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Over 50,000 responses being analyzed

MTA ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF CENTURY'S FIRST BUS/RAIL SURVEY

Nearly 175 prizes have been awarded to randomly chosen passengers who participated in MTA's first comprehensive on-board 21st Century survey of Los Angeles County's bus and rail riders.

(editors: Grand prize winners will be honored Thursday at MTA headquarters during press event. Watch for March 27 media advisory)

In addition to MTA's Metro Bus and Rail systems, patrons of such municipal bus operators as Santa Monica Big Blue Bus, Foothill Transit, Pasadena Area Rapid Transit System, Alhambra Community Transit, Culver City Bus and Torrance Transit, were surveyed.

Conducted this last summer and winter, the survey assessed how well public transit in Los Angeles County is meeting the needs of approximately 1.6 million daily boarding passengers. More than 34,000 questionnaires were distributed and completed on MTA buses, 15,000 on Metro Rail, and 6,000 aboard municipal bus operators. Results are still being analyzed.

"The over 1,600 new compressed natural gas buses MTA has ordered and received in the last few years, new bus and rail service MTA is either implementing or planning, does not become a reality without first hearing from our customers," said MTA Board Chairman John Fasana.

"Transportation improvements of the magnitude we are experiencing today must reflect the needs of the public. Their feedback is invaluable.

Congratulations to the winners."

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Metro Bus grand prizewinner Felipe Verdugo of Los Angeles will receive an annual bus pass, valued at slightly more than \$500.

"It feels great to be a winner, my son told me about the prize," said Verdugo, 47. "The MTA bus system has always been good to me. I'm a handicapped person, but I travel a lot to downtown Los Angeles and East Los Angeles and sometimes to Disneyland. I love the Metro Rapid, especially its low floors. They are very comfortable, especially for people like me. I never believed I was going to be a winner."

Grand prize winners for Metro Rail, which includes the 17.4 Metro Red Line subway, 22-mile Metro Blue Line and 20-mile Metro Green Line, were Angeles residents Daniel Walker and Michael Parker and Monterey Park resident Lisa Lee, all presented with an annual pass for two for Universal Studios.

Summary of bus patron prizes:

- MTA awarded: one grand prize (a year-long MTA pass); two annual passes to Universal Studios; 10 \$100 supermarket gift certificates; 33 \$50 supermarket gift certificates; and 60 one-month MTA passes.
- Torrance Transit awarded: five \$50 supermarket gift certificates.
- Santa Monica's Big Blue Bus awarded: five \$50 supermarket gift certificates.
- Culver City Bus awarded: one \$100 Metrocard; and four \$50 supermarket gift certificates
- Alhambra Community Transit awarded: two \$50 supermarket gift certificates
- Foothill Transit awarded: one \$50 supermarket gift certificate

Summary of MTA rail patron prizes:

- two annual passes to Universal Studios; five \$100 supermarket gift certificates; 25 \$50 supermarket gift certificates

MORE...

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Surveyors from San Diego-based Rea & Parker Research completed the \$783,000 Metro System research project, the first since 1998, aboard 185 MTA bus routes, as well as the 59-mile Metro Rail System, comprised of the Metro Red, Blue and Green lines. The survey project was completed late last year.

The "Year 2001 Los Angeles County On-Board Bus and Rail Survey" addresses the Agency's and the region's need for statistically reliable information about the Los Angeles County transit market and is part of a coordinated effort of five counties who are members of the Southern California Association of Governments to obtain travel information for regional planning, particularly in long-range transportation planning and funding.

The primary purpose of the survey is to make sure the MTA's Metro System is serving the public equitably and accurately.

The questionnaires sought information on demographics, a reconstruction of the last trip using public transit, including the bus line number, and patron satisfaction.

The findings will provide MTA planners and marketing staff with invaluable insight on how transit patrons use the system and how well the Metro System is meeting their needs.

Of particular interest is how travel patterns and rider satisfaction have changed in light of multiple Metro System enhancements such as the extension of the Metro Red Line subway, improved service along the Harbor Transitway and the introduction of Metro Rapid Bus.