

Family Spirits High at Saturday's MTA Rail Rodeo

BY LISA HUYNH

(May 6, 2003) Saturday's storm didn't dampen the spirits of those who attended the 2003 MTA Rail Rodeo – at least 200 family members were there to support their loved ones.

While rail operators and equipment maintenance specialists were competing in a series of events, family members enjoyed a live DJ, karaoke, a country/western band, jumping houses and a clown.

Both adults and kids also flocked to the IN-N-OUT BURGER Cookout Trailer for hot, made-to-order burgers, chips and soft drinks.

"I'm having a good time," said 11-year-old Jose Rodriguez, Jr. "The clown just painted a dragon on my face and made us balloon animals."

Janie Steele, the clown, was a big hit with the kids. She offered face painting, balloon animals, games and prizes.

'Having such a good time'

"The people here are so great," said Steele. "Everyone is having such a good time. I couldn't ask for a better job."

Steele also performed as lead singer of the country/western band Janie Steele and the Pacific Electrics.

Deputy CEO John Catoe, on hand for the competition, said family members were showing their support for their loved ones and for MTA.

"My daughter and I are here to wish my fiancé, Frank Pirillo good luck," said Patricia Chapman. "Though I'm a little disappointed that we couldn't

See metro.net report: [Rail Rodeo Competition Uninterrupted, Despite Cool Weather](#)



Rail Davis Transportation Manager Duane Martin brought his grandchildren along - Rylee Epps, 4, and Haily Epps, 2. (Bill Heard photo)



Christina Coronado, Victor Rodriguez, Jody Salazar, Jose Rodriguez, and Geralso Cervantes.



Asst. Rail Division Transportation Manager Barbara Harris wows the Karaoke crowd.

watch him in the competition, we're having fun." Pirillo is a Metro Green Line equipment maintenance specialist.

Although families couldn't see the competition up close, they were able to watch it on television monitors set up in the vehicle shop and around the yard.

"We keep the families away from the competition because of safety reasons and because it can be distracting to the competitors," said Metro Blue Line Division 11 Manager Duane Martin.

Martin was happy with the rodeo's outcome. "Despite the rain, many people showed up. Can't wait till next year!"

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Janie Steele and the Pacific Electrics set the pace with a country sound.

PHOTOS BY JENNIFER YEH