

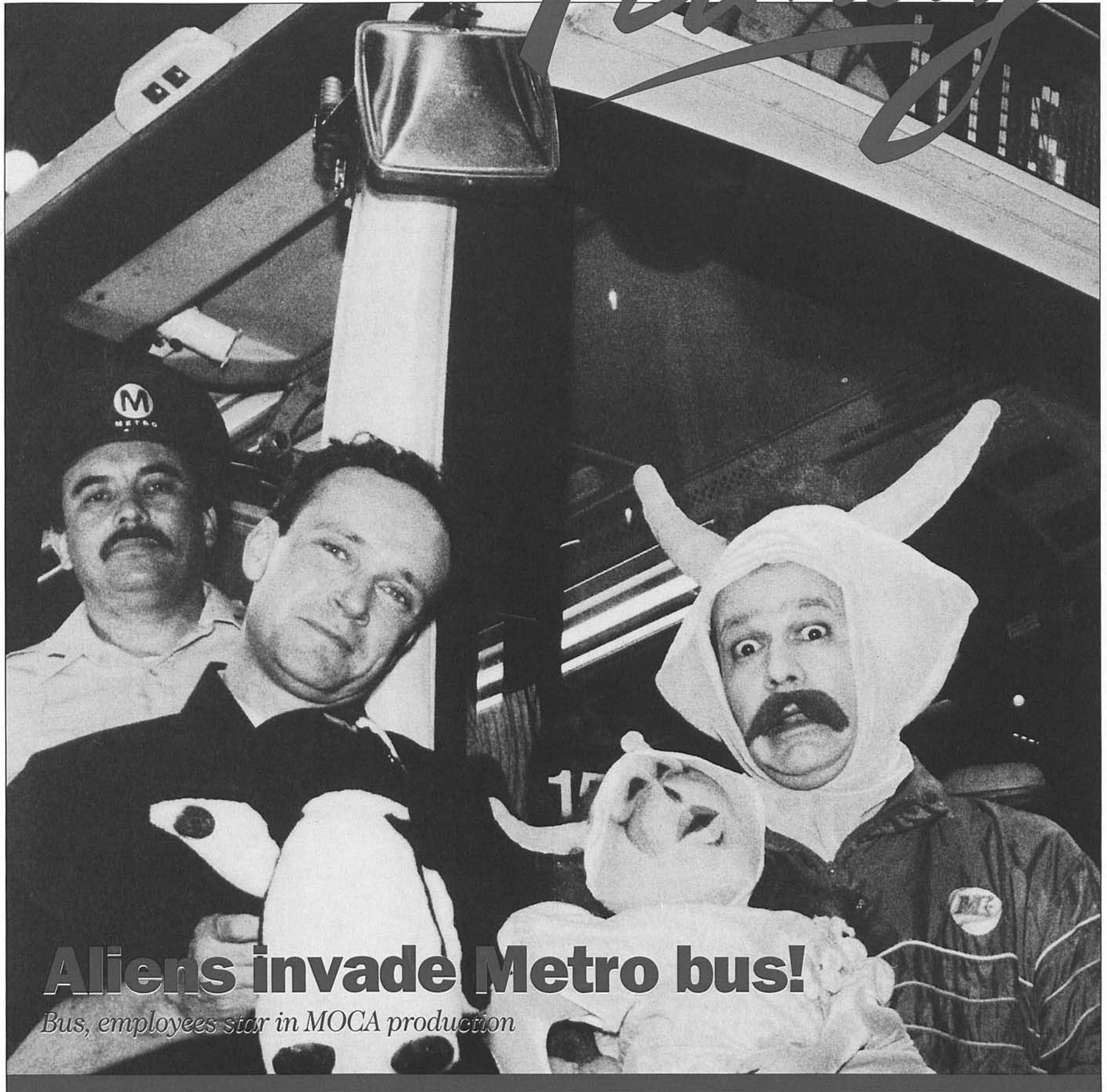
# Metro

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EMPLOYEE MAGAZINE OF THE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

# Family



## Aliens invade Metro bus!

*Bus, employees star in MOCA production*

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**Cover photo: Metro bus Operator Rick Courts (top) and Cornerstone Theater Company actors Peter Howard (L) and Armando Molina are appearing in Token, Alien at the Museum of Contemporary Art's Geffen Contemporary.**

# Metro Family

A monthly employee publication of the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

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# Sharing my thoughts

By Linda Bohlinger, Chief Executive Officer



*As this month's column is being written, \$70 million in funding for our Segment 3 Metro Rail project is being withheld by the Federal Transit Administration. We do have plans to get the grant released. The FTA took this action because of a dispute over the use of Los Angeles International Airport revenues by the City of Los Angeles.*

The FTA's action to embargo Metro Rail funds may force the MTA to borrow money, at a cost of some \$3 million in annual interest, to help us meet our obligations to those who are depending on us to improve regional transportation.

The MTA is not a party to the dispute between the City and the U.S. Department of Transportation. However, we have been in contact with federal and local officials to do what we can to protect our funding.

At the Board meeting, March 26, Mayor Riordan announced that the City of Los Angeles will be returning the airport money, but will pursue legal action against this federal restriction. Based on the City's action, I'll be writing to the FTA asking them to release our grant money.

On a more cheery note regarding federal funding, my recent trips to Washington have left me optimistic that we'll receive a large part of the money needed to improve bus, rail and highway transportation in the County.

### Bus system improvements

We're asking for \$250 million for bus system improvements that will add 650 buses to the region's bus fleet over the next five years, over and above those mentioned in the Long-Range Transportation Plan. That will allow the MTA to replace old buses each year.

A total of \$120 million of our request will go to the MTA to replace our methanol/ethanol fleet; \$80 million to accelerate the MTA's bus replacement program and \$50 million for a region-wide technology-based demonstration project. The municipal operators have submitted separate requests to Congress to accelerate their bus expansion and replacement plans.

We're requesting \$202 million for Metro Rail extensions. A total of \$100 million for Mid-City, \$58 million for the San Fernando Valley final design and \$44 million for the Eastside.

We also requested \$271 million for highway improvements that include the El Monte Busway Extension, the I-10 HOV lane, the Santa Monica Boulevard renovation project and for railroad grade separations in the San Gabriel Valley.

### Top priorities

Bringing in this funding is one of my top priorities. Another is continuing to improve bus service.

I mentioned above our requests for federal funding to add more buses to the MTA's fleet. In addition to speeding up our schedule to purchase new buses, we're also training dozens of new bus operators.

Transit Operations, in cooperation with Marketing, has launched a new program to change the paint scheme on our buses. The new exterior colors will be bright white with a gold stripe accent. Blue-tinted windows and new seat covers will brighten up the interiors.

Many of the changes we're making to improve bus service may not be noticed by the average Angeleno. But, I think they will make people say, "The MTA really has improved."

While these external programs are of

primary importance to the MTA and to our customers, there are three areas I'm focusing on internally. These are leadership, diversity and balance.

You've read frequently in Metro Family and CEO Report about the leadership training we're offering. Our TLAMP program for executives and directors, training for managers and for front-line supervisors is paying off in improved teamwork, morale and productivity.

### Continued training

We'll continue this training effort and will push it to ever lower levels in the agency as time goes on.

My second focus is on diversity. We can be proud of the MTA's ethnic and cultural diversity. At the same time, we represent a blend of transportation agency backgrounds and a wide range of personal skills and experiences.

Finally, I know that work is one of the most important elements of our lives. But, we need to strike a balance between work and our leisure time. Be sure to take time out to have fun and enjoy your family and friends. Renew your spirit and your energy. Don't let life pass you by. ■

## February Employees of the Month



James Allen  
RTP&D



Sr. Off. Ronald Brown  
Transit Police



Eugene Cooper  
Executive Office



Jessica Gil  
Administration



John McBryan  
Transit Operations



John McCamy  
Rail Construction



Stephen Sawyer  
Communications



Johnnie Smith  
Finance

# 'All the world's a stage'...especially a Metro bus

*Metro takes center stage in BUS pLAY at MOCA*

By Frank Harper

Real-life dramas are enacted every day aboard Metro buses, as any operator can tell you.

With this in mind, the Cornerstone Theater Company is staging *BUS pLAY*, a series of nine plays at the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA). The short dramas are performed aboard a Metro bus and feature an actual MTA operator in the role of — a bus operator.

A Metro bus is currently parked inside MOCA's Geffen Contemporary in downtown Los Angeles. It's part of an art exhibition, entitled "Uncommon Sense." The series runs through July 6.

The Series 1800 Metro bus, prepped for its theatrical debut by Division 10 maintenance, serves as both stage and seating for the plays.

## Token, Alien

The primary play, *Token, Alien*, is a 25-minute fantasy bus ride through Los Angeles. With the 39-member audience occupying seats aboard the coach, the bus stops at many Southland landmarks. As the fanciful journey continues, silhouettes of city landmarks pass by the bus windows, giving the impression of motion.

Other passengers aboard the bus include aliens—the extraterrestrial variety—who board the bus via ceiling vents and windows, a penguin and a bride and groom.

According to playwright Christopher Liam Moore, the play's title, *Token, Alien*, purposefully plays on the double meanings of the words "token" and "alien." Its themes deal with such important issues as immigration and building bridges among Los Angeles' diverse communities.

Audience members gain entrance to the play by standing on bus token emblems painted on the museum floor. *Token, Alien* is presented every Sunday at 2, 3 and 4 p.m. The Geffen Contemporary is located at 152 North Central Avenue.

Eight other short plays with bus themes are presented on Thursdays at 5:30, 6:30 and 7:30 p.m. and on most Saturdays at 2, 3 and 4 p.m. They feature such titles as: *One Downtown*, *Ride # 14*, *Seat Selection*, and *Iphigenia at Alvarado*.

## Free admission

"This is a great opportunity for Metro employees and their guests, as well as our



MTA Division 1 Operator Rick Courts (L), who plays a bus driver in *Token, Alien*, listens for directions during a meeting with fellow actor, Leslie Jones (c) and Cornerstone Artistic Director Bill Rauch.



Karole Foreman is a bride who begins her honeymoon aboard a Metro bus in *Token, Alien*.



Actor Armando Molina of the Cornerstone Theater Company plays an alien who boards a Metro Bus during *Token, Alien*.

Ten MTA employees were cast in the Cornerstone Theater Company's plays. They are:

Rashaad Ali	Rick Courts
Dan Denkins	Fred Fluker
Luther Fortinberry	Irma Hill
Patrick Hilton	Richard Lopez
Gloria Mitchell and Leslie Jones, a former employee.	

customers, to visit one of our most acclaimed art museums for free," says Maya Emsden, Metro Art director.

Admission also includes entrance to the art galleries.

"The Metro system is a meeting place for the diverse communities that make up our city," says Emsden. "This play can help us connect with one another in new ways."

Cornerstone Theater Company's philosophy is to involve non-professional actors alongside its company members in community-based productions.

Metro Art publicized auditions for the plays within the MTA and worked to recruit actors from throughout the agency. Nearly a dozen of the cast members are MTA employees.

"We want to celebrate the people who work at the MTA," says Moore, "to get their perspective and incorporate it into the play."

For information about the MOCA exhibit and play schedules, call the Museum of Contemporary Art at (213)-626-6222. ■

## Ali brings life experience to his role in MOCA play

By Mary Ann Maskery



Rashaad Ali

Rashaad Ali has been a bus operator for 21 years and does he have stories to tell!

"Like the guy who was trying to board the bus, and then he grabbed the outside mirror, climbed up on top of the bus, and then crawled through a hatch," Ali says in recalling the incident. "We all have stories. People don't believe them when you tell them."

He reenacted that one for an audition with the Cornerstone Theater Company and got the job. He's now one of ten MTA employees who are acting out their life experiences in the "Uncommon Sense" exhibit now at MOCA's Geffen Contemporary.

## Positive elements

"It's a chance to show some positive elements of the job. Have fun with it," he says. "Most people don't experience much on a bus, unless the bus driver is displaying some positive attitude, some humor."

Ali works out of Division 10, driving Line 55 on Compton Avenue in the morning, and Line 21 on Wilshire Boulevard in the afternoon. He also works as a runway model on the side.

He and his wife, Lorelei, a fashion designer, live with their three children, Zakkiyya, Maza, and Amir, in south Los Angeles.

When Ali hangs up his MTA cap, he'd like to get into acting. It's been a lifelong dream. In the meantime, he'd like to convey at least one thing about bus operators to the public: "We're approachable. We're real people." ■

# On the line for the MTA

*MTA's Government Relations advocates work at local, state and national levels*

By Ed Scannell

When it comes to transportation in Los Angeles County, everyone is touched in very substantial ways by the work of the MTA.

And, while the work of MTA's transportation specialists is indispensable, getting ideas from planning to the asphalt and the tracks usually also takes the efforts of a small group of men and women tucked away in a corner of the 19th floor at Headquarters.

Known collectively as Government Relations, their mission is to help the executive staff and Board develop policy and legislation, and, in their words, to act as the voice of the more than nine million people of Los Angeles County.

Whether we're talking about local, state or federal government, Government Relations and Public Affairs Director Gisselle Acevedo-Franco and her staff are well aware of the need to develop strong partnerships at City Hall, in Sacramento, and in the nation's capital.

## A creative job

"But just because you know somebody doesn't mean you'll be effective in this kind of work," says Acevedo-Franco. "Our job also requires being creative in terms

of developing policy and researching — and in some instances even writing — legislation."

Like their counterparts in private industry, the people of Government Relations are lobbyists, or advocates if the word lobbyist bothers you. Unlike the private sector, however, their client list includes the public.

"We lobby on the merits of the argument and say 'this is how this bill will benefit the public,'" says Claudette Moody, who focuses on legislative efforts in Sacramento. "We're in a difficult position because we represent not only the public, but also MTA's technical staff and the Board."

## Batting for the MTA

Arthur Sohikian goes to bat for MTA in the halls of Congress.

"You try to build consensus at the local level, the state level, and in Congress to talk about providing more money for transportation," says Sohikian. "At the same time many other special interests also are in the ring competing for a part of what now is a smaller pot of money."

Audrey Noda is Government Relations' eyes and ears at the local level.

"Among our stakeholders are local, state, and federal officials who control

the purse strings," says Noda, whose objectives include "improving the image of the MTA."

As bills make their way through the state Legislature, Government Relations sends out "legislative alerts."

## 117 Transportation bills

"Currently there are 117 bills in Sacramento dealing with transportation issues," says Moody. "Eight bills involve the MTA specifically. Four of those deal with the structure of the MTA Board of Directors."

To be successful in its work, Government Relations must convince elected officials and

the public that transportation is a fundamental part of life in America. "It puts food on the table because it's about work," says Acevedo-Franco.

Acevedo-Franco and her staff say trying to forge consensus and navigating the often turbulent political waters is a high-stress job.

"We find ourselves worrying if MTA is going to get the funding it needs," says Acevedo-Franco. "We're here to give people clear and accurate information about legislation and policy and how it applies to them. Bottom line, we're here to serve our customers, the people of LA County." ■



## Gisselle Acevedo-Franco named Latina of the Year

Gisselle Acevedo-Franco, MTA Government Relations and Public Affairs director, recently was named one of two "Outstanding Latinas of the Year" at the 11th annual FERIA de la Mujer (Women's Fair), sponsored by radio stations KTNQ and KLVE. A resi-

dent of Monrovia, she is a native of Costa Rica who moved to the United States at age 12.

She earned degrees in Spanish from Immaculate Heart College and a master's from Cal State LA. She received her JD from Loyola Law School and then represented persons with disabilities at Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center and Protection and Advocacy.

Later, she headed the communications division at MedPartners/Mullikin. ■

# Smarter than smart: MTA to deploy intelligent transportation system

By Mary Ann Maskery

Imagine standing at a bus stop and reading a screen that tells you exactly when the next Metro bus will arrive. Not the scheduled time, but the actual minute when your particular bus will stop for you. And the exact time you can transfer to your next bus, or train, or shuttle.

Imagine knowing traffic conditions on local streets and freeways as they happen.

Imagine a system in which traffic signals can be coordinated so buses can move faster. Or a system that knows in advance what traffic conditions will be on the roads and the actual arrival times of buses and other public transit.

That's what Project IMAJINE is all about. IMAJINE (Inter-Modal and Jurisdictional Integrated Network

Environment) is a step into the future of integrated computer systems, using Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) technology.

## \$3 million project

The MTA Board has approved development of the \$3 million project, which is slated for deployment in Southeast Los Angeles County in 18 months.

It will expand later to include all of Los Angeles and Ventura counties as the nation's first broad-scale demonstration of ITS.

The Federal Highway Administration has designated Southern California as one of four primary corridors in the country to receive funds for deploying ITS technologies.

"IMAJINE will mean faster response in

clearing freeway tie-ups, a more efficient use of freeways and adjoining streets, and a steadier traffic flow," says Interim CEO Linda Bohlinger. "It also will link public transit and other forms of transportation. The result will be better service for our riders and easier access to all forms of travel in the Los Angeles region."

The MTA already has helped develop 'Smart Corridor,' a program that integrates computerized information systems to minimize congestion on the Santa Monica Freeway.

## Coordinates traffic

IMAJINE is even smarter. Where Smart Corridor combines the resources of primary road and highway agencies, IMAJINE will coordinate most traffic-related activities in a community.

IMAJINE ties together four groups: the computer systems for MTA buses and Freeway Service Patrol tow trucks, the Caltrans computerized control system on the I-105 Freeway, arterial traffic signal control systems for cities in Southeast Los Angeles County, and para-transit programs provided by Access Services.

The network will build on such existing technology as the satellite-based Global Position System (GPS) used by the Freeway Service Patrol. It also will incorporate parts of the sign post system, a sensor-based technology that has been used to monitor Metro bus positions.

IMAJINE also can be expanded. That will allow other transportation systems, such as Metro Rail, Metrolink, commercial vehicles, taxis or special fleets to be included in the future. ■

# Emblematic of Success

Design competition draws operations employees

## Transit Operations

Maria Aguirre, Editor



By Amy Tidus and Suzanne Lawver,

As part of Transit Operations' 100-Day Action Plan, employees were challenged to create an emblem for their own bus division that symbolizes the unique qualities of their respective communities.

The emblems will be used as bus decals, patches and pins for each bus operating division.

Last November, 42 talented Operations employees participated in the design competition. The competition was open to all employees within each division.

The focus was on fun and creativity, not perfection. The idea was to convey the concept so that the artwork could later be refined by a graphic designer.

### Mixed media, artists

The choice of media was left up to the employee. Entries submitted included watercolor, computer-generated designs, and hand-drawn motifs colored with marking pen.



The ranks of artists included mechanics, operators, analysts and even senior level managers. Contestants ranged from recent hires to 24-year veterans.

A committee composed of Operations and Graphics staff judged all the entries and named the winners. The designs were then sent to graphic designer Joe Simpson, who then prepared the design's final form.

Contest winners each received mugs at a presentation held at the Transportation Innovations Conference in January.

### Check out our bus

The winners will soon see their designs

emblazoned on every bus assigned to their division.

The goals of the design project were to:

- Inspire pride in the divisions.
- Encourage careful attention to the maintenance and condition of our buses, which will now be clearly identified with a particular division.
- Make the equipment more easily identifiable for the general public, should they wish to comment on a particular bus or share an experience they had with the bus.

So, the next time that you pull up alongside of one of the MTA's buses—check out the insignias! ■



Shown on this page are four examples of Transit Operations division logos designed by MTA employees. The designers of the logos shown here are: Venice, Jose Medrano; East Valley, Don Howey, Laura Laidet and Rich Herpers; West Hollywood, Carl Hobson; and South Bay, Bill Haines, Debbie Thulin, Mary Grace Hall and Eric Carlisle. Final designs were prepared by Joe Simpson of MTA Graphics.



## Guess our new names

Part of the decal project was to rename each of the MTA's bus operating divisions. Can you match the new name with the old division number?

- A. South Bay
- B. Arthur Winston/Midcities
- C. Long Beach Port
- D. Crossroads
- E. Venice
- F. West Hollywood
- G. West Valley
- H. Gateway
- I. East Valley
- J. North Los Angeles
- K. Central City
- L. San Gabriel Valley

Answers  
A. I, B. S, C. L, D. E, F. T,  
G. H, H, I, J, S, J, K, L, L, T, 9

# Putting it together for the Eastside

*Project Manager Alfonso Rodríguez seeks public's support for Red Line construction*



**Alfonso Rodríguez, project manager, Metro Rail Eastside Extension, often visits the Boyle Heights neighborhood where a Metro Red Line station will be built.**

By Gary Wosk

As a boy growing up in East L.A., Alfonso Rodríguez had two passions: one was taking things apart, the other was playing goal keeper for the soccer team — training grounds, as it turned out, for one pressure-cooker of a career in railway construction.

"I was always tinkering with stuff," says the 35-year-old project manager of the \$1.05 billion Metro Red Line Eastside Extension. "I once took the dryer apart just because I wanted to see how it worked."

And then there's that other passion. Guarding the nets and preserving those 1-0 victories are still a source of inspiration to Rodríguez, who as a boy lived on Ferris Street at Whittier Boulevard, close to where the subway will one day pass.

## Heading off problems

Instead of intercepting intended goals, today Rodríguez is more concerned with heading off each and every problem on the Eastside construction project before it occurs. And just like playing goal keeper, he knows the margin of error in this game is zero, rules he intends to thrive under.

"We know we're under a microscope," says Rodríguez, whose team includes nearly 200 MTA employees. "That's why we're going to make sure things get done right on the Eastside."

He'll focus on Phase One of the Eastside extension, expected to be finished by the year 2004. The 3.7-mile project includes four stations designed with cultural themes and will extend from Union Station to First and Lorena streets.

In between, there will be stops at the Little Tokyo Arts District, First Street and Boyle Avenue and Cesar Chavez Boulevard and Soto Street. By the year 2010 daily ridership is expected to climb to nearly 30,000 passengers.

## Array of Opportunities

"The subway will afford the people of East Los Angeles an array of opportunities," says Rodríguez, who now lives in Chino Hills with his wife Dee Dee and three children, Kaitlin, 7, Daniel, 5, and Neil, a new-born. "In a way, it will erase an imaginary boundary line that has prevented people from getting ahead simply because they didn't have the ways and means of traveling to a certain destination."

Overseeing the construction of public works projects in residential areas is nothing new to Rodríguez, a civil engineering graduate of Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. He came to the MTA in April, 1996, with a

track record of building projects on time, within budget and in a manner communities find acceptable.

Unlike the first three Metro Red Line segments, a significant portion of the tunneling on this project will take place directly under residential and commercial buildings, nearly 250 in all. And, although public apprehension in Boyle Heights and East LA is high, Rodríguez says the construction design approach and technology to be used reflects this higher challenge.

## Architect or Engineer

"My parents always knew I was either going to be an architect or engineer because I was always playing with Super City, a high-rise building set," he says. "The fact that I get to build this project closes the loop."

Parental support is one thing, but how about some of the 400,000 people who live within one-quarter mile of four planned subway stations. Does Rodríguez have any more credibility than, say, an outsider?

Not according to a few of the patrons lunching at Ana's Original Mexican Food on First Street, who recently listened as the blue-jeans clad Rodríguez shared the latest subway news with them.

"It really doesn't matter that he's from East LA," said Ana Falcon, the restaurant's owner. "Just because he's from here

doesn't mean I automatically have confidence in him."

## Wait and see

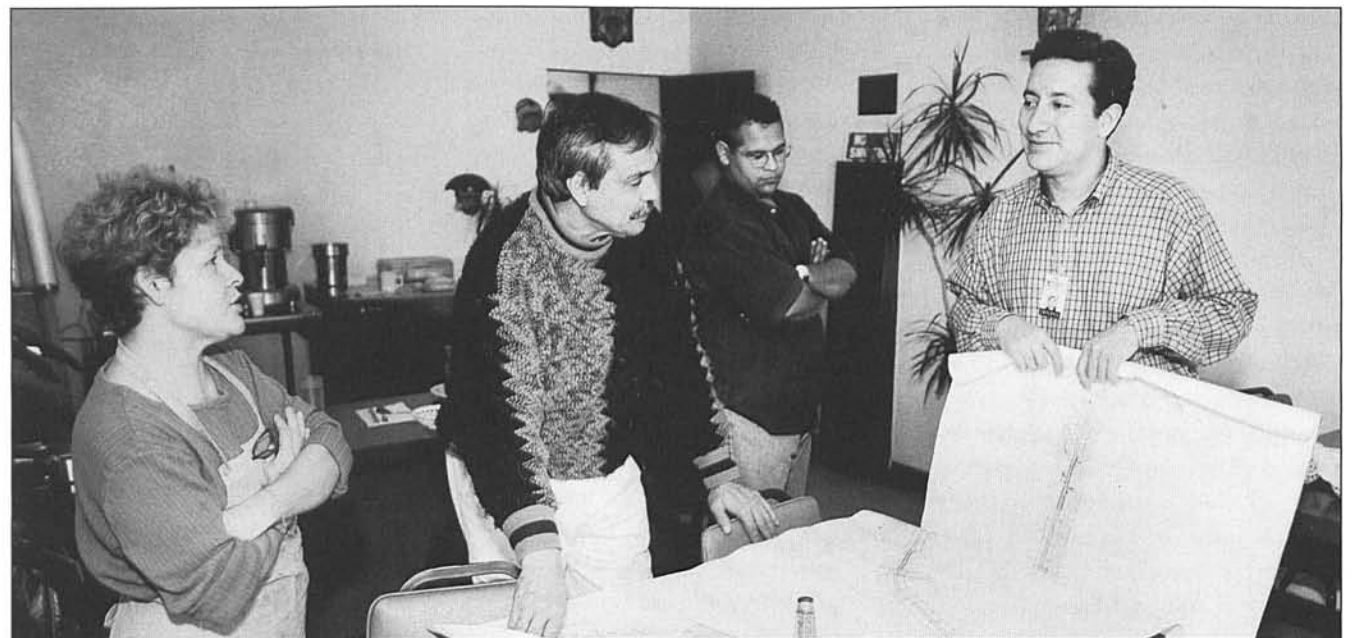
Customer Ray Bretado, a teacher at Blessed Sacrament in Hollywood, echoed that sentiment. "I prefer to take a wait-and-see-approach. I say, 'show me first.' If, in fact, he really cares about the community it will make a difference."

Listening to what people want is the approach Rodríguez has adopted since joining the MTA. He has attended many community meetings and will continue doing so until the project is completed in the year 2004. Yet, he's the first to admit it will take much more than being from East LA and a great attitude to win over people's confidence.

Then, there are the detractors who say he is too wet behind the ears to be handling one of the largest public works projects in the country.

"At my last job I was the youngest VP in that company's history. Before that I was the youngest city engineer at the City of Rosemead," Rodríguez says. "I've always had to prove myself. That's how I felt when I first came to the MTA, but after a while people could see what I could do and why I was hired.

"I just know when this project is done it's going to be beautiful and I'll be able to say I had a part in it." ■



**Rodríguez unfurls construction blueprints and answers questions posed by (from left) Eastside business owners Ana Falcon and Pedro Prieta, and Ray Bretado, a teacher.**

# Long-Range Transportation Plan: Taking the MTA's Vision to 2020

## RTP&D

Regional Transportation Planning & Development

Donna Finn, Editor

By Marta Maestas

**H**ow do you get public support for the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), from the onset?

The answer, RTP&D Executive Officer Jim de la Loza reasoned, is to communicate, communicate, communicate.

Convinced that the MTA needed public input and feedback, de la Loza initiated the Stakeholder and Community Outreach Process.

Previously, LRTPs had been developed, refined internally, and then "rolled out" to the public for comment.

Local officials and the general public expressed frustration with this, a process that essentially asked them to rubber-stamp a finished product.

De la Loza and his staff were determined to change this perception.

### Gain relevant feedback

RTP&D Public Affairs staffers were asked to develop a Stakeholder and Community Outreach Process to gain

relevant feedback into the LRTP update.

This approach channels broad-based public input directly to the MTA Board for their consideration in developing transportation policies and strategies through the year 2020. More public comment will be presented to the Board next Fall.

Keith Killough, Deputy Executive Officer of Countywide Planning and Manager of the LRTP Update, explains:

"The purpose of the focus group component of the public process is to obtain constructive input from a manageable, critical peer group of individuals who have had previous experience and knowledge of Los Angeles County transportation issues."

These focus groups provide all-important review and comments during the development of the LRTP Update. The groups are divided into three categories: Business/Labor; Academic/ Environmental; and Transportation System Users.

### Vision and mission

Comments received in the first round of the meetings emphasized that the MTA should begin with a vision. The LRTP should be a blueprint to implement that vision.

Focus group participants felt the LRTP should identify specific goals and objectives and establish measurable milestones.

A second round of Stakeholder meetings began last February. Comments from

those sessions were considered during the development of the MTA's Vision and Mission statements and the Framework of Goals and Strategies.

"We were gratified with the response and input received on the Vision and Mission statements," says de la Loza.

"Stakeholders felt we listened to them and implemented their initial suggestions."

"I'm grateful to all participants who took the time to contribute so significantly to the public process, and to the MTA staff for their dedication and commitment to our customers," he declared. ■

## Santa Fe right-of-way is a bikeway to the future



By Art Cueto

**A** dusty, unused railroad right-of-way meandering through the cities of San Dimas, La Verne, Pomona, and Claremont in the eastern San Gabriel Valley may soon be reborn as a heavily used bicycle facility in Los Angeles County.

The Eastern San Gabriel Valley Class I Regional Bikeway (or Santa Fe Bike Trail for short) is a proposed six-mile-long bicycle trail along the former Santa Fe Railroad right-of-way.

Last February, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) convened a two-day conference in Washington, D. C., to develop guidelines for bicycle trails along railroad rights-of-way.

### Santa Fe Bike Trail

The Santa Fe Bike Trail was selected as one of the case studies for the conference. Representatives from federal, state and local agencies, national transit associations, such as the Bicycle Federation of America, and railroad operators attended the event.

In 1992, the MTA purchased the San Gabriel Valley right-of-way for the Metro Blue Line to Pasadena. Its use for other transportation possibilities, notably as a bicycle trail, was identified in the 1995 MTA San Gabriel Valley Bicycle Master Plan.

Last year, MTA staff began to work with their counterparts from the four San Gabriel Valley cities and the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) to develop the project.

With the assistance of the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments (SGVCOG), the four cities are now actively seeking funding for the project's

**Winding its way through the cities of San Dimas, La Verne, Pomona and Claremont in the eastern San Gabriel Valley, the Santa Fe Bike Trail is a proposed six-mile-long bicycle path along the former Santa Fe Railroad right-of-way.**

implementation. Provided that funding is secured, the anticipated opening of the project will be early 1999.

### High ridership anticipated

The Santa Fe Bike Trail boasts an unusually high degree of local support. High ridership levels are anticipated because it will serve a number of existing bicycle facilities including activity and employment centers.

Safety is a primary concern of the federal government with shared use railroad rights-of-way and pedestrian/bicycle activities. Federico Pena, the former Secretary of Transportation, set a goal of zero pedestrian-related incidents on railroad rights-of-way.

### Shared-use facility

The MTA's ownership of the former Santa Fe right-of-way provides the ultimate conditions for a shared-use facility. It's an ideal situation when one agency oversees both the rail and bicycle operations of a right-of-way.

A comprehensive plan, addressing both future rail and bicycle activities along a shared-use right-of-way, is essential for its safe development and operation.

With a range of complex issues and so many participants involved, developing guidelines may be a lengthy process.

The MTA will be working closely with the FRA to implement and develop guidelines for this and similar projects. ■

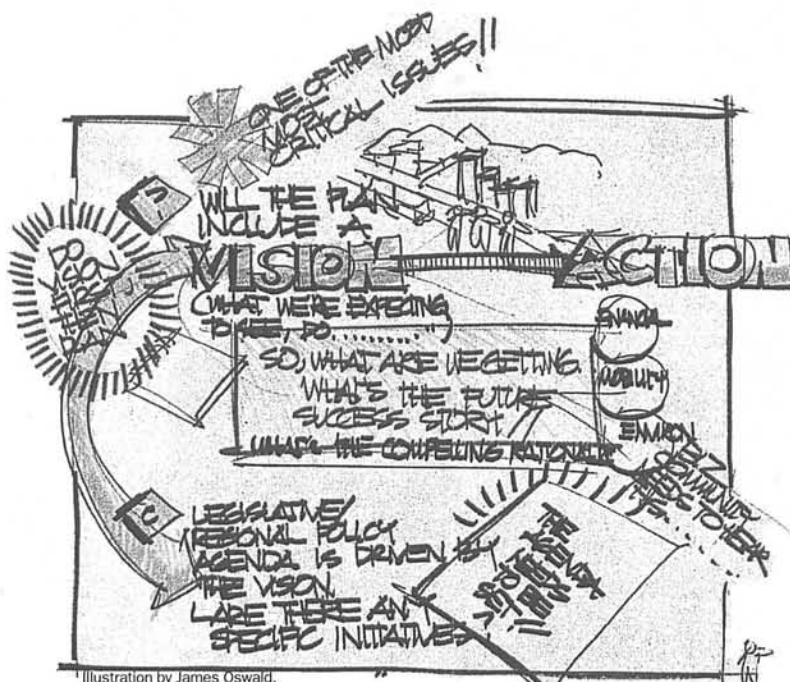
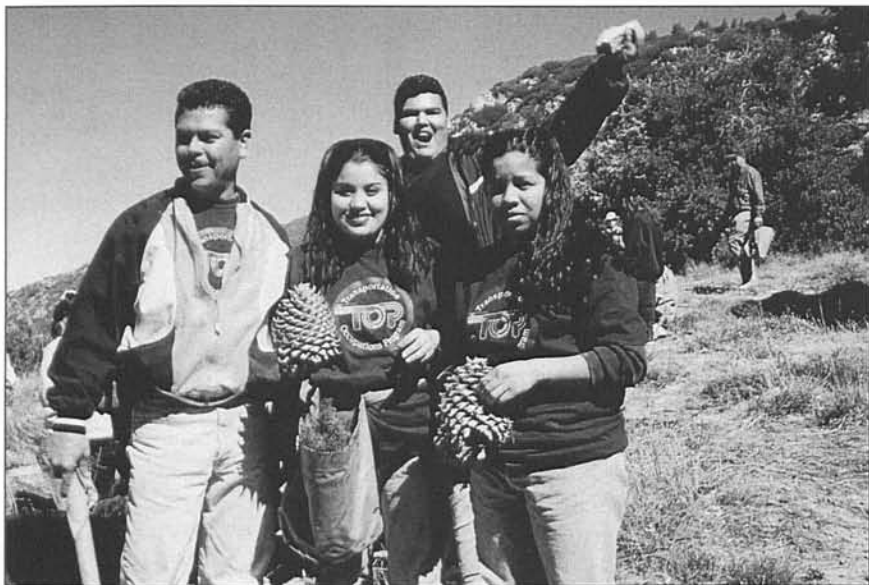


Illustration by James Oswald.

This example of "facilitation graphics" was used to illustrate the comments of focus group participants during discussion of the MTA's Long-Range Transportation Plan.

# MTA's Brye, Rodriguez enjoy planting trees, nurturing souls

*"We plant trees not for ourselves, but for future generations." Caecilius Statius, 220-168 BC*



Jose Rodriguez (L) and TOP student volunteers from Friedman Occupational Center pause from their work planting trees in the San Gabriel Mountains.

Jose Rodriguez, MTA graphic artist, smiles when he describes how his high school students react during trips to the San Gabriel Mountains. "Most of the kids have never been outside of the urban area before," he says. "It's a totally different experience for them. "At first they're apprehensive.

Gradually, the expressions on their faces change; they become more relaxed, more playful," he says. "In the mountains, they begin to experience a feeling of safety that they don't have in their neighborhoods." Rodriguez, who teaches graphic design and architectural drafting as part of the MTA's Transportation Occupations

Program (TOP), takes his 11th and 12th grade students to the San Gabriels in conjunction with TreePeople, an urban environmental group.

The students plant six-inch tree seedlings on mountain slopes. The seedlings and the tools are supplied by TreePeople.

### Volunteers needed

Along with Steve Brye of the Central Area team, Rodriguez has been taking students on tree planting expeditions for more than six years. For several years, Brye, himself, has funded the cost of the bus rental.

"We need more volunteers," Brye says. It's an enriching experience all around — for the students, for us, and for the environment.

The tree-planting experience also ties in with the students' curriculum.

"They study graphic design and architectural drafting and urban planning," says Brye. "Tree planting helps them analyze how eco-systems function."

*Stories by Frank Harper.*

### Dedicated students

Rodriguez and Brye both have the highest regard for the students they've accompanied.

"They put in a great effort," says Rodriguez.

The students attend regular day classes. After school, they travel by bus to attend Rodriguez's class at Friedman Occupational Center for three more hours. Several students have part-time jobs to help support their families.

Rodriguez, who puts in a full day at the MTA before teaching in the evening, provides his students with extra help — job finding skills such as completing applications for school and jobs, interviewing, and resume writing.

"Schools often don't adequately teach these skills and counselors are often too busy," says Rodriguez. "Teaching students is sort of like planting trees. Both have great payoffs in the future."

*If you're interested in becoming a volunteer or would like more information about the TOP tree planting trips, contact Art Gomez at 922-5257 ■*

## Same course, different race for MTA's marathon runners



Jackie Bobo, MTA marathon runner, works out on the streets near her home.

Everett Wilson, as he appeared in the 1990 LA Marathon. Wilson runs 80 to 100 miles a week.

For Jackie Bobo, the event was a personal achievement marking the culmination of a year-long effort.

For Everett Wilson, it was just a typical Sunday outing.

Bobo and Wilson were two of the estimated three dozen MTA employees participating in last month's LA Marathon. A cross-section of divisions and departments was represented as runners, walkers, bikers and volunteers.

For Bobo and Wilson, the same race was a vastly different experience.

Jackie Bobo of Capital Planning decided a year ago to enter her first marathon. Her routine included driving to Santa Monica by 6:30 a.m. from her home in Pasadena each

Saturday to work out with the LA Leggers running club.

### 100 miles weekly

Everett Wilson, by contrast, was running his 12th LA Marathon. His goal is to run 20.

Each Sunday, Wilson runs 20 or more miles. Awake by 4:30 a.m. on weekdays, he runs four to six miles before coming to work in the Accounting Department. After work he puts in another four to six miles at the Muir High School track in Pasadena or in the Altadena foothills.

Altogether, in a typical week, Wilson runs 80 to 100 miles, depending on whether he is training for a marathon.

Wilson was disappointed by his performance in this year's race. He was off the mark from his personal best time of three hours, 15 minutes for the LA Marathon.

### Thinking about next year

"I was elated," Bobo says about her first marathon. "At mile 17, I started thinking about next year's race."

Her goal is to continue to improve her stamina and endurance.

On Monday, the day after the race, Bobo rested at home, exhausted but thrilled by her accomplishment. She is looking forward to next year's race.

Everett Wilson ran six miles that evening after work. ■



# Conversation With: Frank Cardenas

*MTA's chief of staff came up the hard way*

By Bill Heard, Editor

Frank Cardenas got where he is today because he was inspired by his mother's hard work and integrity, because a college administrator took an interest in him — and because the RTD's old Garvey Avenue line always ran on time.

"I was practically raised on the RTD," says Cardenas, 35, the MTA's chief of staff. "My mom and I would take the Garvey line from our home in Rosemead into downtown LA to go shopping on Broadway."

Amparo Contreras, a single mother, worked long hours at low-paying book-keeping jobs to give her young son, Frank, and his sister, Ofelia, a better life than she had experienced since emigrating from Mexico in her late 20s.

Ofelia was 17 years older than her brother, so for most of his youth, Cardenas and his mother lived together in their Rosemead home.

## Strong work ethic

"She was my mother, my father, my best friend. She took me to my first Dodger game on the RTD's Stadium Special," he recalls. "From her, I got values and a strong work ethic. She's one of the most principled people I've ever known."

With gangs on the rise in their area, Mrs. Contreras insisted that her son attend Don Bosco Tech, a Jesuit school. "I didn't blossom academically there," he says, "but, the discipline was valuable."

During high school, Cardenas worked in a lumber yard, a liquor store and as a punch press operator in a car parts factory. For a year after graduation, he worked in construction, digging ditches and pouring concrete.

In 1982, Cardenas enrolled in East LA College with no firm idea of what he wanted to be. His grades improved greatly from high school, and he was elected vice president, then president of the student government. That was when he met Noel Korn.

## Plans were vague

During a meeting in Korn's office, the college administrator asked Cardenas about his future. His plans were somewhat vague, although he was considering a transfer to Cal State LA's school of public administration.

## Profile: Frank Cardenas

- **Native of Rosemead.**  
Currently lives in Los Angeles.
- **Graduate, USC, BA in Political Science, 1987.**
- **J.D., Harvard Law School, 1990.**  
Boalt Hall School of Law, UC Berkeley (Harvard-Berkeley Exchange Program).
- **Appointed MTA chief of staff, August, 1996; previously served as vice president, Board of Public Works, City of Los Angeles; director of governmental affairs, World Cup Organizing Committee, Los Angeles; attorney, O'Melveny & Myers, Los Angeles.**
- **Family: Son, Frankie, 5.**
- **Hobbies: Dodger baseball fan.**

*"There's no way we're going to accomplish our mission if all of us aren't moving in the same direction."*

Korn advised the young man to transfer to USC and to think about becoming a lawyer.

"He said, 'Frank, don't sell yourself short,'" Cardenas remembers. "Those were simple words, but it wasn't until he said them that I decided to set my sights higher."

USC and law school might have seemed an unreachable goal for a young man from humble origins. But, with scholarships, a college loan and a little money from his mother, Cardenas enrolled at USC in 1984. He graduated from USC in 1987 and continued his education at UC Berkeley and Harvard Law School, graduating in 1990.

Cardenas worked as an attorney with a local law firm, was director of governmental affairs with the World Cup Organizing Committee and later served



on the City of Los Angeles Board of Public Works as an appointee of Mayor Riordan.

He joined the MTA as chief of staff in August, 1996, and is responsible for the Office of the CEO, Management Audit and Systems Safety, Strategic Planning and Organizational Effectiveness, Board Research Services and Equal Opportunity Programs.

This interview was conducted March 11.

## Major responsibilities

**Metro Family:** The chief of staff position was created only last year. What are your major responsibilities at this point?

**Frank Cardenas:** At the direction of our interim CEO, Linda Bohlinger, I'm focusing on the rollout of the MTA's vision, mission and guiding principles. Our consultants have said that more of the agency's strategic planning needs to be

under the office of the chief of staff.

One example is a business plan. We have a Long-Range Transportation Plan and annual budgets, but no business plan. We're working on that and, in about a year from now, we'll have a five-year business plan.

**MF:** When you spoke earlier today to a group of new employees, you talked about focusing on values.

**FC:** If the MTA's recent history has taught us anything, it's shown us that while our leaders may change, we still have a job to do. Our work force needs to be able to point not so much to heroic leaders, but to heroic values.

The values we as public servants care about have to remain constant. We have to be fiscally responsible, customer-focused, and responsive to our communities. We need to continue to support each other as employees and as colleagues. If we can do these four things, we stand a good chance of making our mission real.

## TLAMP experience

**MF:** You recently attended TLAMP. What did you bring back from that experience?

**FC:** One important thing TLAMP gives us is a forum in which we can talk about merger issues and what remains to be done to become one family of professionals. We've got to be able to talk openly with each other about what a great experience it was to work for the RTD or the LACTC.

We have to come to terms with the past, honor it, show it the respect it deserves, and move forward. I don't think we've done that yet. We should find time this spring or summer to pay our final respects to these two great organizations and move forward as one.

**MF:** What message do you have for MTA employees?

**FC:** Let's remember that we don't work for a bunch of wealthy shareholders we'll never meet. We work for our neighbors, the people we run into at the store, or who baby-sit for our kids.

We're public servants, and to be a public servant at an organization that's dedicated to improving the quality of life of people who aren't even born yet is a great thing to be proud of. ■

# TLAMP causes ripples of activity as improvements reach into MTA

By Bill Heard, Editor

**S**kip a stone across the surface of a quiet lake and the splashes create ripples that spread for a great distance across the water.

MTA staffers who attended TLAMP (Transportation Leadership and Management Program) have caused ripples of their own that are reaching into many areas of the agency.

TLAMP classes, which have included top MTA executives, middle managers and supervisors, have completed a number of studies and projects since the program started in mid-1996.

"TLAMP projects have three big areas of impact," says Pat McLaughlin, managing director, Strategic Planning and Organizational Effectiveness. "First is teamwork. The second is to focus on results that will be meaningful to everyone in the agency. The third is an emphasis on improving communications."

## Vision and Mission

TLAMP groups, for example, strongly recommended that the agency adopt a vision, mission and values. The goal is for each operating unit to have statements that link to the MTA's overall vision and mission.

The MTA's 2020 Vision is an umbrella under which a five-year strategic business plan is being developed. Annual budgets and performance objectives are written to fit within the business plans.

The agency's move into a new performance appraisal system for non-represented employees resulted from TLAMP recommendations. Human Resources also plans to implement a pay-for-performance program for non-represented employees beginning July 1, 1997. The idea is being tested this fiscal year by the Customer Services and Communications division.

## Division computer net

Of particular interest to Transit Operations employees is a project, slated to begin by June 30, 1997, to electronically connect all operations divisions to Headquarters. Expected to take 12 to 18 months depending on available funding, the project will give divisions greater access to computer e-mail and entry to the Intranet, an internal information network.

The capital request for this project, once accorded a low budget status, was boosted into top priority by TLAMP participants who insisted on bringing operating divisions into the electronic fold as quickly as possible.

Many of the projects resulting from TLAMP sessions concerned improving communications within the MTA. These include:

- Monthly Senior Management Forums. These monthly briefings, held the day after a Board meeting, are chaired by

the CEO and allow managers to share information and ideas across departmental lines.

- Employee recognition programs. An Employee of the Month program has been in place since August, 1996. Other ways to recognize performance, teamwork and good ideas are in development.
- Upgraded internal phone directory. The new, more accurate phone listings include mail codes, "yellow pages" with departmental groupings and

personal titles.

- User-friendly Headquarters building. This includes improved signage and floor guides for elevator lobbies.
- Multiple internal communications methods. These include the CEO Voice Mail, MTA news releases on e-mail and News-In-A-Flash bulletins.
- Organization charts. These charts are updated frequently and a project is being developed to continually update them through the MTA computer network. ■

## Gateway to the Future

*MTA Headquarters hosts annual Career Day*

**M**TA Headquarters was bustling with activity last month as almost 400 high school students, teachers and mentors assembled for the MTA's annual Career Day program.

Brass bands, balloons, and booths chock full of displays and souvenirs created a festive air around Patsaouras Plaza and the Headquarters lobby.

High school juniors and seniors enrolled in the Transportation Careers Academy Program (TCAP) at four local high schools were treated to an event-filled, behind-the-scenes look at the MTA to give them input for making career decisions.

Board Chairman Larry Zarian and Interim CEO Linda Bohlinger welcomed the students and other participants. Naomi Nightingale, manager, Career Development and Training Center, and Art Gomez, program manager, Transportation Teaching Institute, also spoke.

## Behind-the-scenes look

After opening ceremonies, the students, from Wilson (Pasadena), Locke (South Central), John Glenn (Norwalk) and North Hollywood high schools, were paired with their designated mentors.

The students got a first-hand look at the variety of trades and occupations that comprise the MTA—engineers, planners, accountants, journalists, police officers, technicians, administrators, analysts and many others.



The MTA Controller's office was one of many participating in Career Day. From left are Josie Nicasio, accounting manager; Jannette Hernandez, North Hollywood High; Consuelo Damian, John Glenn High; and Controller Bill Henderson.

Students had the opportunity to accompany their mentors through their daily rounds of meetings and appointments and observe the working world.

"A lot of kids visited sites few people ever get to see," says Art Gomez, Career Day administrator. Some students visited the Revenue Department, the Central Control Facility (CCF) and maintenance facilities.

Gomez expects some of the relationships established at Career Day to endure longer than one day. Some mentors are planning to visit high schools and stay in touch with their students, providing career advice and counsel. ■



Andres Ocon, director, Central Area Team (C) and Yolanda Novak, administrative aide (R), hosted three students during Career Day. From left are Sonia Rivas and Teresa Ortega, Locke High, and Teresa Juarez, North Hollywood High.

# New Office of Procurement and Distribution merges Materiel with Construction Contracts

# FAN

Finance &  
Administration News

Deborah L. Craney, Editor

**T**hat whirlwind of activity located primarily on the 12th floor of the Headquarters building is currently known as the Office of Procurement.

"Change is good..." is a suitable theme for the department, because change - for the *better* - is exactly what is taking place.

Since the creation of the MTA, there had been two independent and distinct procurement organizations - administrative and rail construction. In 1995, the MTA Inspector General commissioned the National Government Institute of Procurement (NGIP) to review MTA procurement policies and procedures.

Later that same year, a Review Team was established to analyze processing standards for purchase orders and

contracts. In a nutshell, what emerged was the need to consolidate procurement and compliance functions into a centralized office.

## Consolidation vote

With a unanimous vote received during the November 1996 Board session, Director Yvonne Burke sponsored a motion instructing staff to provide an outline for the consolidation to include a firm set of revised policies and procedures.

A task force was formed to develop the "Consolidation Plan" and a status report was presented to the Board's Executive Management Committee and to the January, 1997, Board meeting.

The work is on-going, and the dynamics are exciting.

A selection process resulted in former Deputy Executive Officer of Materiel Arthur J. Kimball becoming the Procurement Department's new executive officer. The Contracts Section of the Construction Department is now part of the Procurement realm.

This reshaping of two departments into one is intended to bolster precision and clearly delineate authority and responsibility in the MTA procurement process. ■

## Arthur J. Kimball

Executive Officer,  
Procurement

**Born:** Manhattan, New York

**Hobbies:** Golf

**Family:** 3 children,  
5 grandchildren,  
wife Betty.



*"Through the establishment of synergy, we will be more responsive to our customers - both internally and externally, and streamline our administrative processes."*

**T**he perfect example of MBWO (management by walking around), Art Kimball enjoys getting to know his staff. An unassuming, energetic gentleman with an infectious smile, Art brings almost 40 years of experience to his position of Executive Officer.

With the expansion of Procurement, Art's first order of business was to meet

with incoming staff, small sections at a time, to personally field questions and facilitate open discussions on suggestions for structural and procedural improvements. His "open door" policy is bona fide.

Art Kimball's wealth of experience includes several years of administering procurement activity for Pan American Airways world-wide systems and the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART), in addition to serving as Deputy Vice President / Chief Procurement Officer for the massive New York City Transit Authority. ■

## MTA had four main goals in merging departments

The MTA sought to achieve four primary goals by merging Administration's Materiel Department with the Construction Contracts Department of Metro Rail Construction.

- Unite all procurement functions.
- Coalesce common policies and procedures.
- Reduce administrative lead time.
- Project inventory requirements that will provide substantial cost-avoidance in support of MTA operations.

## Suggestion Box

Editor:

I thought the April issue of "Metro Family" was: \_\_\_\_\_

I especially liked: \_\_\_\_\_

I did not like: \_\_\_\_\_

Here's a suggestion for a story or feature in a future "Metro Family" issue: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Thank You for your ideas. Please cut out this section and send it by interoffice mail to Bill Heard, Editor, Metro Family Mail Stop 99-13-8.

# Ready for any disaster

*Frank Spencer helps Long Beach schools train, equip staff for emergency response*

By Bill Heard, Editor

*An earthquake rumbles through Long Beach, crumpling masonry walls and collapsing roofs. It's a school day and dozens of children, teachers and staff are trapped by falling debris. Many are injured.*

*At some Long Beach schools, the tremors have hardly subsided before well-trained emergency response teams of school personnel spring into action. Donning protective gear, they shoulder equipment and medical supplies and move out. The rescue and survival operation has begun.*

Prior to 1992, this disaster scenario might have had a different outcome. That was the year Frank Spencer, MTA information security manager, learned that John Marshall Middle School, the school his son, Kevin, attended had no effective disaster response plan and almost no response equipment or supplies.

Over the past four years, Spencer has developed detailed disaster plans and effective response capability for Marshall. He's recreating similar programs at five other Long Beach schools and has introduced them to many more. He also has worked with the Parent-Teacher Association to raise funds and purchase supplies.

Spencer has trained rescue teams and directed parent volunteers, students and school staff who pitched in to refurbish old gear, assemble emergency kits and even make new equipment.

"I was astounded at the level of emergency preparedness when I became principal at Marshall Middle School," says Karen DeVries, now superintendent of Long Beach Area B schools. "This was one responsibility I never had to worry about because the organization, training and supplies were all there."

## PTA honors him

Spencer's work has twice earned him the PTA Council's PAT (praise, appreciation and thanks) Award, along with many other honors from the schools.

"Many of the schools had raised funds, but lacked direction in disaster planning," says Spencer. "The new plan concentrates

on developing first-class emergency response capability at each school."

Now the schools are building their capability to fend for themselves immediately after a disaster and to sustain a rescue effort until outside help arrives hours or, perhaps, days later.

Each of the nine schools is amassing thousands of dollars worth of equipment and medical supplies, all properly marked, stored and ready for use on a moment's notice.

Spencer estimates the value of Marshall's emergency equipment at \$15,000, although it would have cost much more had all of it been purchased commercially.

## Kept costs down

No effort was spared to make the most of the PTA funds. Spencer helped the schools assemble mass-casualty trauma kits of bandages and other items at a cost of only \$180 each, instead of the market cost of \$500 to \$600. Paramedic supply boxes were improvised for only \$15 instead of the vendor cost of about \$90.

When several schools discovered obsolete traction splints among old Civil Defense supplies, Spencer cut away the rotted canvas and refitted and refinished them with new accessories. Now the splints, which are rarely found in schools, are critical items in several schools' emergency reserves.

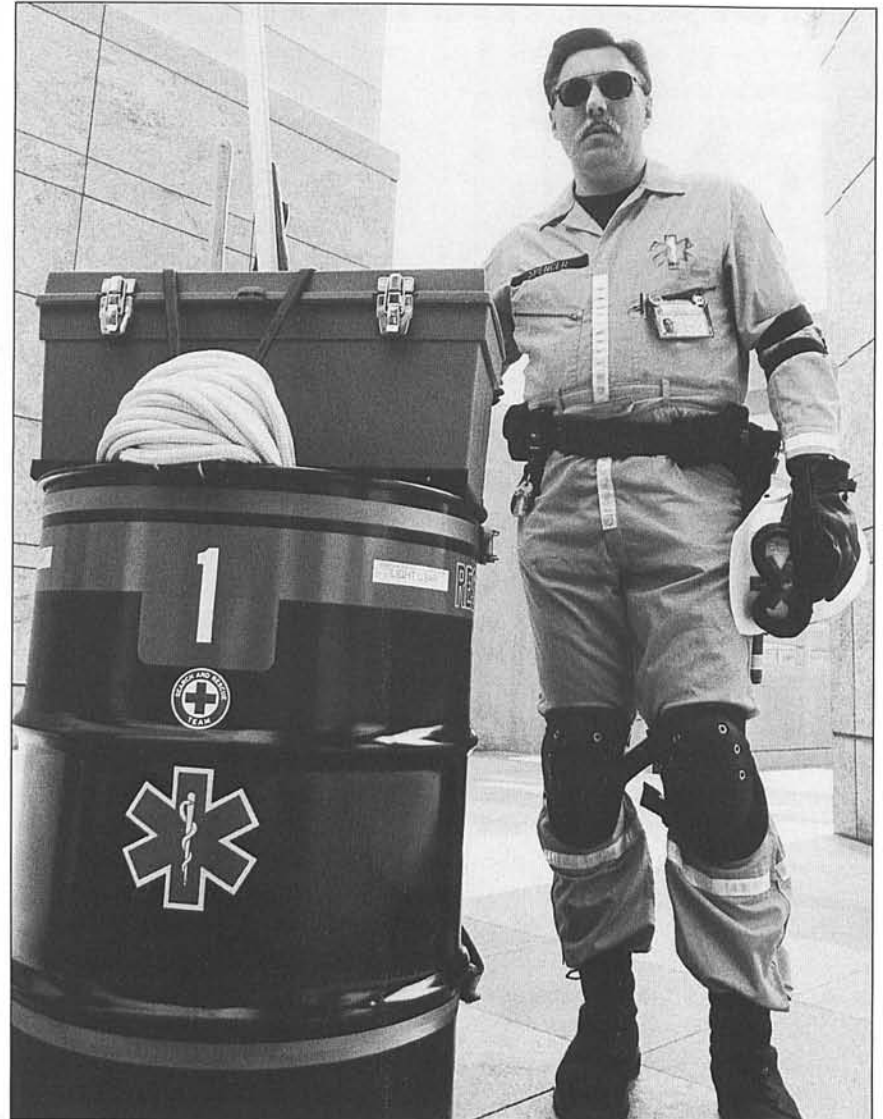
Also among the disaster supplies are dozens of backboards of the sort fire fighters use during rescues. Under Spencer's direction, backboards were made by students, teachers and parents to full specifications in the schools' and parents' woodworking shops.

"I like the fact that the kids, staff and parent volunteers got involved," Spencer says. "That gives everyone ownership in the disaster preparedness program."

## Rescue truck

The innovation he's proudest of is the "rescue truck" he invented to transport tools and equipment during an emergency rescue operation.

A rescue truck has a specially modified 55-gallon drum mounted on a hand truck. The drum contains axes, shovels and other large tools. Atop the drum is a removable rack holding a toolbox for



**Frank Spencer invented this rescue truck as a means of quickly moving emergency equipment to the scene of a disaster. He has donated several to schools in Long Beach. One also is in use at the MTA.**

**Right: Spencer demonstrates to members of the Marshall Middle School faculty how to place an injured person on a rescue backboard.**



smaller tools. The truck's pneumatic tires are filled with polyurethane to avoid flats.

Spencer doesn't plan to market the rescue truck. Instead, he copyrighted the design and his other innovations and plans to prevent them from being commercially exploited. He has built and donated rescue trucks to most of the schools he works with. One also is in use at MTA Headquarters.

As head of the MTA's Information Security Unit, Spencer is responsible for protecting the agency's computers and computer technology, including disaster

response and recovery. An employee for eight years, his career has included law enforcement, security investigations, emergency medical service and disaster planning at several levels of government and the private financial sector.

Of his valuable work providing the Long Beach schools with emergency response capability, Spencer says, "I hope none of these provisions is ever needed. But, in the event of a disaster, I know the school rescue teams won't be empty-handed and that more lives will be saved." ■

# How to dig a subway tunnel

## Metro Rail Construction

Wendy Taylor, Editor

By Wendy Taylor

In the complex world of rail construction, the business of rail building is understandably far from easy. One only has to follow the stories about such projects as BART in San Francisco and the long-time-incoming tunnel under the English Channel.

Subways are probably the most enigmatic of all rail building projects, considering that in most major cities, they must be dug from 50 to more than 500 feet under a densely populated city.

Have you ever wanted to know how subway tunnels actually get dug? Or, what happens to all that dirt?

Construction's Deputy Executive Officer John Adams, who currently oversees the North Hollywood portion of Metro Red Line, Segment 3, offers some insight.

### Giant cookie cutter

"It takes a crew of about 20 to operate the giant tunnel machines and lift the soil or rock out of the ground," says Adams, a veteran rail builder for 40 years. "The

crews work in two or three shifts a day, six days a week, averaging 60 to 70 feet of tunneling a day."

The tunnel machine consists of a giant, circular shield about 22 feet in diameter and about 20 to 25 feet long, with a digger or a rotating cutting face and about 200 feet of "trailing gear" behind it. The trailing gear contains the power to run the shield, which consists mostly of hydraulic-powered jacks and rams.

"Think of it as a giant cookie cutter, pushing against a wall of dirt," says Adams. "It has a conveyor system that loads the soil or rock into small rail cars, called muck cars in construction jargon. The conveyor system then carries the dirt to a shaft, where it is lifted to the surface and transferred to a temporary storage area via a second conveyor system."

### Robot-like arms

While the tunnel machine is advancing, a precast, 8-inch concrete primary liner is set into place. The liner has four sections, and each section is lifted with robot-like arms that put the segments in place to provide the initial tunnel liner.

Later, crews install plastic liner, rebar, build forms, and pour the concrete for the finished, final liner.

"The technology for a tunnel machine goes back about 60 years," says Adams. "It's still considered the most efficient, cost-effective method for projects of this size."

How much dirt is Adams talking



Tunnel crew members inspect the shield of a tunnel machine. The circular shield is about 22 feet in diameter.

about? Considering the fact that a tunnel machine digs about 60 to 70 feet a day, and every foot of tunnel contains 14 cubic yards of soil — the amount removed from the North Hollywood tunnel could fill Dodger Stadium with 20 feet of dirt.

And where does it all go? In keeping with environmental regulations, once the dirt is brought to the surface, it's stored at the construction site in large piles, and later trucked away to various landfills throughout Southern California.

*Editor's note:* A newer type of machine that differs from the "open-faced" type described above will be used

for tunneling the Red Line's Eastside Extension.

The latest technology features a closed-face version that more easily secures the face of a tunnel and virtually eliminates ground settlement. By applying a positive pressure directly to the tunnel face, a "blanket-type" protection is provided without the necessity of altering ground conditions (by grouting, dewatering, freezing, etc.).

In recent months, the world tunneling industry has been moving toward this method based on its proven effectiveness in controlling ground settlement. ■

## Count 'em: 10 ways Metro Construction boosts the local economy

Soon, the MTA begins construction of the Eastside Extension of the Metro Red Line. Nine of the following ways the subway impacts the local economy are already happening:

1. Our contracting program maximizes local hiring and minority business involvement at every level of construction. The MTA annually contracts about \$65 million of its work to minority- and women-owned businesses in the Los Angeles area.
2. The MTA invests more than \$550 million a year in the economy to buy goods and services and provide employment to build its Metro Rail system.
3. About 98 percent of expenditures are for U.S.-originated products and services, with more than \$400 million a year spent in Southern California alone.
4. The rail program employs about 15,000 people each year, representing MTA employees, as well as those hired by MTA consultants, construction contractors and their subcontractors.
5. Metro Rail construction generates several million dollars a year in public road and utility improvements around rail project areas.
6. In 1994, the MTA awarded a \$215 million light rail vehicle contract to the German-based Siemens Transportation Systems — of which \$130 million is committed to be spent in California. Siemens set up a transportation manufacturing plant in Carson to produce car shells for the Metro Green Line. The complex technology of rail car manufacturing provided technical jobs to many aerospace workers who were laid off in the early 1990s.
7. Lower insurance risks, greater productivity and higher quality work result from a construction program that experiences lost-time incidents almost half as frequently as the national average. This provides more funds for other transportation-related projects.
8. Ongoing vendor education programs, including the annual MTA Vendor Fair and the agency's Transit Bond Guarantee Program, assure contract competitiveness and equal opportunity.
9. More than \$1 billion in Southern California business revenues due to capital investment in rail projects are generated each year for companies involved in Metro Rail projects.
10. Once a new line is up and running, businesses near rail stations will attract more customers. The new subway also means easier commuting to jobs in or outside the area. And, as existing businesses prosper, new ones will be drawn to the newly-landscaped neighborhoods — providing more jobs for everyone. ■

# Year 2000 sends 'error' message to computers

*MTA is not immune from the \$600 billion dilemma*

By Frank Harper

Millennium 2000 is fast approaching with much anticipation.

Yet, one group is facing the new century with apprehension and dread. People in the information technology field are contending with a serious crisis that affects every computer—large mainframe and small desktop, alike.

Virtually any enterprise that depends on computers — banking, insurance, government or the MTA — is in a race against time to solve the "Year 2000 problem."

"The Year 2000 impact is substantial," warns Jim Brainerd, chief information officer at the MTA. He says the agency is faced with a dilemma.

"We can either replace older systems or perform a detailed study of millions of lines of computer code."

## mm/dd/yy problem

The problem seems trivial at first glance. Computer calendars were originally programmed in the 1960s and 70s to indicate the month, day, and year with two digits each — *mm/dd/yy*. Thus, April 24, 1997, would be programmed as 04/24/97.

With the year 2000 however, the problem becomes readily apparent. Computers are programmed to interpret 00 as 1900 instead of 2000.

For example, if a friend called to wish you New Year's greetings from Times



Square in New York City, just after the stroke of midnight 2000, California time still would be 1999. Your friend would be billed for a 99-year-long call.

People who are the grand age of 103 in the year 2000 would receive enrollment information about kindergarten because the computer would think they were 3 years old.

## Full-time job

Gary Harrell, of the ITS department, is the program manager for the MTA's Year 2000 Systems Compliance Conversion. He's tackling the two-digit problem full-time.

"Inventorying every computer and program at the MTA is the easy task," says Harrell. "The trick is to determine what

needs to be fixed."

Harrell says the MTA computer inventory contains approximately 5,000 desktop computers, 30 servers (computers that link the network together), two IBM 9672 series mainframe computers and 10 UNIX platform "mini" systems.

"Our plan," says Harrell, "is to look at every computer and every software program. We will then have to decide which computers are in Year 2000 compliance, which ones need to be modified, and which computer hardware and software is scheduled to be phased out because it's obsolete."

To assist in the year 2000 efforts, commercial software products have been developed to find and correct date fields.

"Some older personal computers are

destined for the scrap heap," says Harrell. He notes that there's even a website on the Internet to channel information about the problem.

## Bend, fold, spindle, mutilate

If you're old enough to remember the era of computer punch cards (they bore the message, "Do not bend, fold, spindle or mutilate"), the number of data fields on the cards was very limited. Coding the year with two digits was, at the time, a practical and cost-saving measure.

Fast forward to 1997 and the impending catastrophe. Two-digit year fields are literally embedded in millions of lines of software programs that were written decades ago.

Information technology analysts estimate the national cost of dealing with the Year 2000 problem at \$300 billion to \$600 billion.

Jim Brainerd estimates the Year 2000 cost figure for the MTA to be in the \$6 million to \$8 million range.

A former General Motors executive, Brainerd uses an auto analogy to describe the Year 2000 problem.

"It's like owning a 20-year-old car," he says. "At some point you have to decide how much the car's worth to you. You can either spend money to fix it or replace it with a newer model."

Meanwhile, for Brainerd and Harrell, the clock keeps ticking toward the millennium. ■

## Linda Bohlinger's CEO Hotline

**Q.** We're seeing an increasing number of taggers on Metro bus lines 40, 53, 51, 26 and 60. Can't we get some Transit Police G.H.O.S.T. units out here to put a stop to it?

**A.** Thanks for calling with your concern. The Transit Police G.H.O.S.T. unit, an undercover anti-graffiti squad, spends a significant portion of its enforcement effort responding to bus operator requests. The unit currently is responding to a

prioritized list of requests on both the bus and rail systems.

Unfortunately, a limited number of officers is assigned to the unit and it's difficult to cover all areas of service. However, additional officers from the Investigations Bureau were deployed in March to provide anti-graffiti coverage on the lines you mentioned.

**Q.** We need to let our passengers know that when they purchase monthly passes and tokens, they can use them on both our buses and our trains. Many of the passengers who ride my bus don't seem to know that.

**A.** Good observation. We're taking many steps to strengthen the identity of the Metro System. We display the slogan "Travel Smart...Take Metro" on

all our buses and trains, and we've just adopted a consistent new color scheme that will be applied to all of our buses and rail vehicles over the next few years. In addition, all materials used to promote fares, passes and tokens stress that they apply to both Metro Buses and Trains. Educating the public is a long-term process. I hope everyone will help by using the term "Metro" when talking to the public about our transit system.

**Q.** I object to a notice I saw recently on an MTA bulletin board. It advertised a talk by a speaker whose topic was "how to be black on the weekends." I think this is inflammatory and not constructive for our working environment.

**A.** The speaker, Tom Williams, was sponsored by the African-American Employee Association (AAEA) as part of our observance of Black History Month. The title of his book, *How to be Black on the Weekends*, is provocative, but the subject concerns how our behavior and language in a casual setting may not be appropriate for the workplace. He also discussed how prejudice is most often based on a misperception of other people.

I'm sorry you missed the author's talk. You would have had an opportunity to ask questions and express your concerns about this issue. All MTA employees are welcome to attend AAEA meetings. ■

# All In The Family

## TRANSITIONS

**Aguilar, Arturo E.**  
Mec "B" to Mec "A"

**Bennett, Marian Ann**  
Cash Clerk/  
Mopper Waxer to  
Cash Clerk/  
Cash Cntg Supv

**Buffington, Gary L.**  
Constr Safety Mgr to  
Asst Dir Constr Safety

**Bujosa, Michael**  
Mec "A" to Warranty  
& Equip Mec

**Buyard, Julie A.**  
Serv Attnd to  
Serv Attnd Ldr

**Canel, Luis F.**  
Transit Oprns Supv to  
Rail Transit Oprns Supv

**Cashin, Robert D.**  
Area Team Dir to  
Dep Exec Ofer, PL&PROG

**Cheng, San-Jung**  
Transp Prog Plnr II to  
Transp Prog Mgr III

**Cochran, Ryan R.**  
Transit Pol Ofer (Trn) to  
Transit Pol Ofer

**Coleman, Kenneth**  
Plng Sales Rep to  
Transp Proj Mgr III

**Covarrubias, Jose H.**  
Mec "A" to Mec "A" Ldr

**Dierking, Mark**  
Pub Affair Ofer to  
Sr Pub Affair Ofer

**Drummond, Carolyn**  
Transp Prog Plnr II to  
Transp Prog Mgr III

**Edwards, John D.**  
Facilities Insp to  
Facilities Insp Ldr

**Fagernes, Kent O.**  
Storekeeper to  
Dept Systems Anlst

**Fernandes, Braulio S.**  
Serv Attnd to Mec "C"

**Fortin, Yvonne**  
Utility "B" to Utility "A"

**Galindo, Daniel**  
Serv Attnd to Mec "C"

**Garcia, Adalberto**  
Serv Attnd to Mec "C"

**Garcia, Albert V.**  
Custod. to Stock Clrk

**Garcia, Armando**  
Serv Atten to  
Serv Atten Ldr

**Gay, William M.**  
Sr Commun Ofer to  
Sr Public Affairs Ofer

**Graham, Catherine L.**  
Sr Sec to Admin Aide

**Guerrero, Hector A.**  
Rail Transit Oprns Supv to  
Sr Rail Transit Oprns Supv

**Guevara, Eugene**  
Serv Attnd to Mec "C"

**Harnish, Michael A.**  
Vault Truk Drivr to  
Equip Maint Supv

**Ho, Henry S.**  
Construction Safety Engr  
to Sr Auditor

**Horn, Danny R.**  
Cash Clk/Rel Vault Trk  
Drivr to Vault Truk Drivr.

**Jaeger, Douglas J.**  
Track Insp to  
Track Insp Ldr

**Kandamby, Rohana C.**  
Serv Attnd to Mech "C"

**Kurowski, Douglas C.**  
Assign Coord Clrk to  
Equip Reed Speelst

**La Freniere, Lucy C.**  
HR Asst to HR Analyst

**LaRochelle, Josee**  
Sr Admin Analyst to  
Chief Admin Analyst

**Leib, Ervin E.**  
Stock Clrk to Storekeeper

**Lew, Edwin**  
Serv Attnd to Mec "C"

**Lillard, Preston**  
Mec "B" to Mec "A"

**Lopes, David E.**  
Serv Attnd to Mec "C"

**Luk, Maria E.**  
Sec to Sr Sec

**Morton, Richard J.**  
Rail Equip. Maint Supt to  
Equip Maint Supt

**Oyewole, Mustapha O.**  
Auditor to  
Transp Prog Mgr III

**Parvenu, Andre M.**  
Pub Affairs Ofer to Sr Pub  
Affairs Ofer

**Paterson, Robert M.**  
Tran Police Ofer (Trn) to  
Tran Police Ofer

**Pedini, Karen M.**  
Cust Info Agent to  
Typist Clerk

**Ramos, Gilbert L.**  
Train Opr (F/T) to  
Rail Tran Oprns Supv

**Ramsey, Stephen**  
HR Asst to HR Analyst

**Richter, Barry J.**  
Serv Attnd to Mec "C"

**Roberts, Henry R.**  
Serv Attnd to Mec "C"

**Salazar, Lori Ann**  
Sec to Ofc. Assist

**Salvieto, Perfecto C.**  
Sys Electro Comm Tech to  
Sys Electro Comm Tech Ldr

**Sherman, Marie**  
Cust Serv Agnt I to  
Sr Cust Serv Agnt II

**Soria, Javier**  
Serv Attnd to Mec "C"

**Trejo, Fernando A.**  
Storkepr to Stock Clrk

**Triay, Edgar**  
Cust Info Agnt I to  
Gen Clrk III

**Thomas, Phillip W.**  
Wrkrs Comp Anlyst to  
Admin Analyst

**Thompson, Raymond F.**  
Mec "C" to Mec "B"

**Ullrich, Diane M.**  
Cust Info Agnt I to  
Gen Clrk III

**Vasques, Ruben**  
Transit Pol Ofer (Trn) to  
Transit Pol Ofer

**Victoria, Melissa P.**  
Gen Clrk III to  
Assign Coord Clrk

**Zendejas, Noe**  
Serv Attnd to Mec "C"

**Hale, Johnny J.**  
Apr. 14, 1972

**Barrett, George E.**  
Apr. 21, 1972

**Ivory, Wilbert**  
Apr. 21, 1972

**Smith, John A.**  
Apr. 28, 1972

20 YEARS

**Gonsalves, Albert R.**  
Jan. 7, 1977

**Tucker, Jon K.**  
Jan. 17, 1977

**Joyce, John P.**  
Jan. 24, 1977

**Chawdhry, Abdul S.**  
Feb. 7, 1977

**Phillips, Gary G.**  
Feb. 14, 1977

**Wong, Sam**  
Feb. 19, 1977

## RETIREMENTS

**Bilbrew, Reuben**  
Dec '70 to Feb '97

**Blume, Lodewijk A.**  
Jan '74 to Jan '97

**Brown, Barry W.**  
Apr '79 to Jan '97

**Castaneda, Carlos**  
Sept '66 to Jan '97

**Cayser, Vincente P.**  
Apr '73 to Jan '97

**Churchill, Forest N.**  
Aug '91 to Jan '97

**Coleman-Curtis, Latanya L.**  
Oct '82 to Oct '96

**Cormack, Robert L.**  
Dec '72 to Jan '97

**Cortex, Andrew**  
Oct '81 to Feb '97

**Criss, Lee R.**  
Sep '69 to Mar '97

**Douglas, Melvin**  
Feb '74 to Feb '97

**Endara, Luis A.**  
Aug '73 to Jan '97

**Garcia, Ernest V.**  
Oct '73 to Jan '97

**Harris, Jimmie R.**  
Oct '69 to Feb '97

**Harvey, James L.**  
Sept '73 to Jan '97

**Hayes, Hubert W.**  
Feb '59 to Jan '97

**Jennings, Dexter L.**  
Jan '71 to Jan '97



**Melba Jane Sarris, senior customer service agent in the Van Nuys Customer Service Center, retired from the MTA in March with 38 years of service.**

**Johnson, Lilia R.**  
Jan '74 to Jan '97

**Jones, Robert E.**  
Oct '71 to Jan '97

**Kelso, William H.**  
Dec '73 to Feb '97

**LA Cour, Elijah A.**  
Nov '66 to Jan '97

**Landers, Robert K.**  
Dec '83 to Feb '97

**Martines, Max H.**  
Feb '75 to Mar '97

**Matsubara, Ronald J.**  
Feb '87 to Feb '97

**Mijangos, Carlos C.**  
Aug '73 to Feb '97

**Mountjoy, Donald W.**  
Dec '73 to Jan '97

**Oldham, Laurence M.**  
Sept '72 to Jan '97

**Powell, Donald L.**  
Jun '72 to Jan '97

**Rangel, Efrain**  
Oct '73 to Feb '97

**Robertson, Leon**  
Mar '76 to Jan '97

**Sawyer, Joseph D.**  
Jan '74 to Jan '97

**Smith, Frederick D.**  
Jan '74 to Jan '97

**White, Paul E.**  
Feb '74 to Feb '97

**Williams, Ernest**  
June '71 to Jan '97

**Williams, Philip H.**  
May '80 to Feb '97

**Velasques, Jose M.**  
Jun '80 to Jan '97

## IN MEMORIAM



**Renee Farley-Frawley, the first African-American woman chosen to head an MTA Transit Operations division, died March 9 at age 43. She joined the former RTD on June 19, 1978, and rose through the ranks to an appointment in 1995 as Service Operations Director at Division 2. She was buried at Inglewood Park Cemetery, March 15. She is survived by her mother, five sisters, three brothers, a daughter, son-in-law and two grandchildren.**

# Metro Family News Briefs

## Charitable contribution campaign is scheduled for May 5 kickoff

The MTA's Second annual charitable contribution campaign will kick off May 5 and run through June 20.

This year's theme, *Committed to Serving Our Communities Better*, is meant to tie in with ideas addressed by the Customer First Initiative. The campaign raises funds for community-based charities.

Interim CEO Linda Bohlinger is chairing this year's campaign. Executive officers are serving as co-chairs of the event. Every department at the MTA will have its own campaign coordinator.

The campaign aims to increase donations to an agency-wide total of \$415,000, up from last year's \$367,000, and to increase employee participation from 60 percent to 75 percent of employees.

## MTA honors past, future at 4th anniversary party

The MTA celebrated its fourth birthday since the 1993 merger with much fanfare, April 18.



Interim Deputy CEO Terry Matsumoto was on hand in March to cut the ribbon on the Employee Credit Union's new ATM machine, located in the Headquarters lobby. Assisting Matsumoto are Kathi Harper, Human Resources manager, and Mario Rodriguez, Credit Union manager.

A plaque bearing the theme, *Honoring our past, embracing our future*, was placed on Patsaouras Plaza to commemorate the MTA's predecessor agencies.

The celebration included testimonials to the past by employees of former Los Angeles transportation agencies. An employee jazz band entertained and vintage buses were displayed on the Plaza. The MTA library sponsored a display of vintage photographs.

Simultaneous anniversary celebrations also were held at the operating divisions.

## MTA Headquarters building garners designers award

The MTA and its Headquarters building were honored recently by the International Interior Design Association's (IIDA) Southern California chapter. The agency was the recipient of the IIDA's highest honor — the Calibre Award.

The Calibre Awards signify "a high standard of design quality, support for the effort to increase public awareness of design...and a demonstrated concern and support for quality design on an ongoing basis."

Board Alternate Member Nick Patsaouras, who heads the Board's Building Committee, accepted the award on behalf of the MTA at an awards ceremony held in March at the Beverly Hilton Hotel.

## Small businesses received nearly \$76 million in 1996 from MTA

Small businesses owned by minorities and women received nearly \$76 million in contracts as a direct result of three MTA-administered programs in 1996. That's nearly 25 percent of all contract dollars awarded that year.

The MTA's Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) program has established a goal of 23 percent for small business.

Since the start of Metro Rail construction, almost \$125 million in contracts has been awarded to women- and minority-owned firms, creating hundreds of jobs. ■

CM-231JS497



Los Angeles County  
Metropolitan Transportation Authority  
One Gateway Plaza, P.O. Box 194  
Los Angeles, CA 90053

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