



Neighborhood children liked the literature South Bay Sector volunteers gave them at the Watts Towers Jazz Festival. Photo by Rich Morallo.

South Bay Volunteers staff Drum, Jazz Festivals

By RICH MORALLO

(Oct. 3, 2003) Volunteers promoted bus and train ridership, and distributed safety tips to hundreds of residents who visited the South Bay Sector booth, last weekend, during the Festival of the Drums and the Watts Towers Jazz Festival.

Just down the road from the 103rd St. Metro Blue Line station, MTA volunteers at the Watts Towers answered questions about bus and train travel and encouraged the residents to continue supporting both Metro Bus and Metro Rail.

"We also passed out bus schedules since so many of our visitors came to us asking how to make the right travel connections after riding the Metro Blue Line," said volunteer Wajeha Bilal, who worked both days at the Watts Towers festivals.

The Day of the Drum Festival focused on the role of drums and drummers in world cultures, while the Jazz Festival paid tribute to American jazz, gospel and R&B.

Bilal and Jess Godinez, who also worked at the information table, are both members of Operation Lifesaver - the national organization which sends presenters to campuses to show students how to be safe near train tracks. Both have given several safety presentations at nearby Markham Middle School.

Stream of visitors

Friends of the Watts Towers Festival member Edward Corbett helped at the transit information table, which had a steady stream of visitors.

"These events draw a lot of people even from outside our neighborhood," said Corbett who handed safety coloring books and crayons to young students in the crowd.

Still students themselves, Mytika Williams and fellow South Bay Sector intern Briana Wright were among several volunteers who gave up part of their weekend to answer questions about MTA bus service and circulate bus and train materials.

"It was a great experience sharing Metro transit information with our customers at the festivals," said Williams.

"Great jazz, interesting people and delicious food - it was LA's culture at its finest," added Cheryl Brown, another member of the South Bay Sector volunteer group.

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