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LASD personnel and Metro Transit Security Officers enjoy community spirit during annual National Night Out. Here at Union Station, Sr. Security Officer Loretta Ferem helps staff busy information table.

National Night Out Asks Metro Commuters to Help Fight Crime

By Laura Kloth
Staff Writer

(August 4, 2009) Metro volunteers are joining law enforcement personnel Aug. 4 to promote the 26th Annual National Night Out – a day dedicated to crime prevention.

Organizer and North Bureau Los Angeles Sheriff's Deputy Sgt. Maria Luna said the idea is to remind commuters to be alert and aware of everything around them, and to remind them to call officials if they see a suspicious package or person.

"It's been successful every year, so far," Luna said. She said Metro volunteers work at tables to give out pamphlets to commuters, and explain the programs available. She said, this year, magician Jerry Litt will be performing tricks at the El Monte Station to get more commuters to check it out.



Los Angeles family en route to Lancaster stopped by for a Sheriff's badge sticker and a coloring book, handed out by Sr. Sheriff's Deputy Thomas Rodriguez, above.

• *Photos by Gayle Anderson*

The Union Station table was organized by Fare Inspector Maria Carlin and staffed by Sheriff's Deputy Day Rodriguez, Fayne Tillman Dave Delao, Carl Bernal and Sr. Deputy Thomas Rodriguez, plus Transit Security Sr. Officers Loretta Ferem and Rene Lopez and TSO Gary Carney.

The South Bureau stations will be overseen by LASD Sgt. Steven Rottella. Other stations participating include, Norwalk, Rosa Parks, Warner Center, Inglewood and Union stations.

Volunteer coordinator and Transit Operations Community Relations Rich Morallo documented scenes from the 2009 Metro National Night Out event on Youtube. (Check it out from home at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=apry70TyNPk>)

Morallo said "This is a great opportunity for Metro to urge the community to travel safely and securely on public transit, and to help keep crime off of our buses and trains. As in the past 2 years Community Relations has helped with the logistics in setting up the tables, providing safety and security materials, and requesting Metro Volunteers to help with this unique national community outreach initiative."

The idea for National Night Out comes from National Assoc. of Town Watch Executive Director Matt A. Peskin, who held the first one in 1984. The event has since branched out to some 12,000 communities in the U.S. and Canada.