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Video by Rich Morallo. Not hooked up to YouTube at work? Watch at home at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vysVPqDV0DQ> NOTE: This YouTube link is being sent to you for the purpose of viewing the Metro video only. Metro employees are subject to the Employee Code of Conduct that generally restricts the use of company time/equipment to conducting Metro business. Please click on icon above to view the video.

Metro Team Scores Victory with Metro Gold Line on New Year's Day

By Rich Morallo
Transit Operations/Volunteer Coordinator

(Jan. 5, 2010) Stephen Tu knew exactly what he wanted to do on New Year's Day.

On Friday at 5 a.m. the Metro transportation planner was busy on the Union Station Metro Gold Line platform, guiding crowds into train cars headed for the festivities in Pasadena.

"I'm volunteering this morning to help with everyone traveling to the Tournament of Roses Parade and Rose Bowl Game," said Tu, who takes the Metro Gold Line everyday to work from Little Tokyo.

Also working at Union Station on the first day of the year was Metro Rail and Bus Operations Control Director Roman Alarcon, who busied himself monitoring the families, tourists and football fans waiting for the train.

"We have about 50 operations staff helping the travelers at Metro Rail stations from East Los Angeles to Sierra Madre," Alarcon

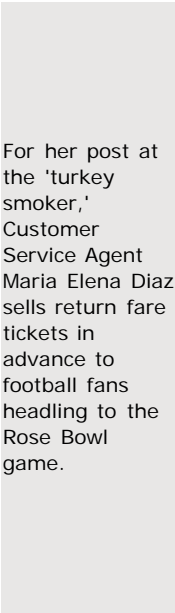
said.

Six miles north at the Memorial Park Station, Metro Customer Service Agent Maria Diaz stood next to a couple of portable fare boxes, busy punching holes into paper tickets.



"We use these blue fare boxes – also known as 'turkey smokers' – to sell tickets to people for when they return from the parade and game," remarked Senior Cash Counting Supervisor Beverly Williams.

Augmenting the ticket vending machines and keeping the passenger lines moving at Metro Rail stations, other Metro staff provided the same service with "turkey smokers" at Sierra Madre, North Hollywood, Del Mar, Lake and Union Stations.



For her post at the 'turkey smoker,' Customer Service Agent Maria Elena Diaz sells return fare tickets in advance to football fans heading to the Rose Bowl game.



Customer information staffers Ruth Moreno, Maria Hernandez and Susan Tate offered directions to riders exiting the train on the best route to get a prime vantage point for the big parade on Colorado Boulevard.

"This is so interesting," remarked Moreno, working on her first New Year's Day assignment. "I'm interacting with people directly, face-to-face, when normally I'm taking their phone calls as a customer information agent," she said.

Nearby, Napoleon, a Metro Security dog, let out a low howl when prompted by Metro transit security officer Gustavo Lozano, who was on station to assist with crowd control.

Back at Union Station crowds continued to arrive.

"We're keeping the ridership happy, answering their questions and helping them to get to where they want to go," Deputy Jose Acero said as he stood watch on the Gold Line platform.

On her fifth year of working on New Year's Day, Service Attendant Leader Virginia Middleton inspected the train cars for debris and litter. "It's nice to see all of the friendly faces this morning," she said.

Throughout the morning, throngs of passengers continued to line the pedestrian tunnel at Union Station where Revenue Collection Clerk Autumn Perry shouted, "If you have a ticket come down this line and you don't have to wait."

Meanwhile, Deputy Leticia Martinez took a moment from crowd control

duties to ponder her new year's resolution - "To ride Metro often, and drive less."

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