

MTA Chief Executive Officer Franklin E. White's

# CELEBRATE

A weekly report  
from the office  
of the CEO

December 19, 1994



Thank you for your tremendous contributions over the past year. I wish each of you and your family a safe and happy holiday season.

**Y**ou're invited to attend the annual holiday party at the 425 Building on Dec. 23. There will be two brunch sittings — one at 9 a.m.; the other at 10 a.m. You'll get your brunch coupon with the specific time on the 19th. Even though children of employees are not invited to the brunch, Phyllis Meng in General Services has arranged parties in both the 425 and 818 buildings for the youngsters. You must accompany your child to either party, which lasts from 9 to 11 a.m. There will be games and prizes at both locations, plus visits from Santa. There also will be a "computer camp" for children over five-years-old at both locations where they will get some hands-on learning about computers. Be sure you sign them up for the parties!

For more information, call Phyllis Meng at 4-6535.

#### **Employee Activities Has Gifts Available**

I understand that Employee Activities is offering some incredible discounts on name brand watches. You might want to browse through their selection on the second floor of the 425 Building. For your shopping convenience, they're also selling holiday baskets, Sees' Candy, and other novelty items. I'm told they have a wide selection of toys and games for children. They'll be open all next week.

#### **Confidentiality and Medical Matters**

As many of you are aware, a lawsuit against SEPTA and our new CAO Judith Pierce, formerly the CAO of SEPTA, has been resolved in Philadelphia. Judith made me aware of the lawsuit during the interview process for the CAO's

position, and I believe strongly her intent in the incident was solely to audit utilization reports to determine if SEPTA was still the victim of fraudulent and duplicative prescriptions filled by SEPTA employees. That fraud had cost the agency tens of millions of dollars in recent years.

I want to assure each of you of MTA's commitment to the confidentiality of medical records. The records involved in SEPTA were not medical, but prescription utilization reports to which SEPTA was legally entitled because the agency was self-insured. In fact, the MTA is not self-insured and doesn't have a similar contract with a sole pharmaceutical provider, as is the case at SEPTA, and therefore, does not receive similar audit materials as occurred in Philadelphia. Instead, this agency maintains contracts with medical providers which pay prescription costs as part of our medical insurance coverage. The providers also review the utilization reports as part of their contractual obligations. As a result, information about prescription usage is between the MTA employee and the insurer.

#### **Uniform Employee Transportation Pass**

I'm pleased to announce that we will implement a new and uniform employee transportation pass/subsidy policy effective Jan. 1, 1995. All full-time, regular MTA employees will receive an employee transportation pass good for unlimited use on all regular service by the MTA. Eligible spouses and dependents can also receive the dependent pass.

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In anticipation of our move into the Gateway Building, we have acquired a new state-of-the art machine which will combine the I.D. badge and employee transportation pass into a single badge. The Employment Office hopes to start taking photos for the new badge in February. Until then, your current I.D. badge and employee pass will continue to be valid. Check with the Employment Office for further details.

#### **Transitchek for Non-MTA-Operated Service**

As many of you know, non-represented and TCU employees will be eligible to receive a Transitchek subsidy of up to \$102 per month to defray the costs of commuting on non-MTA-operated bus and rail service, such as Foothill Transit, Metrolink, etc.

For employees of the former LACTC, this is a continuation of your former policy, with a single exception. Now you must physically take your transitchek voucher to the agency that operates the service on which you want to ride — in exchange for the subsidy. This new policy is a benefit to former RTD staff. See your on-site employee transportation coordinator for further information about the Transitchek program or call Jay Fuhrman at extension 2-4827.

#### **Vera Mae Walsh Appointed to New Position**

Vera Mae Walsh has been named interim director of human resources. Vera was the former director of personnel administration for the LACTC and has spent the last 10 months spearheading the redesign of the classification/compensation program. Because of the extensive review process, you'll be notified of your class./comp.position by the beginning of the year.

#### **MTA Transit Police Celebrate**

Please join the Transit Police as they celebrate their first Community Christmas Day on Dec. 24 at the Blue Line Imperial Station. To volunteer, contact Leslie Ortiz at 2-3620 or Gloria Woodard at 2-3681.

#### **Executive Officers Stage Workshop**

The executive officers attended a strategic planning workshop on Dec. 2. Those present included Dave Kelsey, Art Leahy, Shirley Maimoni, Judith Pierce, Judy Wilson, and myself. The facilitators were David Jones and Shirley Poitras, who many of you have met in unit workshops over the past year. At this workshop, we agreed to the following:

- Executive officers will meet for one hour every Tuesday morning to provide support to one another and to address conflicts, especially in areas where job function overlaps. Only principals may attend.
- The chief executive officer and executive officers will

meet every Thursday at noon. Again, no alternates can attend.

- In order to speed up the strategic, long range work of the organization, the CEO, executive officers, and head of strategic planning will meet quarterly in off site, long-range strategic planning working sessions.

Among the items we discussed were improving the external image of the organization, doing business differently, restructuring and flattening the organization, and communicating more often and more effectively with employees.

#### **Reorganization Activities**

As part of an on-going reorganization in my office, I'm establishing the position of chief of staff, which I shall fill in January. In other moves, Kim Kimball, presently the deputy chief executive officer, will assume other responsibilities.

#### **Vandalism Abatement Award**

Kudos to the Marketing Department's vandalism abatement program, which continues to win acclaim. Councilwoman Rita Walters recently presented the team with a certificate of appreciation, as did the City of Los Angeles.

#### **Green Line Update**

The Marketing Department is hard at work marketing the opening of the Green Line. They've set up action groups, comprised of chamber of commerce directors, community representatives, and other civic leaders. Each of those groups will represent one of the 16 cities along the Green Line. They'll be responsible for grass roots marketing within each of their communities and take the lead on planning and implementing activities for the Grand Opening.

The Marketing team is aiming for a March 17 St. Patrick's Day event to kick off the countdown to the Grand Opening of the line, set for early summer.

May you and your family have a wonderful holiday!

-Franklin White

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*I welcome your comments and questions in response to CEO Report, which is designed to provide employees with direct communication with my office. Please contact either of my Special Assistants, Michael Gonzalez at 244-7476, or Phyllis Tucker at 244-6191. Also, employees can fax comments to 244-6014.*

#### **A publication of the MTA CEO's Office**

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