

# METROLINK MATTERS

METROLINK NEWS AND EVENTS



## New Railcars Debut

More than 300 guests attended a special preview event showcasing Metrolink's first two cars equipped with cutting-edge collision-absorption technology. Guests at the May 3 event at the Eastern Maintenance Facility in Colton got the first look inside the new cars as well as an up-close view of exterior features.



Each stainless-steel car is built with crumple zones on each end to absorb energy in any collision. Interiors also incorporate new safety features such as higher seat backs, bolted-in seat cushions, and energy-absorbing tables. Inside and out, the cars feature Metrolink's new color scheme and logo design.

The cars are the first of 117 Metrolink has ordered and the first in the U.S. to feature collision-absorption technology. They were built in Korea and assembled in Colton.



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## A Word from the CEO

Dear Metrolink Riders,

It is a new day at Metrolink, and the sun rises and sets with our customers—you. As your Metrolink CEO, I can assure you that this organization is under new leadership and will demonstrate a new commitment to excellence. We have a long way to go on this journey but you will see results.



Metrolink CEO John E. Fenton

Everyone in this organization is focusing on reliability, predictability, relationships, and solutions. This is how we demonstrate to our riders that everything we do circles back to you.

Our equipment and infrastructure will be dependable, our staff will be ready to exceed customer expectations, and, consequently, our train service will be reliable. We will listen to customers, make promises we can keep, and therefore ensure that Metrolink is predictable. We pledge to develop better relationships with our riders so we know your needs, your issues, and your motivations. We will partner with you to find solutions.

I have already begun transforming Metrolink, reorganizing its structure around our most important functions and ensuring that we operate efficiently. I am determined to devote resources to creating solutions that improve Metrolink service, improve your commute, and, as a result, improve your life. I believe Metrolink can play a positive role in your day.

Customers are the center of the Metrolink universe—and so is safety.

I promise that everything we do will demonstrate an appreciation for life, and every act will value the lives of our employees, coworkers, contractors, customers, and communities. It is the only way to run a railroad, something with which I have a lot of experience. The Metrolink brand will stand for safety and providing solutions.

Our journey of continuous improvement already has begun, and I urge you to join us on it. Please write to me at [johnfenton@scrra.net](mailto:johnfenton@scrra.net).

Sincerely,

## Customer Commentaries

*Metrolink Matters will share feedback from you on what passengers are talking about out there on the rails. We will reprint quips and comments from your letters and e-mails ... keep 'em coming!*

### **An Orange County Line rider says, “Thanks, but ...”:**

“I read in the latest Metrolink newsletter about a passenger who complained about being frozen during the commute. I immediately noticed the temperature change on trains 682, 600, 609, and 689. Thank you for the quick response. My ride this morning was very uncomfortable. The air was blowing strong and cold. I had to wear my gloves and earmuffs to keep warm. I enjoy riding Metrolink and appreciate your [addressing] this concern.”

**Sorry about that! We’re working on it, and we hope to hit maximum comfort level—consistently—very soon.**

### **A new Corona resident has become a happy new Metrolink commuter, with help from station staff:**

“I just moved to Corona and started commuting on Metrolink. My wife and I went to the station on the Sunday before my first Metrolink commute. Paul was very helpful in explaining how the ticketing and parking works. I am very grateful. Commuting by train is not just less stressful than going by car; it is de-stressing. I love it!”

**And we love providing an easy, de-stressing commute!**

### **Orange County Line riders are pleased Train 808 is still riding the rails:**

“Thank you for listening to rider feedback regarding the discontinuation of the 808 train. I know these decisions are not easy, and the fact that you listened to us and preserved this train is indicative of your responsiveness to rider input. Thank you again and GO METROLINK!”

**Thank you for appreciating the challenges of making tough decisions, and for speaking up. Passenger input is essential in steering us toward decisions that best meet your needs.**





# Metrolink's Equipment Department: Maintaining

"If we do our job right, we don't hear from customers," says Gary Jarboe, director of Metrolink's Equipment Department. The department's job is to keep Metrolink's trains and locomotives in good working order, inside and out—and that should happen without even skimming the surface of a rider's attention.

From the tiniest detail like toilet paper to the vastness of a new train car, the physical assets that make up Metrolink are managed and monitored by the Equipment Department. They oversee routine interior cleaning and safety checks each night close to home, and they also travel to inspect new cars in points of origin as far away as Korea. *Matters* chatted with department director Jarboe to learn how it all happens.

**"You must be a fanatic about safety."**

—Gary Jarboe, director of Metrolink's Equipment Department

Every night, when Metrolink trains conclude their day's service, they land at end points such as San Bernardino and Lancaster. Here, the trains are cleaned, tested, repaired if necessary, and otherwise readied to resume service in the morning. This includes both creature-comfort maintenance—for instance, making sure toilets are clean and the air-conditioning is working—and checking the functionality of components essential for safe operation.

## Begin with the Wheels

"The wheel-to-rail interface is where safety starts," says Jarboe, and so that's where an external inspection starts, with mechanics looking for wear points or any other signs of concern. They walk the trains' exteriors, examining wheel contour, couplers,

and braking systems. They also check locomotives, performing tests to ensure that brakes and all other components are functioning at 100 percent.

Metrolink's Equipment Department oversees the maintenance subcontractor Bombardier, ensuring that contractors perform not only the maintenance required by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) but also adhere to Metrolink maintenance schedules that exceed FRA requirements. Periodically, the Equipment Department's compliance officers perform audits to ensure that all safety regulations and operating rules are being complied with, and that all maintenance is being performed in accordance with Metrolink's high standards.

## Ensure Safe Operations

Whenever a train is delayed, the Equipment Department examines the

# METROLINK SAFETY

## Are You an Aware, Safe, and Courteous Commuter?

Knowledgeable, focused, and prepared Metrolink commuters remain aware during their regular commutes, ensuring that they have a safe, courteous trip without incident. For regular commuters, the following checklist is second nature. How many of these tasks do you complete each day? Which will become a part of your commute routine?

### Wise commuters on the way to stations will:

- Buckle seat belts before starting their vehicles;
- Shun texting or using electronic devices while driving, being sure to talk on cell phones only through headsets or earpieces;
- Leave home with plenty of time to reach their Metrolink stations;
- Obey traffic laws while traveling;
- Be alert for traffic-control devices on approach to stations;
- Arrive at stations in plenty of time to choose parking places in well-lit areas;

- Avoid parking next to dumpsters, vans, trucks with campers, or other vehicles whose size or shape could provide concealment for potential thieves; and
- Hide packages, duffel bags, and valuables (iPods, GPS devices, mail with home address) in locked trunks, rather than storing them in plain sight.

### Upon arrival at stations, wise commuters will:

- Arrive with time to walk, not race, to platforms;
- Ensure that they are safely toting or rolling any bags and boxes so they won't pose a safety hazard to themselves or others;
- Wait on platforms with their carry-ons, never leaving bags unattended;
- Stand well behind the yellow line as trains pull in;
- Allow arriving passengers plenty of room to disembark and move away from the train before boarding; and
- Watch the steps and hold handrails when boarding.



# ning Our Fleet

data to determine whether the delay was equipment-related. But their aim is to repair or replace malfunctioning equipment before it becomes a problem. Like Jarboe said, "If we did our job perfectly, we would change each component out one day before it fails, thereby maximizing the life of the component with no service disruption."

When it's time for larger equipment overhauls—for instance, several Metrolink locomotives are being overhauled right now—the Equipment Department oversees the entire process.

And it's the Equipment Department that oversees the purchase of new equipment like 117 new collision absorption-equipped railcars. Equipment Department staff traveled to Korea, where the cars were manufactured, to inspect them. When



A mechanic operates a wheel-truing machine at Metrolink's Central Maintenance Facility in Los Angeles.

the first two cars arrived this spring, the Equipment Department inspected them once again.

To do the job well, "you must be a fanatic about safety," Jarboe says. The members

of the Equipment Department, with their mix of engineering training and customer-service experience, are all about putting their passion for safety into practice.

## Y ALWAYS MATTERS



### To navigate safely and courteously on board, wise commuters will:

- Maintain good balance by using at least one hand to steady themselves when moving through train cars on foot;
- Rely on handrails when using stairs;
- Remain aware of emergency exits and emergency-equipment locations;
- Know to contact a conductor—often in cab or Comet cars—or the nearest uniformed officer in any onboard emergencies;
- Place personal items underneath seats, not on adjacent seats;
- Allow other passengers the courtesy of seats as they board, never saving seats;
- Listen to conductor announcements;
- Use headsets at a respectful volume when listening to music or watching videos;
- Notify conductors of unwanted activity such as vandalism and loud or disruptive behavior;

- Watch for landmarks along their routes indicating it is time to collect their belongings and proceed to exits;
- Begin making their way downstairs from the upper level before trains stop at their stations;
- Keep doors accessible to those embarking or disembarking by standing away from exits when trains are at capacity, choosing locations where balance can be maintained with handholds; and
- Safely step from trains to platforms and move away before trains depart.

Don't hesitate to improve the commute of other riders, too. A kind offer to assist a passenger with bags or to alert someone who leaves a bag, jacket, or cell phone behind goes a long way to create a safe and courteous Metrolink commuting community. My commute is also your commute, so let's make it better together.



# A Poetic Commute

Rhymes are flowing and community is growing on the Riverside Line. Every Friday, on the round-trip commute between Riverside and L.A., riders on Trains 403 and 404 read original poetry aloud. Fellow passengers quiet down to listen. “You could hear a pin drop,” poet-commuter Eva McDonough says.

About four years ago, a group of commuters who had become friends on the train started referring to themselves as the Train Buddies Organization (TBO).

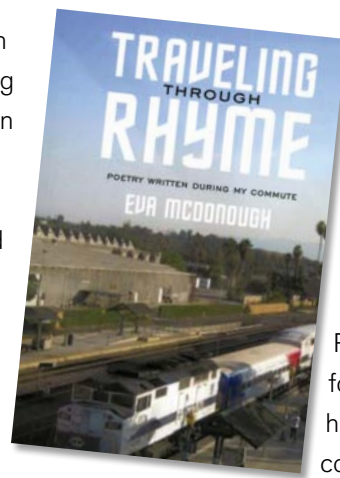
They celebrate birthdays and holidays with onboard potlucks, brainstorm solutions to each other’s problems, and generally enjoy their commute community. One day, a group member offered to read a poem aloud. But his TBO friends didn’t want to hear him read someone else’s poetry—they wanted something original. The group decided to write original poems on a new theme each week. They read the poems aloud to each other—and whoever else is in the car—every Friday, morning and evening. Last year eleven poets participated, creating a total of more than 200 poems, which were collected in a book printed by one of the group members.

The poets came to the group with varying degrees of experience—some had never written a line of poetry before; others had been published. Among them are police detectives, a nurse-practitioner, a nursery-school teacher, bankers, a geologist, an art-gallery staffer, and civil servants. Together, they’re learning about both poetry and life. “Poetry has really



allowed us to evaluate who we are and what we’re thinking about,” McDonough says. Anyone in the car can participate.

Last fall, McDonough collected two-and-a-half years’ worth of poems in a book called *Traveling Through Rhyme*, in which she reflects on her faith, family, and friends—as well as her Metrolink commute. McDonough has been riding Metrolink between Riverside and Montebello for almost ten years, and her appreciation for her commuting community is palpable in her poetry, which is infused with optimism and gratitude for friends, love, and life. You can order a copy through [authorhouse.com](http://authorhouse.com)—or, if you’re riding Train 403 or 404, look for the author herself; she’s always carrying copies to sell.



**Metrolink haiku**  
 Metrolink  
 Work, station, get on board,  
 conversation, friend, station  
 Home.

**Why I ride**  
 I have ridden on the train  
 For many years  
 And I do it gladly  
 Even among the fears  
 Of pedestrians, car, trucks  
 Or shopping carts  
 For all the passengers I have  
 learned to know  
 Have won my heart

*Poetry by Eva McDonough*

# Link Up with Us on Facebook

Metrolink wants to hear from you! Visit [facebook.com/Metrolink](http://facebook.com/Metrolink) to share your experience with us and other riders. Our Metrolink Facebook fan page is a great place to give us feedback and interact with other Metrolink fans. We also post special events and discounts.

In May ...

**Andres** shared: “I don’t normally take the Metrolink to work but today I was running late and decided to ... I forgot how fast and quick the service was ... You guys are doing a great job, keep it up! =>”

**Simon** had a question: “If I have a 10-trip ticket that lists that I can travel from L.A. Union Station to Orange and vice versa, am I restricted to boarding at those two stations or can I still board from other stations in between the two stations?”

**Steven** answered: “Yes, you can. I do it all the time between West Corona and Anaheim.”



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## Need a Cuppa, in Upland?

Need a pre- or post-commute caffeine fix? Try Boomers Coffeehouse, located at the Upland Station on the San Bernardino Line.

Boomers Coffeehouse, harbored in the historic Upland Santa Fe Train Depot, is decorated in honor of the baby-boom generation, with mid-century modern furniture and colorful swag lamps.

Voted the site of the “Best Coffee Drink in the Inland Empire” by *Inland Empire Magazine*, Boomers offers authentic Italian coffee drinks along with original creations such as the Chai Loco—an energizing mix of chai and espresso. If coffee isn't your thing,

Boomers still has plenty to offer, including fruit smoothies, teas, gourmet sodas, and light breakfast foods.

Boomers Coffeehouse's staff can move fast for customers rushing to catch a train. Those who have time to spare can kick back on their patio and take in the views of snowcapped Mount Baldy or work on a laptop using free wi-fi service.

Boomers Coffeehouse is located at 220 East A Street at the Upland Metrolink Station. Open Mondays through Fridays, 5:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturdays from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Closed Sundays. For more information, call (909) 985-8685.



## Ask the CEO

CEO John E. Fenton will answer your questions. Please write him at [johnfenton@scrra.net](mailto:johnfenton@scrra.net).

### As CEO, can you improve on-time performance and customer service?

Yes. We've got to create an experience where the customer says, “Wow, I want to ride that.” That means Metrolink must become reliable and predictable. If we're on time every day and on every ride, you will begin to predict with certainty that we'll be on time, and it will remove a lot of unnecessary anxiety and stress from your life. We owe that to you. Once you can predict that we'll do what we say, we can

partner with you to find the solutions to make Metrolink the best commuter rail in the world.

### What are some of the measures you're taking to improve customer service?

We're in the process of identifying our customer touch points along with every place where passengers receive information from us. We have to make it meaningful and easy for you to ride Metrolink. Trust me. We intend to achieve customer engagement by becoming more focused on customer needs and customer service.

I've asked for you to contact me—many passengers have—and I'm responding.

I'm riding our trains to hear what you have to say and see for myself what we do right and where we can improve. We're going to create a customer-advocacy group because I want to hear what you think we need to do to create that “wow” experience for our passengers.

## METROLINK MATTERS

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