

## **MTA to Celebrate Metro Blue Line 10th Anniversary with Spirit of the 'Red Car'**

By RICK JAGER

In celebration of the return of rail service to Los Angeles, MTA will join elected officials, Friday, July 14, to mark the 10th anniversary of the Metro Blue Line.

[See metro.net June 13: Pacific Electric 'Red Cars' Will Return ...](#)

The event, which will be held at 10 a.m. near the Washington Station in downtown LA, will be highlighted by the unveiling of a modern-day Pacific Electric "Red Car," similar to those that once traveled throughout the region nearly 40 years ago.

The Pacific Electric Red Cars, to be put into service this weekend, are actually a clever disguise of existing Metro Blue Line rail cars, created by an enthusiastic and dedicated MTA maintenance crew that converted two Sumitomo P-865 light rail cars to look very much like the historic trolleys.

### **A step back in time**

Rail patrons using the Metro Blue Line this weekend will have a surprise in store for them. Many will take a step back in time and board what appears to be a Pacific Electric Red Car, last seen in service in 1961.

"There's a lot of nostalgia associated with the Red Cars and we wanted to commemorate 10 years of rail service in the region with this history," said Tom Conner, MTA executive officer of Transit Operations. "This is our way of saying 'thank you' to the people along the corridor who have made the Metro Blue Line such a success and have supported it with their patronage."

Due to the success of the Metro Blue Line - it has transported , more than 135 million boarding passengers in its 10 years of operation - it is presently undergoing a \$9.7 million face-lift with a project that will increase the line's capacity. Construction has already begun to lengthen 19 Metro Blue Line station platforms to accommodate three-car trains.

### **Project to be complete in 2001**

At present, the Metro Blue Line can operate only two-car trains on the 22-mile route between downtown Los Angeles and Long Beach. Work on the platform project began in May and is expected to be completed by late summer 2001.

Ridership on the Metro Blue Line has reached 63,000 average weekday boardings, a five percent increase since the June 24 opening of the North Hollywood extension of the Metro Red Line subway in the San Fernando Valley.

Overall ridership on the 59.4 mile Metro Rail System has increase to 211,015 daily boardings, up 42 percent compared to May figures of 149,050 daily boardings.

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