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Metro Volunteers Return to their 'Hoods to Talk Safety

By RICH MORALLO

(Oct. 13, 2004) Metro volunteers returned to their childhood communities in late September to encourage families and residents to be safe near transit systems.

"This is my 'hood, I grew up here," said Arthur Winston Division 5 Assistant Transportation Manager

Sherry Walker as she set up a Metro information table at the 3rd Annual Vermont Harbor Street Conference.

The desire to provide public service led her to give up part of her weekend and promote Metro at the event.

"This is still my neighborhood and this is good work - giving back to the community," said Walker, who attended nearby Budlong Elementary, John Muir Middle School and Manuel High School.

Meanwhile, to the east in Chesterfield Square, Kathleen Martin was handing out a pencil and bus safety checklist to a youngster on 2nd Avenue during a neighborhood block party.

"See that house," said Martin, a Metro Bus operator out of Carson Division 18, as she pointed to a white painted home across the street. "My cousin used to live right there."

'A great feeling'

"It gives me a great feeling to talk Metro with youngsters and community members from where I used to live," said Martin, who grew up a few blocks to the north on 68th Street.

"We're so glad Metro came out to keep us informed about transit," said organizer Christine Spooner, who said families celebrate neighborhood accomplishments at the block party.

Long-time Watts resident and train safety volunteer Wajeha Bilal passed out information to crowds at the Day of the Drum Simon Rodia Jazz Festival held in the shadow of the famous Watts Towers.

"We have a lot of youths in Watts and most of them learn train safety

PHOTO: RICH MORALLO



Metro volunteer Sherry Walker with two neighborhood children at the Vermont Harbor Street Fair.

through repetition," said Wajeha.

A train safety volunteer for the past four years, Wajeha has promoted rail safety at various annual events in the community and also encourages students at nearby Markham Middle School to be careful near the Metro Blue Line tracks.

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