

Metro

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Authority

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EMPLOYEE MAGAZINE OF THE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

Family



Celebrating our past and future

Employees mark MTA's 4th Anniversary

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- 11** Come along with our reporter on a trip beneath the Santa Monica Mountains to see construction of a Metro Rail tunnel.
- 12** You can ride "shotgun" as we look at some of the hottest cars in town - owned and lovingly restored by MTA employees.

Cover Photo: Interim CEO Linda Bohlinger (C) introduced employees representing the MTA's predecessor agencies during the 4th Anniversary ceremonies. From left are John Adams, Arthur Winston, Tony Calorino, Ray Maekawa, Shirley McKenzie, Mike Leahy and Dorothy Gray.

Metro Family

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

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Sharing My Thoughts



The story and pictures of the MTA's fourth anniversary celebration in this month's Metro Family will give readers only a snapshot of an event that held deep significance for many of us. Whether we operate a bus or a train, maintain the equipment, plan, construct or administer our transit system, we've invested our lives in improving our region's transportation network.

We shouldn't just think of the MTA as a four-year-old institution. As current employees, we're heir to a 123-year tradition of service to the community. We're fortunate to be the most recent in a long line of men and women who contributed their time and talent to building one of the world's premier transportation systems.

I hope you received a copy of MTA Librarian Dorothy Gray's summary of transit history in Los Angeles. It outlines the distinguished history of the MTA's predecessor agencies, beginning with the first horse-drawn rail cars.

A quick read-through of the history describes a transit system that has had unprecedented growth during certain years and stagnated in others. There have been expansions as individuals or cities created local transit companies. These led to consolidations into regional agencies, followed by efforts to decentralize into smaller service areas.

Building for the future

Today's MTA is adding more buses to our fleet, developing clean-air technology and building the Clark ATTB - the bus of the future. We're constructing a regional rail system. We're providing additional highway services for commuters by planning and funding HOV lanes, the Freeway Service Patrol and many other transportation-related programs.

Our vision for the future is to provide a better quality of life for our region so that all who live here can travel quickly, economically and safely in a clean environment.

At the threshold of the 21st Century, let's take our inspiration from those who have gone before us. We have much to do, many things to accomplish toward our goal before the year 2000. In 2020, we will open our time capsule and marvel at our accomplishments over the next 20 years.

I would like to thank Phyllis Tucker and the TLAMP program group for organizing MTA's birthday party. I'd also like to thank Arthur Winston, Tony Calorino, Shirley McKenzie, Mike Leahy, Ray Maekawa and John Adams for sharing their fascinating stories at the celebration.

Charitable giving

One of the ways we can help provide a better future for the people of our region is through our contributions to local charities.

At this point, we're almost half way through our second annual charitable giving campaign, this year entitled *Committed to Serving our Communities*. Launched May 5, it runs through June 20.

As chair of the campaign, I've asked each of the executive officers to act as my co-chairs. They, along with your department coordinators, will ask you to join in supporting the nine fund distribution agencies who distribute your contributions.

Please open your heart to the less fortunate in our society and give generously.

Through this campaign, we can give back something to those whose patronage supports the MTA and fulfill our pledge that we're "committed to serving our communities."

Our daughters, our future

The MTA has many ways in which we maintain our ties to the young people in our community. One of my favorites is "Take Our Daughters to Work" day, a nationwide event the MTA participates in every year.

On April 24, some 400 girls—daughters, relatives and friends of employees—joined us for the day here at Headquarters and at many operating divisions.

I was pleased that my niece, Brittany Bohlinger, could be with me for the day to meet my co-workers and to experience life in the working world. We've arranged a similar day-long experience for boys on June 26.

What we do today to encourage our young people, and to provide role models for them, is an investment we can make in the future. And, with 123 years of history behind us, we have much to offer. ■

May Employees of the Month



Brady Branstetter
Administration



William Davis
Transit Operations



Daniel Haas
RTP&D



Mary Heitmeyer
Metro Construction



Marta Maestas
Communications



Sandra Martinez
Transit Police



Al Mitchell
Procurement



Leyton Morgan
Executive Office



Cornell Washington
Finance

MTA charitable giving campaign

1997 drive sets goal of \$415,000 for 9 charities

May 5 marked the kickoff date for the MTA's second annual charitable contribution campaign to raise funds for community-based charities.

CEO Linda Bohlinger is chairing this year's campaign; each executive officer will serve as a co-chair of the event, which ends June 20.

The goals of the campaign are to raise a total amount of \$415,000 in donations, and attain a 75 percent rate of employee payroll deductions.

This year's theme, *Committed to Serving Our Communities*, is meant to tie in with the theme of the Customer First Initiative, "committed to serving you better."

Nine charities

"We've selected a broad, culturally diverse group of charities to be our campaign partners," says Bohlinger. "Their services reach wide and deep into the community."

Bohlinger is referring to the nine "fund

distribution agencies," whose activities range from health and human care services, economic and cultural programs, scholarships for minority students and environmental programs.

The nine local agencies are Asian Pacific Community Fund, Brotherhood Crusade, Combined Health Appeal, Earth Share, Los Angeles Women's Foundation, National Hispanic Scholarship Fund, United Latino Fund, United Negro College Fund and United Way.

"Committed to Serving Our Communities" has been designed to give every employee an opportunity to become involved with a charitable group that

— COMMITTED —
TO SERVING OUR
COMMUNITES
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meets their particular interest," says Bohlinger.

"Serving the community is a way of serving our customers," she says.

"It's important to remember that many people who'll benefit from our contributions are also, to a great extent, people who depend on us for their means of transit.

Campaign commitment

"This is a way for us at the MTA to repay the many folks who put money in our fareboxes and help pay our salaries."

To demonstrate the MTA's commitment to the campaign, and to the community, senior executives have assumed key roles in the fund drive.

In addition, every department will have its own campaign coordinator. The campaign coordinators will run the day-to-day business of the charity drive, including conducting meetings and soliciting contributions, but division executive officers will keep close tabs on activities and lend support where needed.

"We hope to be able to maximize opportunities for all our employees to participate in the campaign," says Rae James, executive officer for Customer Service and Communications, "without interfering with people's productivity time."

The executive committee has high hopes for the campaign, according to James. The \$415,000 total annual amount is a significant increase over last year's \$367,000 effort, and the 75 percent employee participation goal surpasses last year's figure of 60 percent.

"I think we've set realistic goals and picked the right people for the job," says James. ■

New badges mark beginning of an era

LAPD, LASD to assume Transit Police duties in July

A transformation will take place in the ranks of the MTA's Transit Police, July 1. On that day, 60 percent of the force will pin on LAPD badges. Forty percent will become Sheriff's deputies.

The change of badges and uniforms will symbolize a new era, one in which the LAPD and Sheriff's Department will provide law enforcement services at some MTA facilities and on Metro buses and trains.

The merger of the 19-year-old Transit Police Department into the larger law enforcement agencies was approved by the Board last Fall. It has been the subject of intense discussions among political leaders and lengthy contract negotiations.

Talks went into high gear in recent months, following approval of the merger concept last December by the Los Angeles City Council. The Council and the Board of Supervisors are expected to approve contracts before June 30, in time for the merger to take effect July 1.

The most immediate impact of the merger will be higher visibility of police officers and deputies in the transit system.

"Our customers will see more uniformed officers than they saw before," says Transit Police Chief Sharon Papa, who led the merger negotiations for the MTA.

Total of 665 personnel

The \$52.7 million contract calls for a total of 665 personnel to be provided by the three agencies. Transit Police currently are authorized 645 positions.

The merger will introduce two new types of security personnel to the Metro Rail system. Armed contract security guards will patrol rail stations and parking lots. Uniformed fare inspectors will enforce fare payment rules on the trains.

"The MTA will continue to have its own police department," says Daniel Cowden, assistant to Chief Papa. "Under our con-

tract, the LAPD and Sheriff's Department will provide dedicated services as our police agency."

The LAPD will be responsible for patrolling Metro Bus lines within their jurisdiction and the Metro Red Line. The Sheriff's Department will patrol Metro Bus lines in their territory and the Metro Blue and Green Lines.

For some time to come, the majority of those providing dedicated services will be former Transit Police officers. Although many officers who join the Sheriff's Department will transfer out over the next six months, those who join the LAPD may remain on MTA duty for up to two years or more.

Security guards remain

Headquarters security guards will remain on the job as MTA employees.

Under the new arrangement, the LAPD and Sheriff's Department will maintain an operations center and joint headquarters

on the Plaza level at MTA Headquarters. A roll-call room, locker room, training facility, firing range and Metro Red Line patrol office will be located on the P-1 level.

The Regional Rebuild Center will be the main bus patrol station for the LAPD. The Sheriff's Department's main rail patrol station will be at the Central Control Facility.

The LAPD and Sheriff's Department will launch an intensive outreach program following the merger. Officers will conduct get-acquainted sessions with local community groups, at MTA Headquarters and other locations. They also will visit each operating division to meet the bus operators and maintenance personnel who will be their new constituents.

"I hope everyone who sees these officers and deputies will try to get to know them on a personal basis," says Cowden. "The better we know each other, the better we can all work together to accomplish the MTA's vital mission." ■



Report card on Metro service

Public positive about MTA service, convenience, courtesy

Would it surprise you to learn that most people who ride Metro Buses and Trains rate the service as "good" or "very good?" Or that the MTA received high marks from riders for convenient routes and operator courtesy?

A just-completed survey of more than 54,000 riders, former transit users and non-riders concludes that most of those who use the transit system can be described as "satisfied customers."

The general public also is optimistic about the future quality of transit service, according to results of a telephone survey in which nearly half of respondents predicted that service will improve.

An effort involving several MTA departments, the Service Planning Market Research Project included on-board rider questionnaires, focus groups and phone interviews. More than 10,000 of the responses came from non-English speak-

ing persons, predominantly Hispanic, but also Chinese and Korean.

The survey, which also covered 10 municipal bus companies, was the MTA's first regional customer study. The MTA will share data with transit services in Santa Monica, Santa Clarita, Antelope Valley, Culver City, Torrance, Norwalk, Montebello, Commerce, San Gabriel Valley (Foothill) and Los Angeles (LADOT).

Scientific approach

"This survey is the first large-scale scientific study of both transit riders and non-riders on a countywide basis," says Dr. Robert Jackson, MTA transportation technical manager.

Jackson and Richard Steinbeck, senior communications officer in the MTA's Marketing Department, headed the project.

"Follow-up surveys, planned in phases through 1999, will tell us whether we're

changing people's perceptions of the MTA," says Steinbeck.

The survey will help the MTA identify ways to improve transit service, devise marketing and customer communications strategies, and evaluate the impact of new service programs. Research indicated that riders and non-riders have different needs.

Information please

"Riders want improvements in schedule adherence and service frequency to cut their transit time," says Jackson. In addition to wanting more service and better on-time performance, riders also expressed concerns about safety aboard buses and at bus stops.

"Non-riders need better access to information," Jackson adds. "They don't know how to use the region's transit system."

The survey shows that while 75 percent of riders have called the MTA's information number, only 40 percent of the

general public have even heard about it.

"Knowing where to get information would be one of the keys to driving non-riders toward using the system," says Steinbeck.

More than one-third of the general public questioned in the survey were aware of the MTA's "Travel Smart...Take Metro" slogan, and 86 percent said they like it.

By contrast, 70 percent of the same respondents could not identify the MTA as the county's regional transportation agency.

To address this lack of awareness, the study suggests the agency should work to establish its public identity by "highlighting the benefits that MTA offers Los Angeles' diverse residents..." ■

Next month: more facts about transit users, former riders and non-riders from the market research survey.

Code of Conduct's employee section will cover a broad range of activities

The third section of the MTA's new Code of Conduct—this one aimed at employees—is more stringent in some respects than the agency's old ethics policy, but is clearer and will be easier to understand and obey, says Ryan Nakagawa, MTA ethics manager.

The policy covers employee conduct ranging from relationships with contractors to participation in political activities to use of the Internet. As this article was being written, the new section had been carried over for action at the May Board meeting.

"We tried to make the employee section more readable and to give some background on why a rule is in place," says Nakagawa. "It should improve compliance if employees understand why we have a particular rule."

The entire Code of Conduct, which includes sections for contractors, Board members, their alternates and staff, will be published this summer. Copies will be available in the MTA library and in most offices, along with agency policy and procedures manuals. Each employee will

receive a copy of the employee section.

Code covers everyone

Ethics policies that apply to the average employee include those covering gifts, use of MTA equipment, membership in professional associations and participation in political activities.

The Code defines "gifts" to include event tickets, food items and meals, merchandise, discounts and forgiveness of debts. Under the new policy, employees may accept gifts totaling no more than \$10 in a calendar month and up to only \$50 in a calendar year from a single source.

"Absolute prohibitions on gifts at other transit properties have been unworkable," says Nakagawa. "We think the new limits are more realistic."

The Code requires employees to use MTA property, including work time, facilities, equipment, records and supplies, only for agency business.

Use of MTA phones

A new provision permits "occasional and limited personal use" of MTA phones.

Employees are expected to reimburse the MTA for all personal toll calls.

"We made this change in our rules because there's not a single employee who hasn't made a personal call to the doctor, or to a spouse to say he or she would be late for dinner," says Nakagawa. "It's stupid to have a policy that doesn't work."

Although separate, and more extensive, policies will be issued to cover use of computers and Internet access, the Code notes that an employee's abuse of the Internet may result in disciplinary action.

"Reasonable use of the Internet isn't the problem," says Nakagawa. "The issue is more the downloading of inappropriate material that would be way outside of work needs."

Professional associations

The Code encourages employee participation in such professional associations as APTA. It also advises caution in dealings with contractors and lobbyists who may attend association gatherings.

"Employees attend APTA and other

association meetings to make contacts and get to know what the industry is doing," says Nakagawa. "These educational and networking opportunities are important."

He notes that several sections of the Code, including those on relationships with contractors, acceptance of gifts and honoraria, and the travel policy, provide guidance to employees attending professional association events.

The Code of Conduct permits MTA employees to participate in political activities only when off duty. It does not permit MTA employees to engage in political activity during duty hours, or while on MTA premises.

An employee who holds elective office also may not be involved in MTA projects within the geographic jurisdiction of his or her elective office.

"I hope all employees will read the new Code of Conduct to see how it applies to what they do at the MTA," says Nakagawa.

For more information about the Code of Conduct, contact Ryan Nakagawa at 922-2975 or Bill Lowe at 922-2981. ■

Transportation solutions are their business

Multimodal Planning works to provide quality of life

By Judy Schwartz

The outlook is grim: increased traffic, longer commuting time, aggravated levels of stress. If no action is taken to remedy the situation, we can expect more of the same.

RTP&D
Regional
Transportation
Planning &
Development
Donna Finn, Editor

By 2010, it's projected that freeway rush hour speed will decline by about 20 miles per hour, with the pace on local and arterial streets decreasing by approximately seven miles per hour.

Solving this problem is MTA's main goal, and Multimodal Planning is hard at work. Solutions are their business.

All modes of transportation

Under the direction of Deputy Executive Officer Robert Cashin, Multimodal Planning (MMP) is one of the six departments of RTP&D.

This dynamic organization is responsible for many major projects, among them planning the High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes, gap closures, major surface transportation improvements, bikeways and pedestrian facilities, Transportation Demand Management (TDM), signal synchronization, and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS).

MMP is also the primary interface for many MTA programs and projects, including Propositions A and C Local Return, the

Long-Range Transportation Plan, and the Call for Projects.

The department is organized into seven units – six Area Teams and a Joint Development team.

Organized by geography

The six Area Teams are geographically-oriented: Central, San Fernando Valley/North County, San Gabriel Valley, South Bay, Southeast, and Westside. They handle:

- Rail planning and development with local jurisdictions;
- Transit planning with local communities, including major bus restructuring studies;
- Street and freeway planning and programming;
- Programming railroad infrastructure improvements;
- Recommending projects for regional discretionary funding;

- Communicating with local jurisdictions, elected officials and partner agencies;
- Developing and managing major planning initiatives.

Joint Development

Joint Development is the real property asset development, management, and land use planning arm of the MTA with numerous responsibilities:

- Developing projects with the private sector on MTA-owned property to provide revenue;
- Increasing transit ridership by improving areas around transit station facilities;
- Maximizing integration with communities' cultural and economic goals.

Multimodal Planning is strongly committed to the MTA vision of offering a better quality of life for all people. After all, solutions are their business. ■

Amis receives accolades from architects

By Donna Finn

What do the movie *Field of Dreams* and the MTA have in common? The famous declaration, "If you build it, they will come," and James Amis.

A member of the American Institute of Architects (AIA), Amis is a senior manager in the Joint Development group in the Multimodal Planning Department.

His lifetime achievements were recently evaluated by a jury of his peers. As a result, Amis was elected to the College of Fellows, the highest honor the Institute can bestow upon a member.

Honored by peers

He was one of only 98 members to be inducted into the College for 1997, an honor that has been bestowed on only 4 percent of the total AIA membership of 59,000 architects.

Amis received his Bachelor of Architecture degree from Texas A&M University, and obtained his Masters from Harvard in Business Administration. He's registered to practice architecture not only in California, but in Texas, Oregon and Massachusetts, as well.

"I believe that to have vibrant and healthy communities in the future, we must build a well-rounded transportation system," says Amis.

One of his contributions to the MTA was the creation of the process that blends urban form, design of the public realm,

multimodal transit, and private land use development that will, in time, substantially

change the face of Los Angeles.

Amis is recognized by other transit agencies and cities around the nation as a leader in urban design and transit planning that is rapidly becoming a vital component in the urban city building process.

Stations reflect his vision

Two of the Metro Red Line stations, Vermont/Sunset, Hollywood/Vine and the Del Mar station on the Metro Blue Line to Pasadena, represent the depth and quality of his approach.

His goal of bringing together urban

design principles, architectural concepts, and real estate economics in harmony with traditional transit engineering, planning and construction procedures clearly shows in these stations.

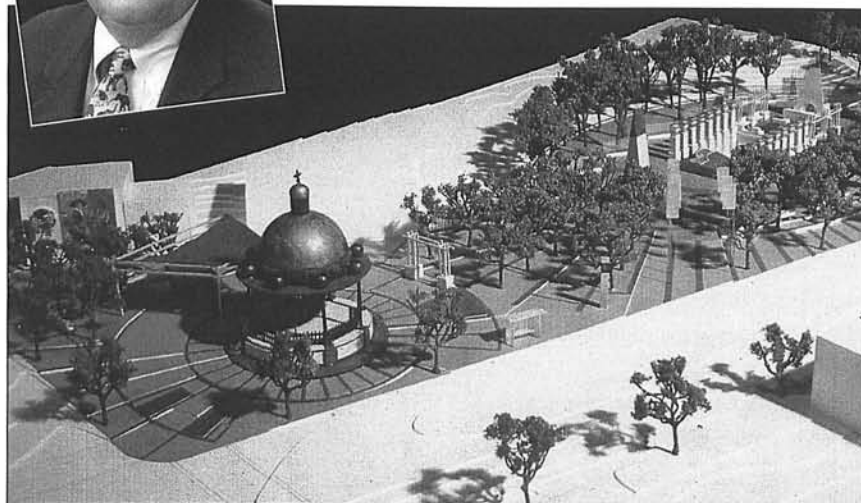
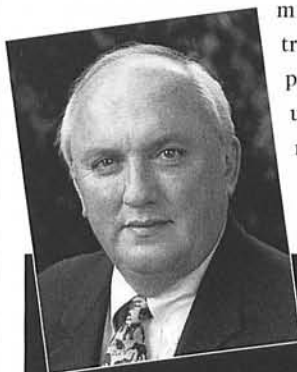
To study and document the best examples of architecture, urban form, and transit-related, mixed-use development, Amis has supplemented his professional and public career through extensive domestic and international travel.

He has incorporated lessons learned from these experiences in his ongoing commitment to enhance traditional American cultural approaches of urban design and economic development principles. ■

James J. Amis, FAIA, was elected to the American Institute of Architects (AIA) College of Fellows. Amis is a senior manager in the Joint Development Group in the Multimodal Planning department.

The planned First/Boyle Station (Mariachi Plaza) of the Metro Red Line East LA Extension is a striking example of Multimodal Planning incorporating community input, local cultural history, and major social events into key urban design concepts.

Designed by CHCG Architects/Manna Joint Association.



Metro Art staffers pick plum produce project

One thing about the produce business, “the fruit never falls far from the tree,” as the old saying goes.

In the heart of downtown Los Angeles’ vibrant produce industry, it’s not uncommon to encounter several generations of a family working together in a business founded by a grandparent.

“It’s a relationship business,” says Alan Nakagawa. As a project manager for Metro Art and an artist by vocation, Nakagawa, whose grandparents and parents owned a restaurant in the produce market, may have fallen far from the tree, but a recent art project has re-connected him back with his roots.

Nakagawa, and Alessandra Moctezuma, a fellow Metro Art project manager and artist, have collaborated on a video and book project called *Produce: A Two-Flavor Portrait*.

Funded by a grant from the Community Redevelopment Agency Downtown Cultural Trust Fund, *Produce: A Two-Flavor Portrait* highlights the history and importance of the produce industry in downtown Los Angeles.

“We’re trying to give voice to somebody

or something that doesn’t have a voice,” says Nakagawa. “Certainly the produce district doesn’t have a voice in the art world. There’s not a lot of accessible information about the LA produce district.”

My father before me

The video, *Produce: A Two-Flavor Portrait*, recounts the history of the produce industry in Los Angeles. Historical photographs trace the produce market’s origins, from a gathering place for farmers, to a thriving market comprised of multi-ethnic family businesses – Chinese, Italian, Japanese, Latino.

The video has had several public showings including the Central Library, and in the community room of Los Angeles City Councilmember Rita Walters.

A happening place

Perhaps the most enthusiastic response to the video took place early one recent morning. The scene was the Market Place Restaurant in the produce district in downtown Los Angeles.

At daybreak, the restaurant is a gathering place for produce buyers and vendors. On this occasion, the Market Place hosted



Metro Art project managers, Alessandra Moctezuma (L) and Alan Nakagawa, were fascinated by the rich history – and tasty treats – to be found in LA’s produce market.

another distinct crowd, as well.

“A number of people from the downtown arts community came for the screening,” Nakagawa says. “There were definitely two different crowds, but both crowds were very pleased.”

“A table of produce buyers didn’t know that the screening was going to happen,” says Moctezuma. “They were very appreciative and surprised since their fathers and grandfathers had all been in the business.”

The *Produce: A Two-Flavor Portrait* project documents an industry and area of downtown LA that’s changing. Family-run businesses are giving way to large volume, high-tech businesses.

Despite these changes, Nakagawa and Moctezuma have high hopes for a revival of the produce market.

“People enjoy public spaces where they can see and interact with other people,” says Moctezuma. ■

Look who’s talking too!

Passenger information system draws raves from operators and passengers

“Route 17. Destination LAX Transit Center,” intones a friendly female voice aboard Metro Bus 4735. Moments later, that same pleasant voice is heard again, “Please exit through the rear door.”

Mary Powers, engineer associate, of the MTA’s Equipment Engineering Department, activates a button on a small keypad near the steering wheel of the bus.

Powers is demonstrating the new automated passenger information system that is now installed on a fleet of 10 CNG buses based at Division 18.

Eventually, 78 buses are scheduled to carry the systems, which includes an LED display sign as well as audio announcement.

“Operators ‘log on’ with their ID number and enter the route number,” says Powers. “As the bus leaves the division, the system is activated. The driver is free to concentrate on operating the vehicle.”

A live human voice

The voice heard on the systems is that of a live human being rather than a synthesized computer-generated voice – hence it has a friendly quality, pleasing to the ear.

All messages—stop announcements and safety announcements—are produced in a studio. For Division 18 alone, there are more than 3,000 stops that have to be recorded.

According to Powers, the system features a device that monitors the bus’

location at all times. The system is activated at a distance of 300 feet before a bus stop.

Curbside passengers hear announcements of route numbers and safety messages from the bus’ exterior speaker system. The volume level of the outside speakers has been carefully monitored.

“With our early morning runs that begin at 5 a.m., we have to be very careful not to disturb neighborhoods,” warns Powers.

“No eating, drinking or smoking.”

“For your safety, do not talk to the driver.”

No disagreements

The passenger information systems are programmed with safety and courtesy announcements, as well as bus stop

announcements.

“If someone is eating or smoking,” says Powers, “the operator doesn’t have to stop and have a disagreement with the offending passenger.”

“We’ve gotten a great response from the disabled community for the system,” she says. Two different automated voice announcement systems are being deployed.

“We’re testing two systems,” says Powers, “to find out which one has better service and maintenance.”

Division 18 received the passenger information systems by the luck of the draw.

“You’ve got to give Division 18 a lot of credit,” says Powers. “Not only are they adding on CNG buses, but the passenger information system as well. That’s a challenge.” ■

Re-engineering MTA recruitment and selection

Task force to implement consultant's recommendations

FAN

Finance & Administration News

Deborah L. Craney, Editor

a representative to the project team to review all procedures, work within policy, legal, and legislative requirements, and to develop solutions to advance the hiring process.

Delivered to all employees

Team members will be investing a significant share of their time for the next

two months. They're also committing to deliver a product for all MTA employees and departments.

The project team consists of Matt Barrett, Executive Office (DCEO); Joanne Kawai, Office of the Chief of Staff; Irma Licea, Customer Services and Communications; Luann Swanberg, Metro Construction; Ed Reyes, RTP&D; Steve

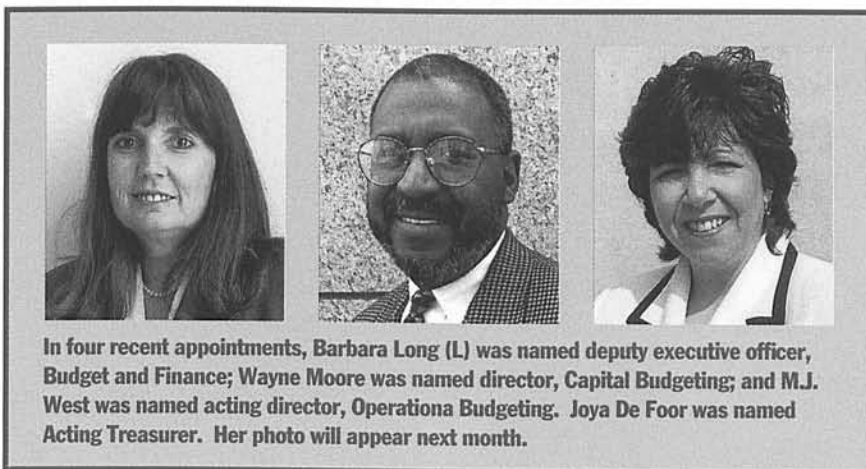
Scott and Marva Phillips, Administration.

Also, Sonja Owens, Operations; Sandy Langston, County Counsel; Barbara Long, Finance; Herman Vargas, Equal Opportunity; Linnea Berg, Darrel Cohoon and Shirley Maimoni, Organizational Effectiveness; Kathi Harper, Jennifer French, Mario Perez-Ceballos, and Aida Lagrimas, Human Resources.

The Human Resources Department has launched a task force to re-engineer the employee recruitment and selection process as recommended in the Organizational Assessment by the Coopers & Lybrand consulting firm.

This critical project will be the first of a number of improvement efforts to be launched over the next year. Ray Inge, deputy executive officer, Human Resources, serves as project manager. The group will be assisted by Coopers & Lybrand.

Each unit of the organization has selected



In four recent appointments, Barbara Long (L) was named deputy executive officer, Budget and Finance; Wayne Moore was named director, Capital Budgeting; and M.J. West was named acting director, Operationa Budgeting. Joya De Foor was named Acting Treasurer. Her photo will appear next month.

Info from other agencies

The Employment Office staff looks forward to the re-engineering process and has already submitted many recommendations on process improvement.

Surveys of other public agencies and transit properties are being conducted to create an information base from which to recommend other changes. Please contact your department task force representative with any recommendations you may have for changing the MTA's employee recruitment and selection process. ■

Three words about the Credit Union: location, convenience, service

Located on the Plaza level at Headquarters, the Metro Transportation Employees Federal Credit Union (MTEFCU) is a cooperative, member-owned financial institution serving MTA employees and their families.

The Credit Union provides a range of financial services, such as checking accounts, loans, Visa cards, payroll deduction, and bill-payer service. Credit union members have the convenience of automatic paycheck deposit into designated checking, savings or loan payments.

Recently the Credit Union introduced another new service, an ATM machine located by the escalators on the Plaza level. There's no surcharge fee for the credit union's ATM.

A member, not a customer

"The Credit Union is established for its membership," says Mario G. Rodríguez, MTEFCU manager. "You're literally a member, not a customer."

"Once a member, always a member," he says. "Retirement, or leaving the MTA,

does not affect your membership."

Family members of MTA employees also are eligible to join the Credit Union. There are no age restrictions.

Membership does have its advantages. Credit Union members receive the advantages of lower interest loans and higher interest dividends on their accounts.

If you've ever wanted to sit on a board of directors of a financial institution, the Credit Union may be just your opportunity. Any member in good standing is eligible to become a member of the Credit Union's board of directors. Elections are held annually for two or three of the board's seven positions. Board members serve three-year terms.

Fully insured deposits

Credit Union accounts are fully insured by the National Credit Union Share Insurance Fund (NCUSIF) up to \$100,000 per account and another \$100,000 for IRAs (Individual Retirement Accounts).

"Technically, you could have \$200,000 in the Credit Union that's fully

insured," says Rodríguez.

Rodríguez says the Credit Union is actively trying to boost share level--the amount of members' savings.

"That's why we're gearing our programs to encourage savings," he says. "We've improved our rates. We're looking to offering free checking, so people can use the Credit Union as their primary banking service."

"We've established a very competitive VISA," says Rodríguez. "Rates ranging from 12% to 15% with a \$6 annual fee."

Rodríguez says the Credit Union's goals are to increase assets--the amount of member savings from \$7 million in shares to \$11 million by mid-1998. The increased dollar amount would allow for increased services and other types of loans.

Balancing service with cost

The Credit Union's main challenge is to balance its services with costs.

"We're competing with some very large institutions," says Rodríguez. "The Credit Union has only \$8 million in assets. We're non-profit but we still need

to generate a profit, to build reserves, by law."

The MTEFCU is a completely separate entity from the MTA. Rodríguez and his seven employees are not employed by nor funded by the agency.

"That's one of the misconceptions, that we're a department of the MTA," says Rodríguez. "Yes, we're a benefit, but we're still a separate business, and we must keep that business sense."

Rodríguez has managed MTEFCU since August, 1995. He has 20 years' experience in the credit union industry. Prior to joining MTEFCU, Rodríguez worked for the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA), the federal regulator of credit unions.

Rodríguez says the Credit Union has been working very hard to make improvements.

"Our share rates weren't the best," he admits. "Our services were limited; we had restrictive loan rates. If someone were to compare us in 1995 to now, they would see a significant amount of change," Rodríguez says proudly. ■

Honoring our past, embracing our future

MTA's 4th Anniversary honors LA's transit history

By Bill Heard

“A rich history. A proud tradition. A strong legacy.” These were the words Interim CEO Linda Bohlinger chose to describe the MTA and its many predecessor agencies, April 18, during commemorative ceremonies marking the agency's fourth anniversary.

Scores of employees gathered through the noon hour on Patsaouras Plaza, and hundreds more at the MTA's operating divisions and outlying offices took time out, to wish the MTA a Happy Birthday.

The MTA provided 40 huge birthday cakes emblazoned with the anniversary theme. Some offices spiced up their celebrations with live DJs and music, barbecue lunches and decorations.

Most celebrants demonstrated their unity by wearing white T-shirts bearing the names of 13 past and current transportation agencies. Stenciled on the front were the words, “2020 Vision, Embracing our Future.”

Past and future

Although much of the event's focus was on the MTA's future, the past also was remembered and celebrated.

“Today, we stand on the shoulders of giants,” Bohlinger declared during her remarks. “We can still see their vision and we share it.”

She honored the men and women who contributed their time and talents over the past 123 years to establish and improve public transportation in Los Angeles County.

Bohlinger also acknowledged the contributions of current MTA employees.

“You are translating our new vision and mission statement from words on paper to action on the street,” she said. “You are providing the leadership and resources for a safe, efficient transportation system that keeps LA County moving.”

Horse-drawn trolleys

MTA Librarian Dorothy Gray read a short history of regional transportation, beginning in 1874 with the first horse-drawn trolleys that served downtown Los Angeles. Her reading described the eras of



the interurban railway network, the Red Cars, growth of local bus lines, and the evolution to today's MTA through the mergers of many local transit agencies.

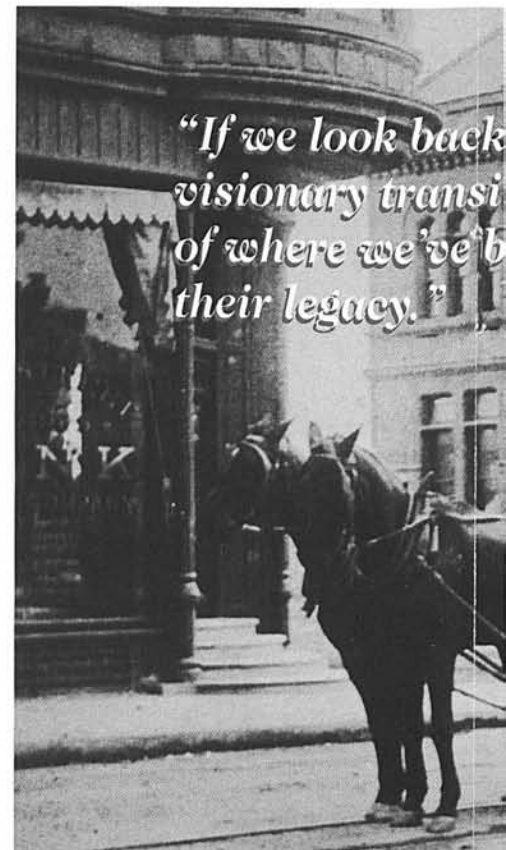
A copy of the transportation history was distributed to all offices and is available in the MTA library on the 15th floor at Headquarters.

Six employees were chosen to bring the agency's history to life. They represented the Pacific Electric Railway, Los Angeles Coach Lines, the old Metropolitan Transit Authority, the RTD, the LACTC, and the Rail Construction Corporation (RCC).

The MTA's oldest employee, 91-year-old Arthur Winston, represented Pacific Electric Railway. He offered his perspective on the evolution of transportation to a rapt audience.

“I've seen the street cars go away, and now come back as the Metro Blue Line,” he said. “They worked well then, and they work now. So do the buses. They're our most important service, because they can go most anywhere.”

Tony Calorino, an MTA schedule maker, once worked for LA Coach Lines. He recalled for listeners how emergency trestles would be laid over the street car



“If we look back at the visionary transition of where we've been to where we're going, we honor their legacy.”



tracks to prevent the cars from cutting fire fighters' hoses during a fire.

First female supervisor

Shirley McKenzie, representing the former MTA, was proud to have been the first female schedule clerk, first female schedule maker and first female schedule supervisor.

“When I started, it was all men,” she

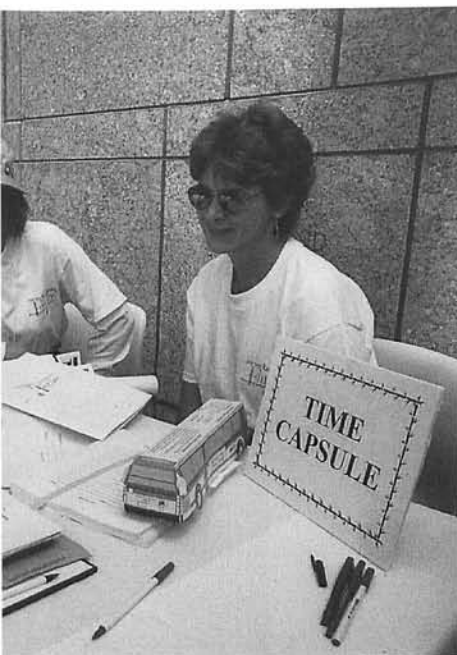
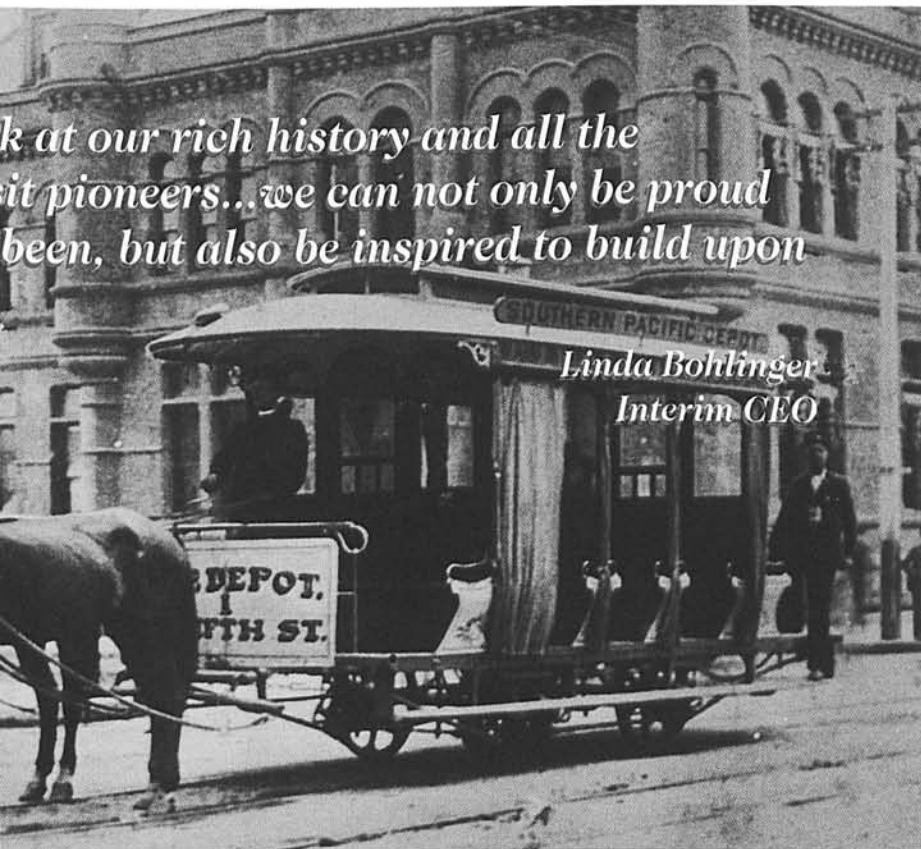
Embracing our future

our 123-year transportation history

Editor, Editor

Look at our rich history and all the pioneers...we can not only be proud to have been, but also be inspired to build upon

Linda Bohlinger
Interim CEO



(Left, top): A half-dozen Pacific Electric operators stopped to chat outside the old Main Street station in the early 1940s.

(Far left) A passenger steps aboard a Los Angeles Railway bus on Beverly Boulevard in this 1935 photo.

(Above) A team of horses waits patiently to pull this Main Street & Agricultural Railroad trolley, stopped near the Southern Pacific depot in downtown Los Angeles. The trolley company began operation in July, 1875.

(Top, right) A Los Angeles Consolidated Electric Railway Co. car paused at the Southern Pacific Depot at Fifth and Central for a photo in 1891.

(Left) Pat McLaughlin (center) and Janne Nielson (right) help an employee provide a message for the MTA time capsule.



in Los Angeles County.”

He credited the LACTC with such accomplishments as establishment of the Countywide Transportation System Management Program, the inclusion of the Metro Green Line within the I-105 freeway, and the negotiation of a 1,000-bus purchase.

Best and brightest

John Adams, deputy executive officer, Metro Rail Construction, highlighted the RCC’s “best and brightest moments.”

These included the opening of the Metro Blue Line in July, 1990; the opening

(Above) Retired TOS Jack Kells (L) and TOS Larry Haynes of Division 7 help themselves to pieces of MTA birthday cake. (Left, above) Cotton candy made the children, and many adults, very happy. (Left) Posing under the 4th Anniversary banner at Division 5 are, from left, Timmie Harrison, Vincent Owens and Ben Cooper.

of the Metro Red Line in January, 1993; the development of the LA Light Rail Car concept; and numerous industry and government awards for innovative construction projects.

These memories and many others will be preserved for the next 23 years in a time capsule that will be placed somewhere on the Headquarters property. The capsule, which will remain sealed until 2020, will contain a number of artifacts representing the MTA and a scrapbook of “messages to the future” from current employees.

“In the year 2020, when our successors open the time capsule,” Bohlinger said, “they will remark that we, too, were giants who propelled public transit along a steady continuum of progress.” ■

said. “Today, we have a woman CEO, a woman who heads up Operations, and women in other important positions.”

Mike Leahy, service operations director at Division 2 and a long-time RTD employee, emphasized the RTD’s many transit innovations during its 29-year history.

“Dramatic improvements and changes in bus design and passenger comfort

became the standard for the RTD fleet,” he said and, noting the advent of the Metro Blue and Red Lines, added, “It was exciting to be part of the team that brought rail operations back to Los Angeles.”

Ray Maekawa, a veteran of the LACTC, recalled the many achievements of that agency, formed in 1976 “to add value to the transportation decision-mak-

Traveling smart in the fast lane

Public forums provide 'quality of life' lessons

By Frank Harper

It's a normal Tuesday morning rush hour in Norwalk. Traffic is crawling to a standstill. Drivers attempt to change lanes without spilling coffee. They dab on mascara, chat on cellular phones, and get steamed at the BMW that cuts into line.

Meanwhile, aboard an air-conditioned, CNG bus, bound for MTA Headquarters, Board member Mel Wilson is speaking with a group of commuters.

The group—business and community leaders from the South Bay, influential as opinion makers—are rather skeptical, as a whole, about the MTA and public transit, based on what they have seen and heard in the media.

It's going to be a tough sell.

Build friendships, awareness

Actually, Wilson is engaged in a forum—part of a new public outreach program.

"The Community Forum series is an effort to reach out to community members," says Scott Mugford, director of Customer Relations, "to build friendships and increase awareness of the MTA's value and importance to the region."

The first of a series of four public forums, called "LA in Motion-Time Out From Too Fast," was conducted in March.

Its focus was on cutting-edge technology and other methods to cope with the hectic LA lifestyle. The program emphasized how public transit also is a resource for managing our fast-paced lifestyle; how the services the MTA offers relieve the stress of driving to work and reduce air pollution and traffic congestion, and also create a higher quality of life in the region.

Work from home

After a continental breakfast and welcome from CEO Linda Bohlinger in the 3rd floor lobby, the group heard a presentation entitled "Time for Technology."

Jim Brainerd, deputy executive officer, Information Technology Services, demonstrated the MTA's Internet website. A panel of speakers from computer hardware and software companies showed the group how to access and use the Internet for work, services, information and entertainment.

The panelists discussed how new tele-

communications and computer technologies such as E-mail, FAX, conference calling, internet services and on-line services, help augment quality of life by reducing car trips and providing the freedom to conduct business at home.

Clean air, water, buses

Central Region General Manager Rick Hittinger chaired a panel on another quality of life issue—achieving a cleaner environment with new transportation technologies.

Hittinger and the panel told the group about the most recent developments in clean-air transit technologies, including the Clark Advanced Technology Transit Bus, compressed natural gas and electric fuel cells.

Panelist Mark Gold, from the environmental organization, Heal the Bay, urged the group to become active in keeping the region's drinking water and coastal waters safe and clean.

During lunch, a panel presented techniques for managing stress. These included meditation, relaxation, prayer, finding solace in music, and family activities. The panel also discussed methods for managing time to create more time to enjoy life.

How MTA services fit

"Our initial program, 'Time Out from Too Fast,' was a great success," says Mugford. His assessment is based on written "before and after" comments from the forum's attendees.

"A struggling organization giving mediocre service," was one South Bay community leader's initial opinion of the MTA. After the forum, the leader's perception was markedly changed: "a company in tune with the times, continuing to upgrade and improve their service."

"If people in the community are unfamiliar with the many services we provide," says Rae James, executive officer, Customer Services and Communications, "they may feel MTA has little to offer them."

"We hope these forums will show not only how much we have to offer," says James, "but how our services fit in with people's everyday concerns."

The dates for the remaining forums are May 19 and June 19. ■



Community Forum participant Zan Colazas, principal of the Hawaiian Avenue School in Wilmington, chats with Interim CEO Linda Bohlinger (C) and Rae James, executive officer, Customer Services and Communications.

Test yourself: Are you a "perfectionist?"

"People who are overly perfectionistic create stress by setting performance and time standards which they can never meet successfully," says Dr. Marvin S. Beitner, a panelist at the recent MTA Community Forum, "Time Out From Too Fast."

Dr. Beitner gave this test to the Community Forum participants. Rate yourself on this test and then have a co-worker, spouse, or friend rate you. The test will provide some insight into how you see yourself and how others view you.

Rate yourself from 0-3 on each statement: (0=never, 1=seldom, 2=sometimes, 3=always)

1. I feel no matter how well I do, it's never enough.
2. I feel I must control or anticipate the future.

3. After success, I feel let down or disappointed instead of good.
4. People say I'm too hard on myself and others.
5. I feel guilty when I'm not working.
6. I become upset with standing in line, waiting in traffic, poor service and anything even slightly out of order.
7. I suffer from headaches on the weekend.
8. When I relax, I still think about work or things I must do.
9. I dominate conversations.
10. Other people rarely come up to my high standards.

Scoring:

- 0-5 No way! You couldn't care less about being perfect.
- 6-10 You're not likely to have serious problems with perfectionism.
- 11-20 You have a tendency toward perfectionism and should be concerned.
- 21-29 You're on the troubled road to perfectionism, but a detour is still possible.
- 30 You're a perfect perfectionist and probably feel perfectly miserable. ■

Source: Marvin S. Beitner, Ph. D., "Psychnotes for Physicians."

Tunneling the hard rock way

Metro Rail miners challenge the Santa Monica Mountains

The Hard Rock Café people ought to put their next LA-area restaurant near the future Universal City Station of the Metro Red Line. Why?

Because, three years from now, when trains stop there on their way to North Hollywood, it will be due to the subway builders' efforts to tunnel through a mountain comprised almost entirely of hard-rock soil.

Hard-rock tunneling is probably the most difficult, tricky and time-consuming aspect of rail construction, and digging through the Santa Monica Mountains is one of the most challenging pieces of the Los Angeles Metro Rail Construction program.

The 12,630 ft.-long twin-tube tunnels (which are about 980 feet underground)

Metro Rail Construction

Wendy Taylor, Editor

will link the Hollywood/Highland Station with Universal City Station.

Tunneling southward

Tunneling activities are proceeding southward from Universal City toward Hollywood. Two refurbished Robbins tunnel boring machines (TBMs), 20 ft., 8 in. in diameter, are doing the work.

Although capable of advancing 25 feet an hour, progress slows to between 50 to 80 feet a day in hard-rock terrain. Since May, 1996, when mining began in the east tunnel, 9,000 feet have been tunneled. The west tunnel was started last July 29 and 8,500 feet have been mined so far.

While the tunneling machines move from the north to the south, another tunneling activity is taking place at the south end. There, in a 300 ft. section, excavation is proceeding northward at a slower pace.

Seismic section

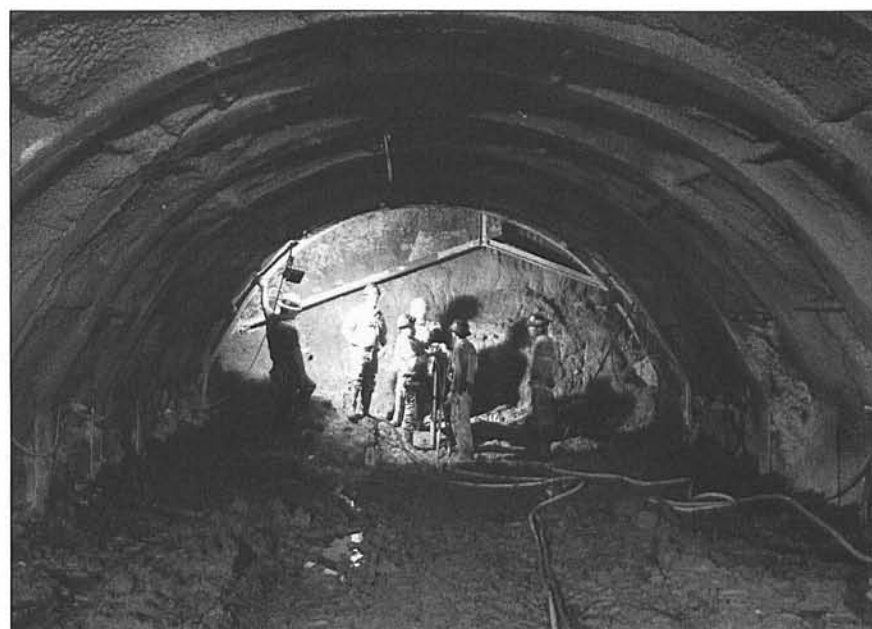
Two tunnel access shafts near the

Hollywood/Highland site mark this "seismic section," which is directly over an earthquake fault.

Here, conventional hand-mining methods, employing roadheaders and other heavy equipment, are used in the softer ground to dig two horseshoe-shaped tunnels larger than those being mined from the north with the TBMs.

If an earthquake someday changes the tunnel structure, the larger size tunnel allows for track realignment without realigning the whole tunnel.

Eventually, the TBMs from the north will reach the seismic section in the south, and they will be raised to the surface via the access shafts. The hard-rock portion of the Red Line construction then will be finished – a feat that should certainly rate a Hard Rock Café-style celebration. ■



Miners are using conventional methods, instead of giant tunnel boring machines, to excavate the south face of the Metro Red Line tunnel through the Santa Monica Mountains.

Tunnel tripping

By Wendy Taylor

There I was – six hundred feet underground, directly below Mulholland Drive. What a switch! Thirty years ago I'd sat up top in my high school sweetheart's tuck-n-rolled '57 Chevy enjoying the glorious view from this infamous spot.

I never imagined that someday I'd be inside the mountain, climbing around the trailing gear of a giant digging machine and negotiating my way along the temporary tracks of an unfinished subway tunnel. The tunnel will, when completed, cut a Metro Rail route through the center of the Santa Monica Mountains. My recent field trip to the Hollywood Hills Red Line construction site reminded me of the vastness of this project.



Seeing it in person, watching it expand foot by foot, day by day, is a mind-boggling experience.

A tag-along

On this day, I'd tagged along on a project tour for members of the Board's Construction Committee who wanted to physically eyeball the status of our work.

Organized by Mary Lou Echternach of the Board Research Staff, the tour was led by Charles Stark, Construction's interim executive officer; Steve Polechronis, Segment 2's project manager; and Henry Fuks, deputy project manager for Segment 3, North Hollywood.

The mood was relaxed and jovial as everyone donned steel-toed rubber boots, hard hats and bright orange vests. Armed with flashlights and safety apparatus (following a safety briefing) we entered the West Tunnel via one of the La Brea access shafts located near the station site at Hollywood Boulevard and Highland.

Resident engineer, John Townsend, employed by construc-

tion management consultant, JMA, proved to be an articulate guide as we rode in a large, cage-like boxcar (called a "man trip") for the mile-long trip into the mountain.

It was hard to hear Townsend over the recurrent din of the hydraulic tunneling gear and the continuous roar of the ventilation system (an immense, overhead cylinder sends fresh air swooshing through the tunnel). Words, however, were unnecessary as we viewed the giant tunnel boring machine (TBM) that can literally push its way through a wall of volcanic rock.

Walking boss

We were in the tunnel during a shift change, so few workers were on hand. Those we saw (including one woman) looked the way I'd always imagined coal miners looked a hundred years ago. Their rough work clothes and serious faces were barely visible beneath caked-on dirt. Most miners travel from project to project, state to state, to work in the bowels of the earth.

However, we did encounter "walking boss" Troy Graham and "TBM supervisor" David Umling, who showed us that today's tunneling techniques are far from old-fashioned.

In a carved-out, hidden corner, a computer screen glowed eerily in the dark. The monitor is part of the computerized guidance system that keeps the tunnel machine in alignment. It works by focusing a laser on a target.

On the bus ride back to Gateway, the comments from the Board members were light-hearted and positive. The consensus was that when all is said and done, the hard work, engineering expertise and dedication of a few thousand people will ultimately contribute to LA's status as a global competitor in the 21st Century.

Personally, I'm proud to be part of what's been called "the largest public works project in North America." We expect that billions of Red Line passengers will be served over the next 10 or 15 decades. Most will probably take the subway for granted.

But, then, they didn't see it from the ground up. ■

Wild wheels of the MTA

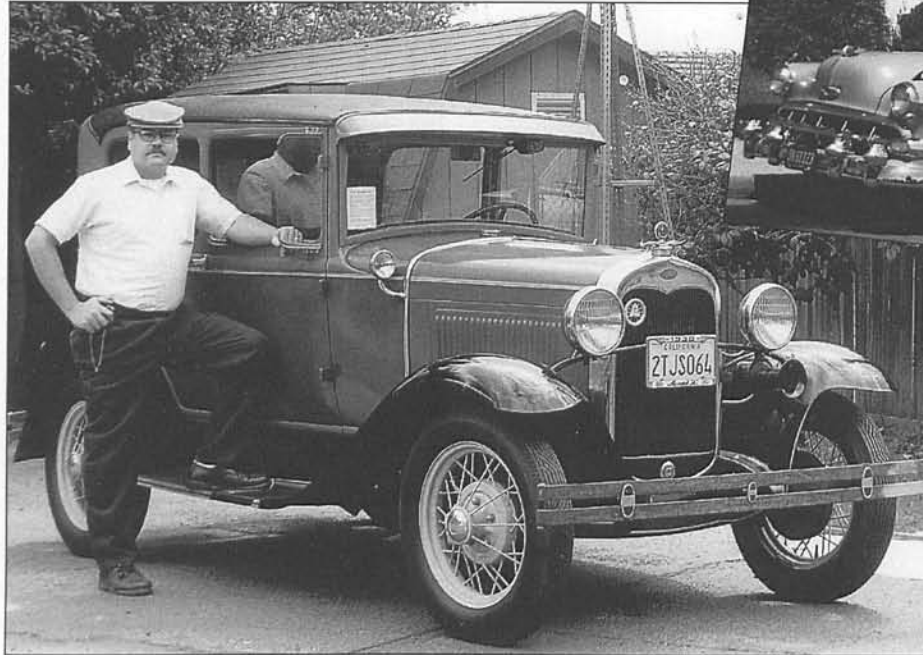
By the book at work, their imagination soars with cars

By Frank Sahlem

The MTA has one of the largest talent pools of mechanics and engineers in the world. They design, build and repair by the book. But when it comes to their personal vehicles, here in car-crazy Southern California they're free to take their talent, put it on wheels, and send it in any direction.

Take, for example, Manuel Rojas, a mechanic at Division 18 in Carson.

He found a 1954 Chevy convertible that had been parked for 20 years. Rojas rebuilt it from the frame up, just for the personal sense of achievement in making it "as original as possible." Now he has a powder-blue, drop-top dream machine with power everything that's won all five



(clockwise, from left) David Roberts is proud of his hot-rod 1956 Ford pickup truck, shown here at Division 2.

Rick Kingi's Super Competition Plymouth Duster runs a quarter-mile course in less than 8.7 seconds.

David Ullrich's 1930 Model A Ford was a pile of rust until he restored it. Now it's worth the price of a brand new car.

Manuel Rojas' 1954 Chevy convertible has won all five car shows he has entered.

Milo Victoria found a dilapidated 1977 Harley-Davidson Electra-Glide in Mexico. Now it's his pride and joy.

includes a full roll cage and on-board fire extinguishers.

Kingi has been drag racing since age 16, when he and his brother bought an old car with the engine sitting in the back seat. He came to work for the MTA 22 years ago, after giving a friend a ride downtown to fill out an application.

Hot-rod pickup

David Roberts, a lead mechanic at Division 2 in Downtown Los Angeles, says, "I've been hot-rodding all my life."

He bought his hot-rod pickup from Boyd Coddington, the famous hot rod builder in Stanton, Calif., almost three years ago.

Roberts has since put in new leather upholstery and a new electrical system, custom air conditioning and new exterior graphics. The truck body and pickup bed are from a 1956 Ford, but the engine and suspension are from a 1988 Corvette.

Roberts, an MTA mechanic for 18 years, explains that he enjoys working on his truck, and on clean air buses, for the challenge of pushing both into uncharted

territory.

"It's a real challenge to get the alternate fuel technology buses working for the environment and our customers," he says. "But anything mechanical is interesting to me."

Showroom Model A

David Ullrich is a Customer Information Supervisor in the MTA's Telephone Information Department. But, he also has technical training in welding and electronics, and he called upon both when he bought and restored a 1930 Model A Tudor sedan.

The car was a pile of rust when Ullrich bought it in 1988. Except for re-chroming the front bumper, the car is now finished,

which he credits to his wife's "patience, understanding, and the use of her sewing machine for the upholstery."

Ullrich removed every nut and bolt on the car, cleaned and identified each one and sent them out for re-plating. He repainted the car in its original drab brown and Keweenaw green and put it back together. It started on the first crank.

Although Ullrich paid \$500 for the car, nearly the same as its original price of \$545, its value is now comparable to that of a new Ford. But, it's not for sale.

"Working on the car is a stress reliever," he says.

Fast fun on a Harley

Milo Victoria is a Service Operations Manager at Division 18. He loves to ride his 1977 Harley-Davidson Electra-Glide, which he calls "my baby."

"I found it in a barn in Mexico," he recalls. "It was rusted and had no chrome—it was being ridden on the beach as an all-terrain cycle."

By the time he finished restoring it, Victoria had "nothing stock" on his Harley but the engine, which he then had to rebuild when it blew out.

He smiles when he describes the cream-and-chrome, 1200cc bike as "so fast it scares me" and "so loud I'm not sure it's legal." ■

Editor's Note: Frank Sahlem is an MTA Customer Information operator. He cross-trained as a feature writer for Metro Family.

shows he's entered.

When Rojas took his car to the Team Chevrolet show in Pasadena in 1994, it won Dealer's Choice, People's Choice and Best In Show.

"The dealer offered to trade me a new Corvette for it, straight across," he recalls.

160-mph drag racer

Rick Kingi, a bus operator at Division 7, races a Super Competition Plymouth Duster at dragstrips in Arizona, California, Nevada and Utah.

The Duster runs the quarter-mile course in less than 8.7 seconds at a top speed of about 165 mph. Most drag races are won by tenths or even hundredths of a second, and being competitive requires a constant retuning of the racing machine to wring out every ounce of speed.

But, as it is with driving MTA Line 2 and Line 10 in West Hollywood, safety is Rick's paramount concern. His car

Spotlight on excellence

Division 3 serves East and Northeast Los Angeles

Transit Operations

Maria Aguirre, Editor

By Maria Aguirre

This month, the spotlight falls on Division 3, now known as the North Los Angeles Division.

The North Los Angeles Division is located in Cypress Park, close to where the I-5 and 110 freeways intersect. The hard-working operators at this division provide essential services to the people of East and Northeast Los Angeles.

For the transit dependent, Metro Bus service to the County Hospital and to the industries in Vernon make this division and its operators an indispensable part of the life of the communities they serve.

Meet the director

Cheerfully accepting the challenges of

this unique operating division is Gary S. Spivack, the service operations director. He joined the Southern California Rapid Transit District in March, 1982, as director of planning.

Since then, Spivack has managed staff in operations planning, procurement, real estate, general services, printing services, local government and community affairs, marketing, planning, Metro Rail, administration, and graphics. He recently passed his 15-year anniversary with the MTA. He arrived at Division 3 on January 13.

Spivack's first priority is team building. His aim is to include everyone, in every area of responsibility, as an important part of the North Los Angeles Division family.

To implement this philosophy, Spivack has an "open door" policy. He is always available to all staff members.

"My office is more than just the 'woodshed,'" says Spivack. "I want to know what's going on in a person's life, their triumphs as well as their challenges."

As an example of management responsiveness, Spivack set up a team-building program. A number of operators at the

division felt the program could be improved. They approached Spivack



with their concerns and the original program was reformed to reflect their recommendations.

"I've found an unprecedented

level of cooperation," says Spivack.

Being a good neighbor

A major division goal is improved community relations. The division participated in the Cinco de Mayo festival sponsored by the Cypress Park/Elysian Park Chamber of Commerce. Community meetings also will be held at the division.

Being a good neighbor is merely going the mile, Spivack says. Being a focal point for the community is to go the extra mile to make people proud and happy to have the MTA in their backyard.

The division's instruction department feels free to be innovative. Line 442, the freeway express from downtown Los Angeles to the South Bay Galleria, is a case in point.

On its northbound journey, it now enters the freeway at Manchester and exits at 39th Street instead of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. This allows the operator to use the HOV lane and cuts 20 minutes off the morning commute.

True grit and grime

"For sheer division pride you can't beat the mechanics and service attendants at this division," says Eddie "The Flying" Flynn, equipment maintenance supervisor.

Flynn is quick to point out the division's consistently low numbers in the Planned Maintenance Program, where mileage-related repairs are made. They have an aggressive graffiti clean-up program for the interior and exterior of the fleet.

The efficiency of the mechanics and the level of cooperation between the mechanical, service and operations staff is shown in the better than 99.5% on-time rollout performance that is achieved every day.

Keep up the good work, North Los Angeles Division! ■

Everything I know about life I learned as a bus driver

Editor's Note: Peter Freeman is a bus operator at Division 7. This is his philosophy, developed during 26 years driving buses in Los Angeles, England and Europe.

By Peter Freeman

- People are more important than time.
- It's better to be late in this life than early in the next.
- Don't move until you know where you are going and how to get there.
- When you get thrown a detour, get back on route as soon as possible.
- Never curse with the microphone switched on.
- When you hit the skids, keep focused on where you want to go. Not where the skid is taking you.
- Always stay in control.
- No matter how great the danger, or how impossible the circumstance, there is always a silent alarm switch somewhere. The trick is in finding it and using it.
- The difference between an optimist and a pessimist: When asked, "How's business?" An optimist will reply, "picking up." A pessimist will reply, "dropping off."
- Good character, like good driving, is all about keeping between the lines.
- Base all decisions on the big picture.
- It's always a good idea to cover your rear end. So, check your mirrors often.
- It's better to be totally safe than totally sane.
- A passenger boarding your bus is like somebody entering your life. When they come on, welcome them. When they want to leave, stop and let them go.
- Keep a cool head. Never, never panic.

Commentary: Who's our customer?

By Ellen G. Levine
Executive Officer, Transit Operations

Did you hear the story about the children who could walk on water? The parents complained that the school district wasn't teaching the children to swim.

Customer complaints are a fact of life. Very often we feel that they are not deserved, but they are still our customers, and every customer complaint has to be treated with respect.

Even when not deserved, I believe there is something to be learned from even the most relentless criticism. It provides the impetus we need for growth and devel-

opment, as individuals as well as an agency.

So who are these customers anyway? Yes, it's the 1.2 million passengers who board our buses and trains every day. But don't forget the customer within the MTA.

When an operator signs on for an assignment, that operator becomes the supervisor's customer. The mechanics and service attendants have their customers in operations, and so on throughout the agency. Our customer is whoever we provide service and/or support to.

If we treat each other, and each other's concerns with sympathy and respect, we can reflect this in the sympathy and respect we show to our customers on the street.

Then, who knows? The only complaints we receive will be the ones we don't deserve. ■



Metro Bus operator prefers his transportation... on the small side

Terry Davis bikes 40 minutes to work every day

By Mary Ann Maskery

It takes Terry Davis about 40 minutes to get to work—by bicycle. He's been cycling to work for the last year and a half, and now at age 53, Davis has discovered something: "I decided I really didn't need a car."

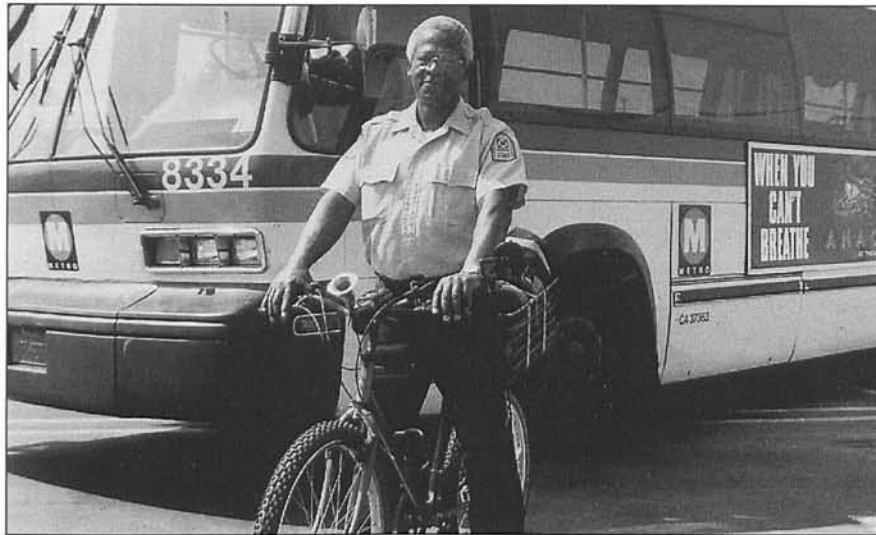
As for all those Angelenos who pack the freeways every morning in their rush to work, Davis says, "That's ridiculous. It creates tension. And doing that to get to work just adds to all the stress you feel on the job."

Talk about stress. For his livelihood, Terry Davis drives a six-wheel, 28,000-pound bus on Line 207 serving Western Avenue, one of the busiest bus routes in the city. He's been a bus operator for 14 years, now working out of the South Bay Division in Carson. He bicycles home to Redondo Beach and calls the 40-minute trip "relaxing."

A total believer

Davis is now a total believer in non-automotive travel. When he's not driving a bus, or riding a bus or train, he takes the bike. He's already sold his car.

Davis is one of a growing number of MTA employees who practice what they preach about getting Los Angeles residents out of their cars. They are now among



Operator Terry Davis, 53, rides his bike to work 40 minutes each day from Redondo Beach to Division 18 in Carson. He's one of a growing number of MTA employees who practice what they preach about using alternative transportation.

some 40,000 people in Los Angeles County who commute to school and work by bicycle.

The MTA has helped fund 400 miles of bike routes in the county and will fund some \$18 million in general improvements for bicycle use in the next two years.

The agency also has helped fund a bike station in Long Beach and is looking at proposals to offer parking and other facilities for cyclists at major bus and train stations in other parts of the county.

Work and avocation

Jesse Simon combines work and avocation in his efforts to expand the MTA's facilities and services for cyclists.

A transportation technical manager at the MTA, Simon has guided the expansion of bike lockers and racks at Metro train stations. He commutes four miles by bicycle every morning and adds 14 miles to his evening trip "to get some exercise." He's been doing it for 25 years.

"I do it because I like it," he says. He wants to help make bicycle riding com-

fortable. "If you're going to be hassled, use a car."

Los Angeles offers ample opportunity for commuting by bicycle. It is just about the largest market for new bicycles in the country, with nearly one million sales every year.

Long-distance drivers

It may be hard to imagine bicycle commuters in Los Angeles, the home of the long-distance driver. But in reality, when Los Angeles residents get in their cars in the morning for that daily commute to work, or to shop, many of them make trips short enough for a bicycle ride.

An estimated 35 percent of daily commutes are less than five miles long.

Take, for example, George Ibarra, a 33-year-old MTA accountant, who is a relative newcomer to commuting by bicycle. He rides his bike about five or six miles to El Monte, where he can catch a train, or sometimes a bus, to Union Station.

In the eight months he's been doing this, Ibarra has come to enjoy what he calls "the simpleness of life," the greater sense of beauty and community that he gets on a bicycle.

And for those still fighting freeway traffic in the morning, Ibarra offers one other benefit he has come to appreciate: "I need less caffeine." ■

Linda Bohlinger's

CEO Hotline

Q. Why do division managers have new cars and charge cards with unlimited charge accounts? Why are top management people at Headquarters given cars at taxpayers' expense? They should drive their own cars, even on company business.

A. Service Operations Directors do not have MTA charge cards. On the issue of assigned cars, MTA Procedure # GEN 16 permits the 24-hour assign-

ment of vehicles to employees who may be required to respond to emergencies outside of job hours, or if the job requires visits to MTA sites at irregular hours, or at the discretion of the CEO or Deputy CEO. Employees assigned 24-hour vehicles must pay income tax on the value of the vehicle's use for commuting and any other non-business mileage. Improper use of an MTA non-revenue vehicle may result in disciplinary action. Thanks for your call.

Q. On my last paycheck stub, there was a message about nominating people for Employee of the Month. Nomination forms are supposed to be in the kitchens at all locations, but I haven't seen one as

long as I've been at this division. What's the story?

A. Thanks for your call. Employee of the Month nominating forms are supposed to be in all kitchens at every location. Our Internal Communications Department has plenty on hand for all offices. If there are none at your division, please ask the Service Operations Director or the Administrative Analyst to order them. We want everyone to have an opportunity to nominate a deserving co-worker for this honor.

Q. In my department, two different positions—a schedule supervisor and a schedule operations planner—are both at the same pay grade. But

the planner receives overtime and the supervisor does not. Why?

A. Interesting question and not easy to explain. Under MTA policy, it's not always the pay grade that determines whether an employee is eligible for overtime pay. Two employees with very different job responsibilities may be in the same pay grade. For example, a supervisor is not eligible for overtime pay because the managerial responsibilities of the position make him or her exempt. A non-supervisory employee in the same pay grade may be exempt or non-exempt. It all depends on the work the employee performs and how it is categorized under the Fair Labor Standards Act. I hope that answers your question. Thanks for calling. ■

All In The Family

TRANSITIONS

Albano, Vincent G.
Transit Pol Ofer (TRN)
to Transit Pol Offer

Ambrosich, Gary F.
Facilities Insp to Mec "A"

Amiri, Shahrsad
Transp Proj Mgr III
to Transp Proj Mgr IV

Andreas, Alison J.
Admin Intern
to Transp Project Plnr I

Arteaga, Jose L.
Janitor to Lead Mpr Wxr

Bambrick, David E.
Tran Pol Ofer (TRN)
to Trans Pol Ofer

Chaires, Rogaciano
Pension & Ins Clerk I
to Benefits Tech

Charles, Gail
Dir of Equal Opty Prog to
Mngg Dir of EO Prog

Cardoso, Diego R.
Transp Proj Mgr III
to Transp Proj Mgr IV

D'Agostino, Oscar
Serv Attn to Mec "C"

Davis, Eugene R.
Transit Pol Offer (TRN)
to Transit Pol Offer

DeFoor, Joya
Asst. Treasurer
to Act. Treasurer

Estrada, Diana J.
Accounting Assist
to Accountant

Galvan, Roman
Ser Attn to Mec "C"

Garcia, Armando
Serv Attendant Ldr
to Mechanic "C"

Gregosek, John H.
See Guard II
to Trans Pol Ofer (TRN)

Ho, Henry S.
Sr Aud to Safety Comp Insp

Hoover, Ronald Grant
Asst Admin Anlst
to Telecom Anlst

Hernandez, Fidel A.
Serv Attendant
to Mechanic "C"

Interiano, Mario O.
Serv Attendant
to Mechanic "C"

Jackson, Seabron
Bus Opr (P/T)
to Bus Opr (F/T)

Jas, Susan R.
Transp Proj Mgr III
to Transp Proj Mgr IV

Joe, Francene M.
Asst Eq Opp Prog Rep
to Equal Opp Prog Rep

Long, Barbara E.
Dir of Budget to
Deputy Ex. Ofer., Finance

Martomes, Manuel
Serv Atnd to Mec "C"

Mendoza, Rose L.
Bus Opr (F/T)
to Rail Trans Oprs Supv

Mckensie, Donald
Pass Rel Rep
to Cust Info Agent I

Moore, Wayne
Dir of Prog Mgmt Anlst
to Dir Capt Prog Mgmt

Morallo, Richard D.
Comm Outreh Aide
to Pub Aff Ofer

Olsen, Janice L.
H. R. Anlst
to Sr H. R. Anlst

Peres, Adolfo
Elect Comm Tech
to Sys Elect Comm Tech

Shaw, Linda A.
Temp to F/T Comm Ofer

Singh, Charanjit N.
Bus Opr (P/T)
to Bus Opr (F/T)

Strawen, Tanya R.
Financial Anlst
to Sr Financial Anlst

Trachter, Ira
Transp Program Plnr II
to Sr Admin Anlst

Yapelli, Phil S.
Trans Pol Ofer (TRN)
to Trans Pol Ofer

RETIREMENTS

Ariza, Armando D
Mar '74 to Mar '97

Carbajal, Armando J.
Mar '74 to Mar '97

Charles, Lester L.
Mar '70 to Mar '97

Escoto, Daniel M.
July '73 to Aug. '96

Garcia, Alfonso G.
Apr '74 to Apr '97

Gibson, Willie B.
Mar '74 to Mar '97

Green, Luther
Feb '87 to Mar '97

Larkin, Patrick P.
Feb '75 to Mar '97

Melanson, Cecilia M.
Nov '91 to Apr '97

Metoyer, Thomas
Mar '74 to Mar '97

Mickel, Shirley J.
Mar '74 to Mar '97

Platt, Ruth M.
Mar '89 to Apr '97

Royston, Rawlin A.
Feb '74 to Mar '97

Sample, Walter A.
Mar '74 to Mar '97

Serratos, Jaime
Mar '74 to May '97

Sarris, Melba J.
Sept '59 to Mar '97

Sharp, Kris A.
Nov '73 to Feb '97

Shults, Dale K.
Mar '87 to Mar '97

Thompson, Arthur E.
Aug '92 to Mar '97

Young, George N.
Sept '86 to Mar '97

SERVICE AWARDS

40 YEARS

Gateswood, James
May. 7, 1957

25 YEARS

Orr, Patrick L.
May. 3, 1972

Prince, Jimmie L.
May. 5, 1972

Van Leuvan, Madeline A.
May. 30, 1972

20 YEARS

Dear, Marsha A.
May 9, 1977

15 YEARS

Avila, Mary J.
May 17, 1982

Freeman, John G.
May 17, 1982

Guerrero, Jenet
May 10, 1982

Insell, Frances E.
May 17, 1982

Mitchem, Kimberle M.
May 17, 1982

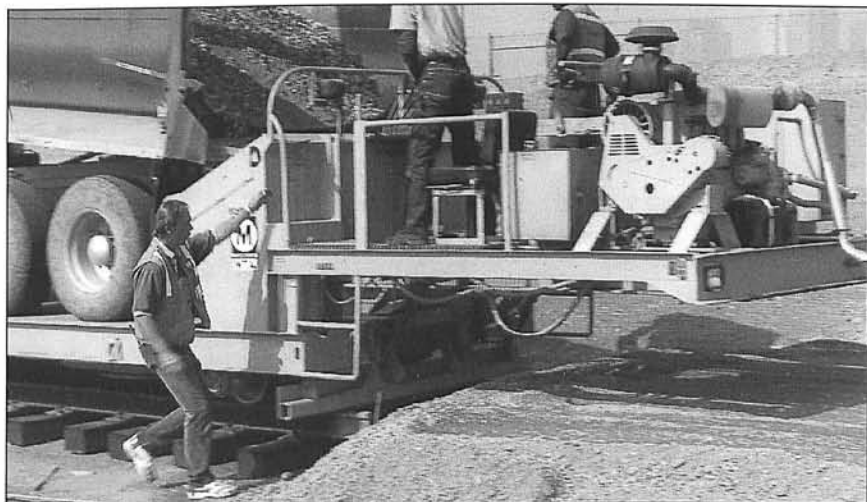
Noriega, Bernard
May. 3, 1982

Ong, Lynn Hoang
May 25, 1982

Thai, Phong T.
May 10, 1982



Five of the MTA's most veteran bus operators were on hand for the 4th Anniversary celebration at Headquarters. From left are Lonnie Anders, 37 years service; Samuel Rodriguez, 33, years; Jack A. Bailey, 37 years; Donald Dube, 38 years; and Billy J. Thomas, 34 years.



More than 550 feet of new track were laid in the Metro Red Line rail yard recently in preparation for the delivery of new subway cars. Metro Rail employees built, aligned and surfaced the track. Here, workers are distributing the ballast rock used for the track bed. Track Supervisor David Walker (L) oversees distribution of ballast and the operation of the tamping machine.

Suggestion Box

Editor:

I thought the May 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.

Metro Family News Briefs

Transit crime decreased 7 percent during 1996

MTA Transit Police report an overall seven percent decrease in Part I crimes on Metro Bus and Train lines in 1996. Part I crimes include homicide, rape, robbery, assault and theft.

Serious crime was down 19 percent on the Metro Bus system, a continuation of a downward trend over the past four years. Robberies on buses decreased 38 percent and assaults were down 14 percent. There was a 22 percent decline in assaults on bus operators in 1996.

Transit Police officers focused their Metro Red Line enforcement efforts on fare evasion and "quality of life" issues in 1996. Officers issued 17 percent more citations for these infractions.

The Metro Blue Line crime rate increased last year. Police reported 187 Part I crimes in 1996 compared to 132 in 1995. Transit Police reported 102 Part I crimes on the Metro Green Line in 1996. A preliminary evaluation reflects a problem with thefts in the park-and-ride lots.

A plain clothes detail is deployed on the rail system to help reduce crime.



The MTA celebrated Poetry Month in April by issuing a series of seven new bookmarks featuring poetry and visual art works. Metro Art arranged an event at Headquarters for the artists. Signing autographs are, from left, Patty Sue Jones, Laura Stickney and Leo Padilla.

Fox's 'Volcano' improbable, says government geologist

The Twentieth Century Fox movie, "Volcano," gets two thumbs down from a U.S. government geologist and a Cal State University Northridge professor.

According to U.S. Geological Survey Geologist Brett Cox, the potential for a volcanic eruption in the Greater Los Angeles area at any time during the next 1,000

years is essentially nil.

"There's been no known volcanic eruptions within 50 miles of Los Angeles in the last 11 million years," says Cox. "The odds of a volcano popping off here in our lifetime are not very good."

The movie depicts a Metro Red Line train at the Wilshire/Alvarado Station being devoured by lava.

Cal State Northridge Professor Peter

Weigand notes that the last volcanic eruption was Conejo Peak in the Santa Monica Mountains. Those who would believe the movie, he told the MTA, "would believe anything."

"While Los Angeles doesn't have real volcanos," says Interim CEO Linda Bohlinger, "we do have earthquakes. And a subway is generally the safest place to be in an earthquake."

15 LA transit projects to get 22 percent of available funds

With the MTA's help, 15 LA County projects will receive nearly 22 percent of all funding offered by a state transportation improvement program.

The California Transportation Commission (CTC) has voted to award \$22.4 million to such mass transit projects as Metro Blue and Red Line stations, Metrolink rolling stock purchases and rail access improvements to Burbank Airport. A total of \$100 million was distributed statewide.

The CTC reviews nearly 200 applications each year and funds only 25 to 50 projects. ■



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