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Strength in numbers: Metro's legion of volunteers and community partners regroup in the West Plaza patio after volunteer appreciation confab in the Board Room.

Volunteers Take Metro to the Communities in One-on-One Campaign to Increase Ridership

By Rich Morallo

Volunteer Coordinator/Community Relations

(Nov. 5, 2009) Twice Rey Coutts rescheduled his travel plans for flying out to an NFL football game so he could deliver supplies to a Metro community event. Tess Fitzpatrick and Rosemarie Ordenes brought their families to public festivities so they could spend time with spouses and children and promote Metro as well.

"I celebrated my last birthday behind a transit information table," said Bob Thomas.

Rey, Tess, Rosemarie, Bob and other Metro volunteers made personal sacrifices to keep to their commitment and talk up public transportation in the community.

This past year, the volunteers traveled to 125 weekend neighborhood venues in Los Angeles County – including Bob's Saturday trip to Lancaster – and reached about 350,000 residents.

The volunteers, coming from different departments and divisions throughout the agency, contributed more than 1,000 personal hours to encourage people to use buses and trains.



Metro executives led by Chief Operations Officer Carolyn Flowers and Deputy Executive Officer for Regional Communications Lynda Bybee thanked the volunteers for a job well done at the Metro Board Room. South Bay/Gateway Cities General Manager Dana M. Coffey and San Fernando Valley General Manager Richard Hunt along with Division 7 Assistant Transportation Manager Alicia Walker joined the congratulatory line-up.

Last Friday, Metro executives led by Chief Operations Officer Carolyn Flowers and Deputy Executive Officer for Regional Communications Lynda Bybee thanked the volunteers for a job well done at the Metro Board Room. South Bay/Gateway Cities General Manager Dana M. Coffey and San Fernando Valley General Manager Richard Hunt along with Division 7 Assistant Transportation Manager Alicia Walker also thanked the volunteers.

Deputy Executive Officer for Public Relations Marc Littman and Community Relations Manager Helen Ortiz-Gilstrap talked about the achievements of Metro Speaks, the agency's speakers bureau during the program.

A highlight of the program occurred when Metro volunteer and Division 8 mechanic Marilyn Archie provided the entertainment with a Whitney Houston song.

One of six emcees for the program, Yvonne Price, welcomed the group including Metro Partners, the staff who provide logistical and material support for the volunteers, and the Community Partners, neighborhood and agency representatives who invite and work with the volunteers at fairs and festivals.

Emcee Rey Coutts, along with Tess Fitzpatrick, Bob Thomas, Roberto Burris and Edith Goff-Youngblood saluted the volunteers as "weekend warriors."

Credit Roll:

Community Partners: Wajeha Bilal - Watts, Harold Brown and Deborah Brown - Time Warner, Tori Hill - Expo, Nicole Honaker-Hwang - Balboa Park, Mark Johnson - CityLites, Cynthia Manker - Inglewood Today Magazine, Ara Najarian and Sara Elena Loaiza - City of Cudahy, and Jesus Ojeda - Metrolink

Metro Partners: Dan Colonello - Mail Services; Fran Curbello - Communication Services; Deputy Gary Debondt - Transit Services Bureau; Tony Jusay - Bike Program; Lt. Jacob Lopez - Metro Security; Raul Naranjo - ITS; Helen Ortiz - Public Relations; Tom Rodriguez - Copy Center; Claire Fitzgerald, Tom Horne, Marie Tervalon - Customer Relations, Bronwell Trice - Community Relations; Alicia Walker - Division 7; and Myrine White, Lynda Reed, Jackie Anderson and Gary Shiroishi - Metro South Bay.

Metro Volunteers: Tony Banash, Rachel Bird, Cheryl Brown, Robert Burris, Victor Castaneda, Patricia Chen, Rey Coutts, Shalitha Davis, Evelina Del Castillo, Marlene Dietrich, Dixie Dorsett, Kathy Drayton, Elsa Edejer, Erica Erwin, Loretta Ferem, Tess Fitzpatrick, Teresa Fong, Bedford Gaines, Elizabeth Garcia, Arlene Garcia, Jennifer Gill, Jes Godinez, Edith Goff-Youngblood, Dwight Graham, Veronica Hargrove, Joane Harper, Fernando Hernandez, Caroline Howard, Dana Jones, Cris Liban, Jose Melendez, Martha Mengistu, Bill Moore, Rosemarie Ordenes, Fanny Ortiz, Elizabeth Palacios, Charles Pinkett, Sanyal Prabal, Yvonne Price, Valene Rader, Sue Le Roux, Sndra Sandoval, Wally Shidler, Michael Staley, Elizabeth Streegan-Chriss, Linda Tam, Bob Thomas, Alice Tolar, Eugnio Villacorta, William Walker, Norman Ward, Angela Watkins, Tonya Yates and Cory Zelmer.