

- Want to volunteer to help get Metro Buses and Trains ready for when the strike ends? [Click here for the details.](#)

Clear Sailing as Volunteers Clean Buses, Rail Cars; Another Round Set for Saturday

By BILL HEARD, Editor

(Nov. 4, 2003) The bright, clear skies and cool breezes were a relief to those who volunteered to clean buses and rail cars for a second weekend.

And the accomplishments showed it. Division maintenance managers reported that volunteers cleaned some 473 buses and rail cars in eight-hour shifts, Saturday and Sunday.

"As with the weekend before, they did excellent work with interior details," said General Manager Jack Gabig of the San Gabriel Valley Sector. "They're a big support to us and we're hoping they'll come out again this weekend."

Volunteers will be needed again this weekend – Saturday, Nov. 8 only – at the Metro Red Line yard and at divisions 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 15 and 18. Some volunteers will be assigned to clean Metro Rail stations. The deadline for weekend volunteers is close of business, Wednesday, Nov. 5. [Click here to download the excel file sign-up sheet.](#)

On Saturday morning at Division 18, Administrative Analyst Vernisa Mitchell and her partner Buyer Jean Belvin were hard at work on a particularly dirty Line 60 bus that normally carries passengers between Long Beach and Union Station.

"We're cleaning seats, we're cleaning window sills, mopping, cleaning dashboards and ceilings," Mitchell laughed. "I think we should get credit for cleaning two or three buses after cleaning this one."

Nearby, Jim McElhattan of ITS and Teresa Robbins, a Payroll accountant, were finishing up another coach. Robbins was especially impressed with one of the chemicals she was using.

"The graffiti is fun," she said. "With the stuff we have to clean it, you just spray it on and the graffiti wipes right off!"

Looking at his volunteer crew, Division 18 Maintenance Manager Ken Matsuno had high hopes. "They've been doing a great job. I hope to clean 40 to 50 buses this weekend."

Joe Medrano, equipment maintenance supervisor at Arthur Winston Division 5 echoed Matsuno's confidence. With a plan to clean 20 buses on Saturday, a dozen already had been scoured by 11:30 a.m.

Out at El Monte Division 9, seven volunteers were cleaning buses. The division has won a number of awards in the "How You Doin'" monthly contest for bus cleanliness and the crew was taking

[SLIDE SHOW](#)

Click on image to view slide show of bus cleaning efforts.

PHOTOS: GAYLE ANDERSON/BILL HEARD



Rain and volunteers help put the sparkle back in Gateway Division 10's fleet of buses.

particular care with its work.

"This is not just a general 'wipe it down and go,'" said Maintenance Manager John McBryan. "You know the bus is clean when you can walk inside and it smells clean."

Pausing to squeeze out a mop, Jose Miranda of Scheduling said it took him and his partner, Scheduling Supervisor Thang Tran, three to four hours to finish a bus. "This is a lot of work."

One Division 9 volunteer wasn't assigned to clean buses. Dieter Hemsing, director of Inventory Management, had gone back to his roots and was in the bus bay busily performing a front brake realignment.

Along with McBryan, Hemsing got his start as a mechanic at Division 9, working there from 1979 to 1982. Promoted to supervisor, he subsequently worked at divisions 7, 10, 12. "Basically, I've been all around."

Outfitted in a blue overall instead of his customary dress shirt and tie, Hemsing completed the job on one wheel, rolled it across the floor and leaned it against the bus. Then, he positioned the second wheel on the lathe, adjusted the dial and set the machine in motion.

Hemsing watched the machine begin reshaping the brake drum with satisfaction. Exercising once again the skills he had learned those many years ago, he was obviously a happy man.

Volunteer Registration Details

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Sign-up form

Want to volunteer to help get Metro Buses and Trains ready for when the strike ends? Here are the details:

- Excel file: [Click here for the sign-up sheet](#)

Volunteers must complete and return the linked form to Renee Willis by close of business, Wednesday, Nov. 5. In order to ensure there is adequate assignment allocation of volunteers across the various divisions, please provide three preferred assignment locations, including bus divisions 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 15, 18 and Metro Rail Division 20.

Volunteer Pay:

Paid overtime will be limited to pay grade P and below. Exempt employees will be paid straight time for overtime hours (payroll earn code OSK), and Non-Exempt employees will be paid time and a half for overtime hours (payroll earn code OTP).

Your overtime hours at the Division will be reported on your regular timesheet and charged to Project 300006, Task 02.04 (If you have a regular work assignment on Saturday, you will not be able to volunteer for this assignment).

Keep in mind that you qualify for overtime if you have worked 40 hours this week as of Friday, Nov. 7, for Saturday's OT work, inclusive of Time Off With Pay.

Mileage is not reimbursed since this is a volunteer assignment and not an alternative work location.

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Intern Volunteers:

Interns may volunteer provided they meet the following criteria:

- Interns must obtain the permission of their immediate supervisor prior to volunteering
- Interns cannot work overtime
- Hours worked will be paid as straight time
- Interns can work Saturday, provided the total hours per week, Sunday through Saturday, does not exceed 40 hours, inclusive of the volunteered hours.

Plan To Get Dirty:

Please expect to get dirty, so dress appropriately (long pants), but for safety reasons, please wear closed-toe and closed-back shoes with a rubberized or non-slip sole, such as tennis shoes, running shoes or safety shoes. Consider a hat or baseball cap, in case you work outside the bus in direct sun light.

You must wear a safety vest during your work assignment. All Divisions will provide you the safety vest. If required, the Division will provide all other safety wear, such as gloves and eyewear.

First Come, First Served:

Assignments will be allocated on a "first come, first served basis." Please feel free to volunteer for one or both days, but we do request that you complete a full eight hours of service for the day you volunteer. All assignments will start at 8:00 a.m. at each location (Division addresses will be provided with the assignment sheet).

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