary Joanne Harper, graduated from Loyola Marymount University with a BS in Business Administration.

Employee Graduates

- **Brian Rydell**, Division 20 Acting Manager/Vehicle Maintenance, graduated from CSU Fullerton with a BA in Business Management and Operations.

High School Graduates

- **Gemayel A. Lee**, grandson of Division 20 Secretary Joanne Harper, graduated from Highland High School in Palmdale, Valedictorian, Cal State Long Beach Presidential Scholarship, Key Club, Governor's Scholarship, Highland HS Pacesetter, National Ventures Scholar, Scholar Athlete Award.

Metro Green Line Division 22

High School Graduates

- **Shannon M. Arndt**, wife of Division 22 Storekeeper Paul Arndt and daughter of retired Equipment Maintenance Manager Roger Flynn, graduated with an associate's degree and a Paralegal Certificate from El Camino College.
- **Jameeley Pineda**, daughter of Division 22 Maintenance Specialist Donato Pineda, graduated from Centennial High School in Corona.
- **Gregory L. Johnson**, son of Division 22 Service Attendant Leader Karen Pikes, graduated from Crenshaw Learning Charter High School in Los Angeles, Coca-Cola Scholarship, Gold Seal for GPA, UCLA Blue and Gold Scholarship, Roy Leadership Award/Scholarship, 2002 Honor Graduate.

Accounting Department

College Graduates

- **Marion G. Uy**, daughter of Accounting Department Senior Accountant Corazon Uy, graduated from CSU Fullerton with a BSN in Nursing, cum laude.
- **Grace C. DeGuzman**, daughter of Accounting Department Senior Accountant Silverio DeGuzman, graduated from UCLA with a BS in Biology, Summa Cum Laude.
- **Geraldine Y. Cabrera**, daughter of Accounting Department Accountant Ofelia Cabrera, graduated from UC San Diego with a BS in Molecular Biology.
- **Jenece Solomon**, daughter of Accounting Department Supervisor Jerry Solomon, graduated from UCLA with a BA in Political Science, Magna Cum Laude.

- **Ronald D. Perez**, son of Accounting Department Accounting Supervisor Alex Perez, graduated from UCLA with a BA in Economics & Classical Civilization, UC Regents Scholar, Blue & Gold Scholar.

High School Graduates

- **Armand C. DeGuzman**, son of Accounting Department Senior Accountant Silverio DeGuzman, graduated from Ayala High School in Chino Hills.
- **Jennifer N. Cabrera**, daughter of Accounting Department Accountant Ofelia Cabrera, graduated from Rowland High School in Rowland Heights.

Audit Department

College Graduates

- **Jennifer M. Villanueva**, daughter of Project Audit Group Lead Auditor Nestor Villanueva, graduated from Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising with a Associate Degree in Fashion Design.

Employee Graduates

- **Nestor A. Villanueva**, Project Audit Group Lead Auditor, graduated from DeVry University with a BS in Information Technology.
- **Doreatha Roberts**, Management Audit Sr. Secretary, graduated from University of Phoenix.

High School Graduates

- **John P. Atienza**, son of MASD Senior Auditor Willie Atienza, graduated from Don Bosco Tech in San Gabriel, President's Honors.

Board Research Services

Employee Graduates

- **Christian Valtierra**, Board Research Services Administrator, graduated from CSU Los Angeles with a Master's in Public Administration.

Building Services Department

College Graduates

- **Tiffany N. Harris**, daughter of Custodial Services Mopper/Waxer Lee Harris, graduated from Long Beach City College with an AA in Computer Art and Design.

High School Graduates

- **Cicely D. Sheperd**, daughter of Building Services Maintainer and Scheduling Schedule Clerk Harold and Barbara Sheperd, graduated from Rancho Cucamonga High School in Rancho Cucamonga.
- **Travon B. Williams**, son of USG Mail Carrier Theresa Williams, graduated

from El Camino Real High School in Woodland Hills.

Bus Operations Control

High School Graduates

- **Andrew P. Mellon**, son of Bus Operations Control Center Senior TOS Peter Mellon, graduated from Rancho High School in Rancho Cucamonga.
- **Joseph Castillo**, son of Bus Operations Control Senior TOS David Castillo, graduated from Alhambra High School in Alhambra, Academic Achievement Award.

Construction Safety

High School Graduates

- **Essence King**, granddaughter of Construction Safety Senior Secretary May Hampton, graduated from Manual Arts High School.

Contracts Administration

Employee Graduates

- **Olivia Foro**, Contracts Administration Administrative Aide, graduated from University of Phoenix with a Masters' Degree in Organizational Management.

Customer Relations

High School Graduates

- **Justin R. Wong**, son of Customer Relations Communications Officer Casaundra Mangan, graduated from Temple City High School in Temple City.
- **Juan C. Alamilla**, son of Customer Relations Customer Information Agent I Maria Alamilla, graduated from Don Bosco in Rosemead, Honor Roll, Perfect Attendance.

Employee Graduates

- **Lavette Wade**, Customer Information Agent, graduated from University of Phoenix with a BS in Business Management.

Diversity & Economic Opportunity

High School Graduates

- **Shonnaya Gay**, daughter of Diversity & Economic Opportunity Department Contract Compliance Representative Sherman Gay, graduated from Good Shepherd Luther School in Inglewood, Class Valedictorian, Principal's Honor Roll, 4.0 GPA.
- **Jamel Gay**, son of Diversity & Economic Opportunity Department Contract Compliance Representative Sherman Gay, graduated from Artesia

High School in Lakewood, Varsity Basketball "All Suburban League Selection", Five Star All Star Camp "Top Defense Player".

Communications

Employee Graduates

- **Karen Kern**, EO Communications Assistant Administrative Analyst, graduated from University of Phoenix with a BS in Business Management.
- **Amy Howell**, Communications Intern, graduated from Cal Poly with a BS in Urban Planning and Design.

Facilities Maintenance/Engineering/Systems

College Graduates

- **Mariel L. Fabro**, son of Facilities Engineering Architect Carlos Fabro, graduated from Stanford with a BS in Biomechanical Engineering.
- **Lois E. LeMottee**, wife of Facilities Systems Technician Edward LeMottee, graduated from Cal Poly Pomona with a BA in Social Sciences, Dean's List.

High School Graduates

- **Diana A. Carreon**, granddaughter of Facilities Maintenance Administrative Aide Eileen L. Darensbourg, graduated from Quartz Hill High School in Quartz Hill.
- **Shauna A. Carreon**, granddaughter of Facilities Maintenance Administrative Aide Eileen L. Darensbourg, graduated from Quartz Hill High School in Quartz Hill.

Highway Programs Development

High School Graduates

- **Randy K. Maekawa**, son of Highway Programs Development Director Raymond Maekawa, graduated from Troy High School in Fullerton, National Merit Scholar Finalist, National Honor Society, Governor's Scholars Award.

Human Resources

College Graduates

- **Ruben Bazua Jr.**, husband of HR Employment Standards and Compliance Secretary Irma Bazua, graduated from CSU Los Angeles with a BS in Business Administration, Dean's List.

Information & Technology Services

College Graduates

- **Robert K. Presler Jr.**, son of ITS Engineering Associate Robert K. Presler

Sr., graduated from UC Riverside with a BA and BS in Music and Math, Deans Fellowship, Gluck Foundation Fellowship, UCR Chancellors Academic Scholarship, Outstanding Student of Music Department 2002, Alpha Lambda Delta, Phi Beta Kappa, Golden Key Honor Society, Cum Laude.

- **Candice A. Jackson**, daughter of ITS Computer Operation Analyst Maxine Drummond, graduated from Dillard University with a BA in English and Mass Communication.

High School Graduates

- **Jessica L. Patton**, daughter of ITS Office Supervisor Kelly K. Patton, graduated from Esperanza High School in Yorba Linda.
- **Ian A. Jackson**, son of ITS Computer Operation Analyst Maxine Drummond, graduated from King Drew Magnet High School in Los Angeles.

Maintenance of Way

High School Graduates

- **Joseph R. Cabison**, son of MOW Communications Administrative Aide Esther Cabison, graduated from Don Bosco Tech in Rosemead, President's Honor, Perfect Attendance Award, National Honor Society Excellence Award.
- **Robert E. Chappell II**, son of MOW Communications Director Rob Chappell, graduated from Morenci High School in Morenci, AZ.

Marketing

Employee Graduates

- **Chris Arriola**, Marketing Administrative Intern, graduated from USC with a Master's Degree in Public Administration.

Office of the Ceo

Employee Graduates

- **Geyner Paz**, Office of the CEO Administrative Intern, graduated from CSU Fullerton with a Master's Degree in Public Administration & Public Finance Management.

Operations Central Instruction

College Graduates

- **Carlos A. Baez**, son of Operations Central Instruction TOS Carlos Baez, graduated from MCP Hahnemann University School Of Medicine with a Doctorate of Medicine.

Payroll

College Graduates

- **Allan Leung**, son of Payroll Clerk Huey-Ling Leung, graduated from UCLA with a BS in Biology.

Planning & Development

College Graduates

- **Stephanie Torres**, daughter of Countywide Planning & Development Transportation Planning Manager IV Larry Torres, graduated from CSU Fullerton with a BA in Human Services.

High School Graduates

- **Brianna C. Wright**, daughter of Transit Planning Administrative Aide Juanita L. Wright, graduated from Bishop Montgomery High School in Torrance, Academic Achievement Award, Math Analysis.

Procurement

College Graduates

- **Evangeline L. Veal**, daughter of Procurement Senior Buyer Kitty D. Jones, graduated from CSU Dominguez Hills with a BS in Psychology.
- **David Milam**, son of Procurement/Material Management Chief Administrative Analyst Chuck Milam, graduated from USC with a BS in Architecture.

High School Graduates

- **Jason S.H. Garry**, son of Procurement Contracts Administrator Veronica Hargrove, graduated from Bishop Amat Memorial High School in La Puente.

Programming & Policy Analysis

College Graduates

- **Anna Pauline T. de Jesus**, daughter of Programming and Policy Analysis Department Administrative Aide Jhoanne T. de Jesus, graduated from UC Santa Barbara with a BS in Business Administration.
- **Dyee L. Dysart**, daughter of Asst. Administrative Analyst Mary Lee, graduated from Pasadena City College with an AA in Business and Marketing.

Rail Operations Control

High School Graduates

- **Germaine K. Davis**, son of Rail Operation Control RTOS Instructor Kirk Davis, graduated from Long Beach Polytechnic in Long Beach, Medallion.
- **Ryan M. Davis**, son of Rail Operations Control RTOS Instructor Kirk Davis, graduated from Long Beach Polytechnic in Long Beach, Medallion.

Regional Rebuild Center

Employee Graduates

- **Brenda A. Cummings**, RRC Administration General Clerk III, graduated from CSU Dominguez Hills with a BA in Interdisciplinary Studies.

High School Graduates

- **Xavier Roundtree**, son of RRC Acting TOS Saul Reece and Division 5 TOS June Reece, graduated from Ontario High School in Ontario.

Revenue Department

College Graduates

- **Adele R. Sagun**, daughter of Revenue Fare Collection Technician Jesus Sagun, graduated from Stanford with a Master's in Education.
- **Joseph R. Acuna**, son of Revenue Department Electronic Communication Technician and Rail Electronic Communication Inspector Jeff and Diane Mumolo, graduated from ITT Technical Institute with a Associate of Science in Electronic Engineering.

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Board OKs Motions on Station Developments, Safety Device

- **In other actions:**
 - [Dangerzone Deflectors](#)
 - [Metro Gold Line Parking](#)
 - [25 New Positions](#)
 - [Janitors at 818 Building](#)

(June 27, 2002) The MTA Board approved motions, today, giving CEO Roger Snoble authority to negotiate exclusively with two firms that have proposed developments at Metro Rail stations. The motions require the projects to be built as currently proposed.

Legacy Partners of Irvine wants to develop 2.8 acres at the Hollywood/Vine station. Urban Partners of Los Angeles is planning a development on approximately 7 acres at the Wilshire/Vermont station.

Legacy Partners has proposed a mixed-use, transit-oriented development with some 300 hotel rooms, 200 apartments, 46 condominiums, 30,000 square feet of retail space and 732 parking spaces on the Hollywood/Vine site.

An amendment by Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky would require the MTA to withdraw from negotiations with Legacy Partners if the firm should decide not to build the hotel or condominiums.

The plan proposed by Urban Partners at Wilshire/Vermont calls for development of a three-story middle school for some 800 students on a 2.6 acre portion of the site. This motion also was approved with the provision that major elements of the project would be built or the MTA would terminate the deal.

In other actions:

Dangerzone Deflectors: The Board voted to purchase S-1 Gards – a device also called the “Dangerzone Deflector” – that can push a fallen pedestrian out from under the rear wheels of a moving bus. The devices will be installed on the MTA’s fleet over the next 12 to 15 months.

>See metro.net June 13: "[Dangerzone Deflector can save lives...](#)"

Metro Gold Line Parking. The Board approved a motion to provide up to \$10 million to cover the unanticipated cost of constructing a 1,000-space parking structure at the Metro Gold Line’s Sierra Madre Villa station. The staff will study a proposal to purchase a parking structure at the Del Mar station.

The action also relieves the rail line’s construction authority from the requirement to reimburse the MTA for the cost of pre-revenue startup activities and other items.

25 New Positions. The Board approved a motion permitting the MTA to hire 25 employees to conduct bus schedule point checks, data collection, analysis and reporting required to maintain compliance with the federal Consent Decree.

Under the plan, 18 of the new employees would perform point checks and seven would handle administrative and data processing duties. Currently, the work is spread among existing staff in the Performance Analysis and

Service Planning units.

The Consent Decree's special master has ordered the agency to monitor load standards three times a month on 20 high-ridership bus lines and once a month on 59 other lines beginning July 1. The special master also required additional performance reporting.

Janitors at 818 Building. The Board approved a motion by Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky to "communicate its concerns" to the owners of the 818 West 7th Street building about management's relations with the building's janitors. The MTA still leases offices in the building.

Yaroslavsky's motion stated that as a building tenant, "the MTA has a responsibility to ensure that workers who clean and maintain the building are paid legal wages and treated fairly." An option to extend the MTA's lease is expected to come before the Board for action in July.

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PHOTO: BILL HEARD



Los Angeles City Councilman Hal Bernson

LA City Councilman Hal Bernson Elected MTA Board Chairman

By RICK JAGER

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John Fasana, Claudette Moody and Arthur Sinai commended by MTA Board.

(June 27, 2002) Los Angeles City Councilman Hal Bernson will become the new MTA Board chairman beginning July 1, 2002. He succeeds outgoing Chairman John Fasana, who has held the position since July 2001.

Bernson, who is appointed to the 13-member Board by Mayor James Hahn, has served on the LA City Council since 1979. He will serve as Board Chair through June 2003.

"I want to thank John Fasana for his leadership over the last year as Board Chair," said Bernson. "His commitment to better transportation in Los Angeles County and his involvement has helped guide the MTA to new heights in providing quality transportation services."

"I am grateful to Mayor Hahn and the Board for the opportunity to serve as Chair of the MTA," added Bernson. "I will work hard to continue improving transportation services for the region and look forward to working with the MTA Board, CEO Roger Snoble and MTA management in implementing programs and services aimed at improving mobility,"

The Board also elected Los Angeles County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky as First Vice Chair and Frank Roberts, Mayor of Lancaster, as Second Vice Chair.

The Board chairmanship is rotated among elected officials on an annual basis among the City of Los Angeles, the County of Los Angeles and the League of Cities.

Transitions

PHOTOS: BILL HEARD



< Board Chairman John Fasana, joined by his daughter, Lisa, accepted a resolution of appreciation for his year's service as chairman from Mayor James Hahn.

> Government Relations Director Claudette Moody, who is leaving after 17 years of service to the MTA and the former LACTC, received a resolution of appreciation from Chairman John Fasana and recognition for her service to the MTA from CEO Roger Snoble.



< MTA Inspector General Arthur Sinai, second from left, was presented resolutions marking his eight years of service by Board Chairman John Fasana, incoming Chairman Hal Bernson and Mayor James Hahn. Sinai retires June 30.

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Eastside Light Rail Project Reaches Milestone with FTA Action

By ED SCANNELL

(June 27, 2002) The MTA's Eastside Light Rail Project reached another milestone, last week, when the Federal Transit Administration signed a Record of Decision (ROD).

The FTA action certifies that the project has satisfied all federal environmental guidelines and signals the expected near-term approval for MTA to begin final design of the light rail extension.

This six-mile extension of the Metro Gold Line through East Los Angeles will serve one of the most densely populated areas of Los Angeles County.

"The MTA could not have reached this milestone without the tireless support of the people of the Eastside," said Board Chairman John Fasana. "When this extension of the Metro Gold Line opens in 2008, it will greatly improve Eastside residents' access to jobs, schools, medical facilities, places of recreation and many other destinations."

The Record of Decision paves the way for FTA authorization for the MTA to begin final design of the project, which would be followed by signing of a federal Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA).

The MTA estimates construction of the 1.7-mile tunnel portion of the Eastside project will begin in mid-2003 and construction of the at-grade portion would get underway in late 2004 or early 2005.

"The steady progress of the project and this latest milestone are testimony to the ongoing efforts of our project team," said Jim de la Loza, MTA executive officer for planning. "They are committed to delivering a first-class project to an area whose residents have waited patiently for several years for easier access to the growing Metro Rail system."

The Metro Gold Line, now under construction between Union Station and Pasadena, is expected to begin operations in mid-2003. The Eastside extension would operate from Union Station to Pomona Blvd./Atlantic Blvd. along 1st Street, then transition to 3rd Street via Indiana Street and proceed east along 3rd Street to Atlantic Boulevard.

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San Gabriel Valley, San Fernando Valley Sectors Set to Roll July 1

PHOTOS: DENNIS FINN

By RICK JAGER

The MTA is ready to implement new community-based transit sectors in both the San Gabriel Valley and the San Fernando Valley beginning July 1.

The sectors are designed to improve bus service, reliability, customer satisfaction and enhanced travel opportunities for those patrons who rely on MTA services.

"The creation of these service sectors will dramatically improve the overall operation of the bus fleet and provide quality service to those who rely on MTA services," said Board Chairman John Fasana. "Equally important to the success of the service sectors will be the Board's decision to create individual governance councils that will provide the needed local control over the operation of the bus service."

"Hats off to both CEO Roger Snoble and Deputy CEO John Catoe for fulfilling their promise of implementing community-based transit sectors by July 1," he added.

Heading up the Metro San Gabriel Valley sector is Jack Gabig, who for the past 12 years has served as general manager for Montebello Bus Line, supervising a staff of 200 employees and overseeing a 75-vehicle bus and paratransit service.

David Armijo will head up the Metro San Fernando Valley sector. Armijo for the past six years has served as Director of Operations for Orange County Transportation Authority, where he managed the agency's bus and paratransit services, Metrolink commuter rail services and the Orange County Taxi Administration Program.

A major departure

"The creation of these community-based transit sectors is a major departure from the way MTA has done business in the past," said CEO Roger Snoble. "These sectors, smaller in size, will allow us to operate bus service that is more community-focused and tailored to their needs."

Metro San Fernando Valley service encompasses two MTA operating divisions in Chatsworth and Sun Valley. The sector will be responsible for the operation of approximately 440 Metro buses and 23 Metro Bus lines carrying nearly 53 million boarding passengers each year. Armijo and his support staff are located in offices in Chatsworth.

The Metro San Gabriel Valley service has two MTA operating divisions in El Monte and Cypress Park. The sector will be responsible for the operation of 450 Metro buses and 30 Metro Bus lines carrying nearly 62 million boarding passengers each year. Gabig and his staff are located in offices adjacent to the MTA's operating division in El Monte.

A total of five service sectors will be created to serve the region. By the



Metro San Fernando Valley GM David Armijo



Metro San Gabriel valley GM Jack Gabig

end of the year, community-based transit sectors will also be established in the South Bay, Westside/Central area, and at Gateway Cities in southeast Los Angeles County.

Three other General Managers

The MTA has hired three additional service sector general managers. They are Richard J. Rogers, formerly vice president of Transportation Concepts where he managed all transit, shuttle and paratransit contracts; Dana Coffey, a 26-year MTA veteran, most recently serving as division transportation manager at South Bay Division 18; and Tracy Daly, a former assistant executive officer for Metrolink.

Rogers will assume the general manager position for the Gateway Cities sector, Coffey will take on the general manager duties for the South Bay sector and Daly assumes the general manager position for the Westside/Central service sector.

The appointments of all five general managers for their respective sectors are proposed. The MTA Board has approved the creation of individual governance councils to provide local control over the sectors. The Board still must define the roles and responsibilities of those councils and is expected to take action in late September.

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v The San Gabriel Valley service sector building, from Santa Anita Avenue. The building is located at San Gabriel Valley Division 9 in El Monte.



San Gabriel Valley Sector Employees Move Into New Digs

By AMY HOWELL

(June 28, 2002) On the heels of their San Fernando Valley counterparts, San Gabriel Valley sector management and staff moved into new digs, Thursday.

"This is the first day out here," said Community Relations Manager Helen Ortiz. "Everybody who's been assigned is here today."

Employees will work in the building that previously served as the location for Operations Control Instruction (OCI) at San Gabriel Valley Division 9 in El Monte.

"I'm trying to work and unpack at the same time," said Executive Secretary Lisa Rose Martinez.

In addition to her own duties, Martinez also assisted construction and engineering crews, as well as ITS employees, with tasks that included getting computers, phones and fax machines up and running.

"We're all working together as a team to get this building ready and operable," Martinez said.

The official operational start date for both service sectors is July 1.

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In addition to trying to work and unpack simultaneously, Executive Secretary Lisa Rose Martinez also is assisting with other tasks that will get the service sector up and running. Below, Administrative and Finance Manager Chris Gallanes' new office unpacks his office.



Photos by Amy Howell