

Bad Weather Doesn't Stop Metro South Bay Volunteers

By RICH MORALLO

(Oct. 2, 2002) Dark skies and drizzle couldn't deter Metro South Bay volunteers from fanning across its service area, last Saturday, to participate in five community fairs and festivals on the same day - a record number for the sector.

A band of bus and train safety volunteers, mechanics, transportation operations and equipment maintenance supervisors, LAPD Transit Service Bureau officers, Division Advisory Committee (DAC) members and service sector staff manned information tables in Watts, South Central Los Angeles, Inglewood and El Segundo.

"We get to interact with people a lot better at these events," said Transportation Operations Supervisor Joe Rodriguez from Carson Division 18.

Rodriguez answered bus schedule and bus line questions at the Richmond Street Fair in El Segundo. Helping him field queries was Marco Pedemonte, an equipment maintenance supervisor from Arthur Winston Division 5, who had two assistants himself - wife Neife and four-year-old son, Daniel.

Handing out literature

A few minutes northeast of El Segundo, Senior HR Analyst Jeannette Bell passed out bulletins and application forms for operator, mechanic and equipment records specialist positions at the Thoreau and Adath Streets Block Party in Inglewood.

Working side-by-side with Metro South Bay General Manger Dana Coffey in the celebration's most visible booth - a shiny red Metro Rapid Bus on display - Bell said she had a party at the event.

"It was fun talking to the residents and telling them how the service sectors would enhance customer service," she said.

While Bell and other Metro South Bay volunteers worked, train safety presenter Wajeha Bilal distributed bus safety checklists and train safety tips to youngsters as she listened to Aztec drums and music during the 21st annual Day of the Drums festival at the Watts Towers.

Crowds of up to 3,000 attended the festival, held just a couple of blocks from the 103rd Street Metro Blue Line train station.

'We have to stay in touch'

A Watts resident for 58 years, Wajeha was busy

PHOTOS BY RICH MORALLO



Seven-year old twins Hector and Jose hoist a Metro bag at Vermont Harbor street fair.



The Metro Rapid Bus was a big attraction at the Thoreau and Ardath Streets block party.



Marco Pedemonte, wife Neife and son Daniel helped man the Metro South Bay table at the Richmond Street Fair in El Segundo.

reminding children to “look, listen and live” around buses and trains. She often volunteers to promote Metro in her neighborhood. “We have to stay in touch with the community and make sure we know their needs.”



Wajeha Bilal with Metro Safety's 1st pamphlets at the Watts Towers' drum festival.

Community Relations light-duty operator Tanya Hardson and LAPD Officer Steven Ramos took up positions at the Vermont Harbor 1st Annual Street Conference, which closed down a couple of blocks along 53rd Street east of Vermont Avenue.

They handed out safety coloring books and crayons to neighborhood children. Word processor operator Pat Clark helped them until it was time to take safety materials to Metro South Bay's fifth event for the day - a barbecue dinner and fundraiser for a church on 59th Street.

"We're glad Metro South Bay came out to these events," said Inglewood resident Charlie Walker, 68. "If it weren't for these information tables, I wouldn't have known that seniors pay less for a Metro pass."

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