

Wow. So many responses to December's trivia! Was it because we hid the answer to the question inside the issue? The Montgomery Bus Boycott last 381 days. We're happy you played! Maud Robinson of La Puente is even happier since she was our winner. She gets a free 31-Day Pass. January's topic is CHINESE NEW YEAR. Good luck!

Remember that all correct answers received by the last Friday of the month will be placed in a drawing for a free Foothill Transit 31-day pass! As always, employees of Foothill Transit contractors and their families are not eligible.

Please limit entries to ONE per customer.

ONE. Only ONE. Not two. Not five. ONE. We dig your enthusiasm. But let's play fair, ok?

Every year in the Chinese calendar is assigned to one of twelve zodiac animals, one of which is the dragon. When is the next Year of the Dragon?

- A. 2025
- B. 2011
- C. 2020
- D. 2012

Send your answers to Footnotes, c/o Foothill Transit, 100 N. Barranca Ave., Suite 100, West Covina, CA, 91791.

Please include your personal information, so we can let you know if you've won.

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City & Zip: _____
 I ride Line # _____
 Daytime phone _____
 Evening phone _____

EVENTS

Opportunities 2006:

Emerging Business & Real Estate Opportunities in the San Gabriel Valley

Friday, January 20th
 8:00AM - 2:00PM

Pacific Palms Conference Resort
 One Industry Hills Parkway, City of Industry
www.valleyconnect.com

College Preparation Seminar

Saturday, January 21st
 1:00PM - 3:00PM

Diamond Bar High School
 For reservations, call (909) 341-5510
 Para reservaciones llame a (909) 341-5510
www.collegeprepsseminar.org

COMMUNITY

Published for the customers, board members, friends, and staff of Foothill Transit. Articles may be submitted to Felicia Friesema, editor.

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Foothill Transit contracts with Connex ATC for management and administrative services, and with First Transit for operations.

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Sending Them Pieces of Home

With the holidays done, our families and friends overseas are still in our thoughts

Foothill Transit Bus Operator Ed Muñoz has a lot on his mind. His son, Ronnie Avila, is a Marine stationed in Iraq.

"We don't know where," Ed said. "He'll call to let us know he'll be gone for a few weeks at a time. We get worried if we don't hear back from him."

Like many parents with kids in the military, Ed sends his son care packages full of items from home. But back in December, he asked the Pomona Yard to help out.

"The box we ended up sending was over 65 pounds," said Ed.

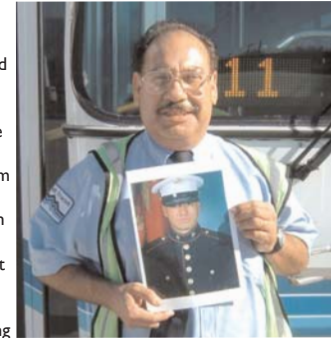
"Everyone chipped in. It was full of shaving cream, his favorite Twinkies, foot powder, all the little essentials that aren't always easy to come by over there."

When the box arrived, Ronnie put it out for his unit so that everyone could take whatever they needed.

"He told me the Marines will be sending a thank you card to us at the yard."

While he is very proud of Ronnie, Ed is looking forward to having him home at the end of his tour in February.

"We take it all day by day. He'll get a big homecoming party. And I'll probably parade him around the yard a little. The holidays were tough. But he'll be home soon."



Bus operator Ed Muñoz holds up a picture of his son, Marine Corporal Ronnie Avila

receive time off to go home for the holidays. Anxiously waiting for him were his wife and new baby daughter.

"Oh it was great," said Isabel. "He just soaked it up while he was here. Home cooked meals and no sand anywhere."

A.J. Soltero is in the United States Army in the 82nd Medical Evacuation Division. While his work does put him in dangerous positions, A.J. rarely discusses it with his family.

"During his first tour he did," said Isabel. "He was exposed to so much. By the time his second tour came, he stopped talking about it.

He just misses home and talks about how things are here."

Isabel does send her son care packages. Baby wipes, candy, magazines, and lip balm are the most frequently sent items. He brought home a jar of Iraqi sand to show his family one of the things he and the rest of his fellow military personnel cope with every day.

"It was lighter than I expected. Like talcum powder. And it just gets into everything," said Isabel. "It's a small thing to help us understand."



United States Army Sergeant A.J. Soltero pictured here sitting on the back of a transport vehicle

Our El Monte Store Manager, Isabel Soltero, was one of the luckier ones. Her son was able to request and

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// Foothill News

Pieces of Home

(from page 1)

"But you know, we never really will."

When he comes home, she says he's just focused on home. And that's the way she wants it to be.

Army Sergeant John Nehls knows what it takes to keep machines running. He should. He probably learned a thing or two from his dad.

His father, Gary Nehls, is Foothill Transit's Director of Information Technology. Among many responsibilities, Gary makes it possible for *Footnotes* to be designed and written without any technological hiccups.

"The army is a good fit for John," said Gary. "He has the commitment."

John is one of a few Foothill Transit family members who are currently serving in the Middle East as part of the Iraq War. John enlisted with the United States Army prior 9/11. Since then he's served in a variety of places and is currently on his second tour in Iraq.

John, like most overseas military personnel, spent the

holidays at his base, celebrating with his fellow troops.

"We know he's working hard. We know he's fine," said Gary. "But you know, you never stop thinking about it. You try not to dwell on it. Especially around the holidays."

There are some bright spots on the horizon. For one, John's tour will likely end in a few months time. For another, John will be getting married in June. In the meantime, he is the happy recipient of care boxes from home.

"We send him everything from storable food to games," said Gary. "There are limits to what we can send, but the little bits of home help. He emails when he can, but that goes in spurts depending on the tasks he has ahead of him."

"We're proud of him," he adds with a smile. "It's not easy work. And we'll have no idea what it was really like."



United States Army Sergeant John Nehls

Banking on Opportunity

The San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership is holding its Opportunities 2006 Conference on January 20th. So what's the connection with Foothill Transit? Everything.

Opportunities 2006 is a conference highlighting the growing opportunities for business and real estate investment in the 30 communities that make-up the San Gabriel Valley. The conference will be held on Friday, January 20th, at the Pacific Palms Conference Resort in the City of Industry.

Growing, you say? The Westside may be a trendy address, and Downtown may have clout, but more and more, people see the advantages of parking their dollars here.

The recent population booms to our east mean a workforce source is out there looking for a shorter commute. While valley growth may mean increased traffic, smart transit options will lessen the burden on our roads and make the valley more inviting for both work and play.

But what about us, you ask. For those of us who already make our home here, we know how our quality of life is improved by access to reliable transit. Need proof?

According to the American Public Transportation Association, for every mile traveled, public transportation uses

about one half of the fuel consumed by automobiles, and about a third of that used by sport utility vehicles and light trucks. Every \$1 invested in public transportation projects generates from \$4 to \$9 in local economic activity. Riding a bus is also 79 times safer than traveling in your car (not to mention less expensive).

As if that weren't enough, the federal government recognizes the need for transit in growing communities by supporting it with vital resources. Every \$1 billion invested by the federal government in public transportation supports approximately 47,500 jobs. So as the San Gabriel Valley grows, so do we. Our new neighbors and businesses will be looking to us to help keep their citizens and employees mobile.

For more information on how Foothill Transit can help your business stay on the go, visit foothilltransit.org. To register for Opportunities 2006, contact the San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership at 626-856-3400.

\$1 invested in public transportation projects generates from \$4 to \$9 in local economic activity.

// Your Ride

No Badge. No Problem.

Kevin Gano is our new Director of Security and Safety. He stopped wearing a police badge years ago, but the aura still remains.

It's impossible to not look Kevin Gano in the eye. When he speaks, he holds your attention and your gaze with authority. This, you say to yourself, is a man who is on patrol. Always.

Which is part of the reason why we hired him.

There were many reasons, actually. His former employment with the City of Norwalk as Director of Public Safety, his career with the La Verne Police Department, his FBI training, his public record, his local involvement. He's also a resident of Claremont, which adds to his interest in working as our Director of Security and Safety.

"The agency has an impressive dedication to customer safety," said Kevin. "I am excited to be a part of the team."

Kevin's enthusiasm extends to Foothill Transit's

recently launched SmartBus Program, which will provide the agency with new bus monitoring technologies.

"With Foothill Transit's implementation of the SmartBus Program, the agency will be able to take their overall safety plan to a new level," said Kevin.

Local community concerns will also take a high priority among Kevin's goals. His record for establishing collaborative relationships between public agencies will be an important tool when working with the 21 member cities in Foothill Transit's Governing Board.

Welcome aboard, Kevin!



Online Passes Sail

It's hard to believe that our "new and improved" website is almost a year old. So many exciting new features have been added since last year's March launch. One of which has exceeded our expectations.

Many of you have been buying your 31-Day Passes and Metrocards online via our Online Pass Sales Outlet. Talk about convenience! Quick and secure without having to make an extra trip. If you haven't added Foothill Transit to your set of bookmarks, time's a wastin'! Save time! Buy online! At foothilltransit.org

HAPPY 4703!

Chinese New Year falls on January 29th this year.

We'd like to take a moment to wish all our customers celebrating the Year of the Dog a festive and prosperous new year. Buses will run their usual Sunday service, though we'll be on the lookout for dragons.



Take the bus home

The new Foothill Transit toy bus can go anywhere you go—your home, office, or even your kid's toy box (if you feel like sharing). Get yours today for just \$7.99, at a Foothill Transit Store or foothilltransit.org.

Foothill Transit
WE DRIVE
800-RIDE-INFO (800-743-3463) • foothilltransit.org