

All in the Family



Whether a princess or an executive, a rose by any other name is still a rose. MTA's Bessie Rush-Johnson, a member of the Pasadena Tournament of Roses executive committee, congratulates Tournament of Roses princesses Anjali Agrawal and Glynn-Helene Joseph, both daughters of MTA employees.

Even without a float

MTA is well-represented in the 2003 Tournament of Roses

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(Oct. 23, 2002) Among the beaming parents, a crush of media, cheering sections of teenagers, the oom-pah-pah of tubas on a rose-lined veranda, and Tournament of Roses officials in impeccable white suits, MTA's Bessie Rush-Johnson was very much at home.

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Rush-Johnson, an Equal Opportunity representative at the MTA, also is a member of the Pasadena Tournament of Roses executive committee. On Tuesday, she was at the Tournament House for the selection of the 85th Rose Queen.

Rush-Johnson, a volunteer organizer for the Tournament of Roses officialdom for eight years now, discovered just last week that two of the princesses of the Tournament of Roses Royal Court are also members of the MTA family. As reported in metro.net, Princess Glynn-Helene is the daughter of Metro Red Line mechanic Emil Joseph, and Princess Anjali is the daughter of MTA engineer Sudhir Agrawal.

The Royal Court was presented one by one, each princess seemingly floating over a red carpet on the arm of a Tournament official, and when the name of the Queen was announced, the Royal Court opened like a rose, unfolding in girlish delight around Rose Queen Alexandra Wucetich.

The girls have spent the week going through interviews with the nine-member Queen and Court Selection Committee, said Rush-Johnson. "It's an excellent opportunity for the girls. The training they get in public

speaking, and community involvement is invaluable,” she said.

Then there’s the wardrobe, donated by Macy’s, the best haircuts in town, college scholarships and more than 150 social events to regally attend.

One million people will attend

Queen Alexandra and the Royal Court will reign over the 2003 New Year’s Day festivities, culminating with the 114th Rose Parade, and the 89th Rose Bowl Game.

More than one million people are anticipated to attend the Rose Parade, which will be broadcast live on all the major networks and in worldwide syndication.

As an official Tournament of Roses ambassador, Bessie Rush-Johnson will also be attending the rush of social events, the first of which is the Coronation luncheon on the lawn of Tournament Hall today.

It’s a busy season for Rush-Johnson, who also organizes the annual holiday Gift Giving Drive for the Fred Jordan Mission of Skid Row Kids. This year’s goal is to gather 8,000 gifts, up by nearly 2,000 from last year. She plans to launch the MTA’s 7th annual gift drive in November.

How does she do it? “You’ve got to be organized,” she said, “and, then, it’s easy.”

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Clockwise, from top left, Princess Glynn-Helene with parents Caryl and Emil Joseph. The 2003 Royal Court. Princess Anjali with parents Neeta and Sudhir Agrawal. Bessie Rush-Johnson, background, and the royal parents, the Agrawals, left, the Josephs, right. The Royal Court: a moment. Bessie Rush-Johnson and Tournament President Gary Thomas.

PHOTOS BY GAYLE ANDERSON

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