

A National Day of Remembrance

The freedoms all Americans enjoy were paid for with the lives of others that few of us actually knew. That is why we collectively remember them on one special day in May—Memorial Day.

Memorial Day, initially named Decoration Day, is a day set aside to honor those who have died in our nation's service.

There are many colorful stories about the origin of Memorial Day, with over two dozen cities and towns claiming to be the holiday's birthplace.

While Waterloo, New York, was officially declared the birthplace of Memorial Day by President Lyndon Johnson in May 1966, it's difficult to prove conclusively the origins of the day. It is highly likely that it may have sprung up simultaneously in many separate areas. It is a historical fact that women's groups in the South were decorating graves before the end of the Civil War, long before any official holiday was declared.

Decoration Day was proclaimed on May 5, 1868, by General John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, in his General Order No. 11, and was first observed on May 30, 1868. Flowers were placed on the graves of Union and Confederate soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery.

The first state to officially recognize the holiday was New York in 1873. By 1890, Decoration Day was recognized by all of the northern states. The South refused to acknowledge the day, honoring its dead on separate days until after World War I. Since 1971, Memorial Day has been celebrated on the last Monday in May in most states. (Some southern states still set aside separate days to honor the Confederate dead.)

Since the late '50s, on the Thursday before Memorial Day, the 1,200 soldiers of the 3rd U.S. Infantry have placed small American flags at each of the more than 260,000 grave-stones at Arlington National Cemetery. They patrol non-stop during the weekend to ensure that each flag remains standing.

And since 1998, on the Saturday before Memorial Day, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts place a candle at each of approximately 15,300 gravesites of soldiers buried at Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park on Marye's Heights.

Our debt to our veterans can only truly be repaid by individual Americans.

(continued on page 5)



Airman 1st Class Ryan Bryson hugs his son, Chad, for the first time in four months. Airman Bryson returned from Iraq on March 6. He is assigned to the 355th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Lanie McNeal)



Members of a joint honor guard carry flags in honor of five military members who were killed when their MH-53M Pave Low helicopter crashed Nov. 23 in Afghanistan. A full-honor mass funeral was held at Arlington National Cemetery on Jan. 21. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Jennifer Gangemi)

Inside



Ventura County Weighs Local Sales Tax

The governor of California has proposed a \$3.9 billion cut in transportation spending over the next two years. The Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC) has drafted a plan that, if approved for the November 2004 ballot and accepted by two-thirds of the voters, would enact a half-cent sales tax to generate approximately \$50 million a year towards transportation.

(continued on page 3)



Kruisin' 4 the Kids Cruise Nights at the Fender Center for the Performing Arts

Beginning in April 2004, the Fender Center for the Performing Arts will be featuring cruise nights, which will take place every first and third Friday of each month through October 2004 at the Fender Center for the Performing Arts in Corona.

The cruise nights will feature celebrity guests and live music as well as raffles, trophies, and food. With the help of K&N Filters, this is sure to bring out the best Southern California street rods, customs, roadsters, and muscle cars. Kruisin' 4 the Kids is a combination car/motorcycle theme coupled with entertainment by the Chantays, Stephen Collins (*7th Heaven*), Michael Welch (*Joan of Arcadia*), Matt Nelson (performing a tribute to his dad, Ricky), and others. Admission is free.

The cruise benefits the Kids Rock Free educational program, which provides free or low-cost music instruction to children ages 7–17.

The festivities begin at 6:00 p.m. All cool cars are welcome. This is a great opportunity to take the family out for a fun night of hot rods, hot music, and hot guitars.

The Fender Museum of the Arts Foundation is a not-for-profit public benefit corporation that was founded in July 1997. On July 6, 1998, the Foundation opened the Fender Museum of Music and the Arts, a small venue and education center located at 365 N. Main Street in Corona. That day, the Foundation began providing free lessons in piano, guitar, and drums to children ranging in ages from 7 to 17. Two hundred nine children attended that first eight-week course. Currently, more than four hundred children per week take advantage of these free and low-cost Kids Rock Free educational opportunities, which now include piano, guitar, drums, bass, vocal performance, and combo band classes. The Foundation envisions expanding these offerings over the next few years to include additional multicultural instruction in music, dance, and theater.

On July 13, 2002, the Fender Museum of Music and the Arts carved a place for itself in music history with the official opening

of its brand new 33,000-square foot building in Corona. The museum and education facility houses Kids Rock Free classrooms, Studio FM (a 48-track digital recording studio), the outdoor TLC Amphitheater, a visual arts gallery, and the "Celebrate the Legacy...the Fender Story" exhibit, which presents a 50-year history of the famous Fender electric guitar and its impact on the world of entertainment.

Only 32 percent of U.S. elementary schools offer any arts education.

Studies have shown that arts education has a positive impact on early childhood development.

Kids Rock Free is a grass-roots program that has already helped thousands of children, but thousands more are on the waiting list. The Fender Museum's Kids Rock Free curriculum has been shared with other institutions around the country.

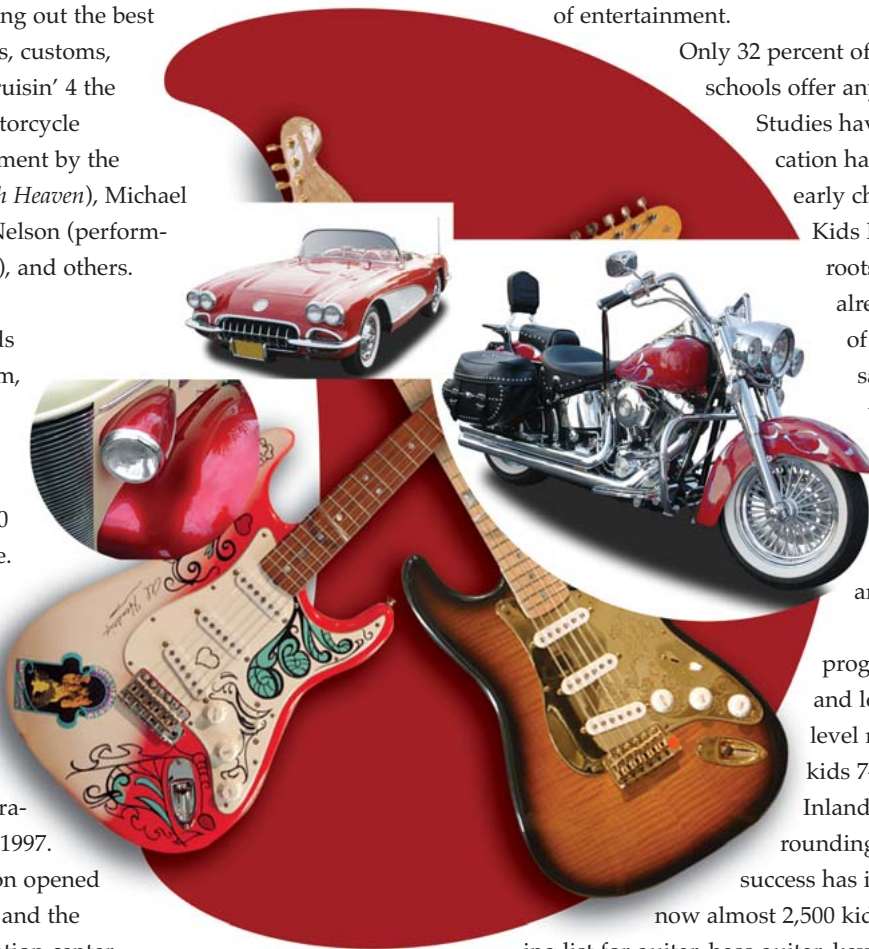
Since its inception, the program has provided free and low-cost professional-level music instruction to kids 7–17 throughout the Inland Empire and 64 surrounding cities. Unfortunately,

success has its downside. There are now almost 2,500 kids on a two-year wait-

ing list for guitar, bass guitar, keyboard, drum, voice, and combo band classes. To respond to this incredible need for more music education, the Foundation is trying more innovative and aggressive fundraising techniques to accommodate those kids on the waiting list. This spring, the Fender Center for the Performing Arts will auction a \$500,000 home in Corona and stage several high-profile concerts as part of its fundraising campaign.

Log on to the Fender Center for the Performing Arts at www.fendermuseum.com or call (909) 735-2440 to learn more about the Foundation's many activities.

The Fender Center for the Performing Arts is located at 365 North Main Street, just steps away from the North Main Corona Metrolink Station.



Transportation Investment Leads to Economic Growth

Throughout our nation's history, economic growth, prosperity, and opportunity have followed investments in the nation's infrastructure. From the internal improvements of the early 1800s—canals, locks, and roads—to the Interstate Highway System of today, infrastructure investment has been our foundation for economic growth. For example, between 1980 and 1991, almost one-fifth of the increase in productivity in the U.S. economy was attributable to investment in highways.

Our nation's highways, transit and rail systems, pipelines, airports, harbors, and waterways not only provide the backbone of our economy by moving people and goods, they also employ millions of workers and generate a significant share of total economic output. Transportation-related goods and services generated 10 percent of our total Gross Domestic Product in 2001. Economic growth and vitality are also dependent upon high-quality water and wastewater infrastructure systems.

In addition to facilitating economic growth, our transportation system has a direct and significant impact on the daily lives of nearly all Americans. The average household spends 19 percent of its income on transportation, more than on any other expense except housing, and the average person travels 43 miles each day.

Despite the importance of transportation to both our economy and the quality of life in our communities, many of our nation's transportation-infrastructure needs are going unmet. This has resulted in, among other things, an alarming increase in congestion.

Congestion Crisis

Congestion is a major national problem, and is increasing in cities of all sizes. According to the Texas Transportation Institute, in 2000, traffic congestion cost motorists in the nation's 75 largest urban areas a staggering \$67.5 billion in wasted time and fuel. This \$67.5 billion total cost equates to an

Local Sales Tax *(continued from page 1)*



Voters in many California counties have approved local sales taxes to help cover the gap between state highway funding and what is needed to keep traffic moving.

Ventura County is the largest county in the state of California without a transportation-directed sales tax.

The half-cent transportation sales tax would be used to:

- ▶ Reduce congestion, improve safety, and widen Highways 101, 23, 118, and 126
- ▶ Maintain local streets and county roads
- ▶ Coordinate traffic signals countywide
- ▶ Expand Metrolink rail services and local bus services
- ▶ Guarantee lower fares for senior citizens and persons with disabilities
- ▶ Construct truck weigh stations and bike paths
- ▶ Improve railroad crossings and access to Cal State University–Channel Islands
- ▶ Conduct independent yearly audits of the programs.

average annual cost per peak-period road traveler of about \$1,160.

From 1982 to 2000, the average annual delay per peak-period road traveler increased by 288 percent, from 16 hours to 62 hours. This problem is not restricted to the largest cities. In areas with fewer than one million people, delay more than quadrupled over these same years, indicating that even smaller areas are not able to keep pace with rising demand.

In 2000, 5.7 billion gallons of fuel were wasted due to traffic congestion in these cities alone. This amount of fuel would fill 570,000 gasoline tank trucks: if placed back-to-back, these trucks would stretch from New York to Las Vegas and back again.

Source: U.S. House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.



Coppelia Soars in Ventura

Ventura County's Footworks Youth Ballet announces its premier production of *Coppelia*, to be held at the Oxnard Performing Arts Center at 800 Hobson Way, Oxnard, on May 22 and 23.

Coppelia is a lighthearted storybook ballet. This enchanting light comedy tells the story of a spirited young peasant girl who sneaks into a toy maker's workshop and pretends to be his favorite doll. The ballet, showcasing some of the finest young dancers in Ventura County, is a great opportunity to introduce children to the joys of ballet. The performance includes a special children's reading of the story of *Coppelia* one half-hour prior to the ballet. Footworks Youth Ballet believes that this reading of the story, as well as a translation of the miming used in the ballet, will help children to better understand and enjoy this charming story.

Footworks Youth Ballet, a not-for-profit organization, believes in reaching out to the community. Artistic Director Kirsten Oakley has made it her mission to provide

opportunities for young children to be exposed to the art of ballet. Footworks has donated more than 300 tickets to local youth organizations such as the Boys and Girls Club.

The Oxnard Performing Arts Center is located at 800 Hobson Way, Oxnard. *Coppelia* will be performed on May 22 and 23. Ticket prices range from \$10 to \$20 and can be purchased by calling (805) 384-0642 or (805) 486-2424.



Dancers Brianna Meyer and Maco Demetri Doussias bring the story of Coppelia to life.

Making Cents of Local Sales Taxes

Did you know...?

- ▶ When you buy a \$20.00 tee shirt at Disneyland, you donate 10 cents towards Orange County roads.
- ▶ A \$4.00 bowl of soup in Buellton puts your two cents into Santa Barbara's transportation coffers.
- ▶ A \$25.00 ski cap at a Big Bear resort kicks in 13 cents toward San Bernardino highway and transportation projects.
- ▶ A \$3.50 Dodger Dog contributes three and a half cents to better roads and buses in Los Angeles.

Many cities use local sales tax measures to augment state transportation funding. Throughout California, 18 counties representing more than 80 percent of California's population have approved local transportation sales tax measures.



SunLink Commuter Service is Suspended

SunLine Transit Agency will suspend its regional weekday service to the Inland Empire entirely by July 1. The 3:50 p.m. departure from the Westfield Shoppingtown in Palm Desert made its final trip on April 2. Remaining service is scheduled to terminate on June 30.

SunLink has provided weekday service from Palm Desert and Palm Springs to Cabazon, Banning, Beaumont, Loma Linda, and Riverside's downtown transit and Metrolink stations since January 2000. SunLine Transit Agency's board of directors voted to modify the service in September by switching to a smaller vehicle to reduce operating costs for a six-month period. It was determined at the board's March 24 meeting that the six-month savings was not enough to make the commuter service cost-effective.

"After assessing all of the agency's fixed-route operating costs, SunLink was identified as the one route where substantial savings could be realized with less system impact than reducing or eliminating service on local Coachella Valley SunBus routes," explained SunLine's director of business development, Gayl Biondi.

SunLine Transit Agency is a joint powers authority formed in 1977 to operate the Coachella Valley's public transportation system.

Remembrance *(continued from page 1)*

When he designated May 30, 1868, as Decoration Day, General John A. Logan stated that it was "a day for strewing with flowers or otherwise decorating the

graves of comrades who died in defense of their country, and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village, or hamlet churchyard in the land. It is the purpose of the commander in chief to inaugurate this observance with the hope that it will be kept from year to year while a survivor of the war remains to honor the memory of the departed."

The staff of *Metrolink Matters* wishes to

particularly remember the sacrifices of one of our station cities, Oceanside, which recently bore the loss of more than 24 marines.



Staff Sgt. Kevin Lucius, left, and Senior Airman Donald Cook hang a U.S. Flag aboard a C-130 Hercules on March 31 in memory of a fallen airman from their home base. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman First Class Desiree N. Palacios.)

Lost and Found

Many people can name at least one item that they've accidentally left behind on a Metrolink train. All of the items found on our trains are secured at the Metrolink Information Booth at Los Angeles Union Station. If you've lost something, you may be able to locate it by contacting the Metrolink Customer Call Center at (800) 371-5465. When you call, you will be asked for a detailed description of your item, which will be entered into a Lost & Found database. If your item is being held at Union Station, the computerized system will be able to match your description with an existing record in the database. Your item will be returned to you personally by a Metrolink field representative or by express mail within five days. We do our best to return lost items, but Metrolink cannot be responsible for lost or stolen personal belongings left on the trains or platforms. All unclaimed items will be donated to various Goodwill charity locations after 60 days.

News Notes:

The La Sierra Station parking expansion project is complete. Metrolink commuters can now make use of a total of 1,030 spaces (including spaces for the disabled).

SAFETY MATTERS

If you commute by train, you have probably seen all the safety reminders put out by Metrolink—the brochures and posters, the *Metrolink Matters* articles, and the safety messages on seat drops. You are probably well-educated about railroad safety hazards.

At Metrolink, we have an exceptionally active rail-education program that strives daily to reach the entire community. Our team puts on several hundred safety events a year, targeting the 1,500 schools that are within a two-mile radius of our train tracks. We've taken our safety message to farm workers and hold regular Officer on Board events to discourage unsafe behavior around tracks and trains.

Still, another refresher can't hurt.

Did you know...?

It is illegal to trespass on railroad property. If caught, you could receive a fine of up to \$500.

California is number one in the nation in trespasser fatalities. Source: Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) preliminary statistics for 2001.



California is number three in train versus auto incidents. Source: FRA preliminary statistics for 2001.

Every 115 minutes in America, someone is hit by a train. Source: Federal Railroad Administration.

It is impossible to estimate the speed of a train from a distance. Trains move much faster than they appear to.

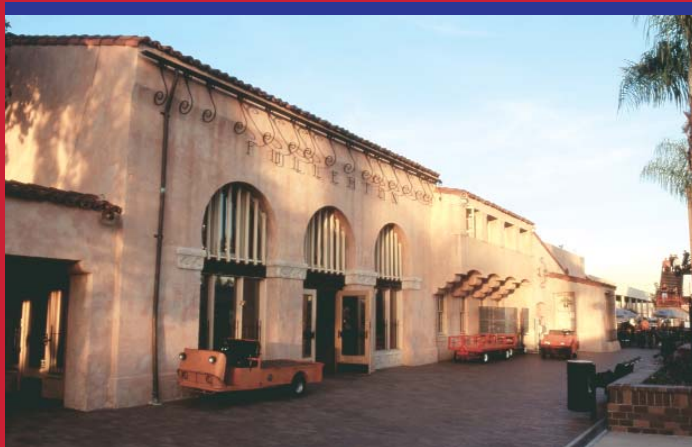
Trains are twice the width of tracks. (It is possible to be hit by a train even if you're not on a track.)

Very few people survive being hit by a train.

Some of the activities that cost trespassers their lives include taking shortcuts on the tracks, crossing tracks while wearing headphones, placing foreign objects on the tracks for fun, playing chicken with the train, and not paying attention to their surroundings.

If you are interested in scheduling a Metrolink safety presentation for your group, please call (800) 371-LINK (5465).

Station City News



Fullerton Station

Fullerton—The sixth annual Fullerton Railroad Days will be on track from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., May 1 and 2, 2004. Held at the Fullerton Train Station, the event marks the city's incorporation in 1904 and its historical railroad connection. The city and the Fullerton Railway Plaza Association are joining to welcome kids and their families to a great weekend of free train exhibits and tours. Included are restored vintage railway cars and a modern freight locomotive. Other displays will feature railway memorabilia, scenic garden railroads, model train layouts of all sizes, and the popular Southern California LEGO Club train exhibit. Local businesses and community groups will staff educational, entertainment, food, and souvenir booths.

This great community event takes place at the Fullerton Train Station, 120 E. Santa Fe Avenue, in beautifully restored downtown Fullerton. For further information, call (714) 278-0648 or visit www.scrmf.org.

Oceanside—Cinco de Mayo Fiesta is scheduled for Sunday, May 2, from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Pier Amphitheater. The Annual Latino Fiesta in celebration of the Cinco de Mayo holiday is sponsored by North County Community Services and Univision KBNT, and features live entertainment, food vendors, and community-related informational booths. For more information, please contact Susan at the North County Food Bank at (760) 761-1140.

The U.S. Professional Longboard Surfing Championships take place May 14 to 16, 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., at the North Harbor Jetty. This event, sponsored by Longboarder magazine, is part of the U.S. Professional Longboard Surfing Championships 2004, which crowns the male and female U.S. professional champions. The best American longboarders will be present. For more information, contact Longboarder magazine at (949) 366-8282.

The California Cup, a revolutionary team-based competitive surfing event sponsored by the National Surf League (NSL), will be held May 21 to 23, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., at Oceanside Pier. Four star-studded teams—representing Santa Cruz, Ventura, Orange County, and San Diego—will compete in games that include coaches, substitutes, quarters with top and bottom halves, timeouts, and live scoring. For more information, visit www.nslgame.com.

Miss Saigon Revisits LA

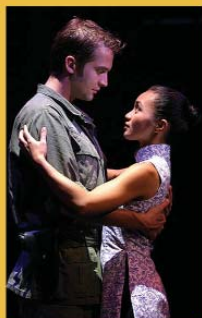
From the writers of *Les Misérables*, Alain Boublil and Claude-Michel Schönberg, comes the hit Broadway musical, *MISS SAIGON*. This newly conceived touring production is based on the original Cameron Mackintosh production seen on London and on Broadway.

Set in 1975 during the final days leading up to the American evacuation of Saigon, *MISS SAIGON* is an epic love story about the relationship between an American GI and young Vietnamese woman.

Win one of five pairs of tickets to the opening night performance of *MISS SAIGON* when it returns to Los Angeles at the Pantages Theatre for a strictly-limited two-week engagement on June 16, 2004 and running through June 27.

Simply fill out the attached coupon and mail to Miss Saigon Contest; Metrolink Matters; 700 S. Flower St., 26th Floor; Los Angeles, CA. 90017 by May 28.

MISS SAIGON is the first show of the Broadway/L.A. 2004-2005 Season. For more information, log onto www.BroadwayLA.org. Tickets are also available through ticketmaster at (213) 365-3500.



Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail Address: _____

*All winners will be contacted by phone.
Contest tickets are for opening night only.

METROLINK MATTERS
 Editor-in-Chief: Denise Tyrrell
 Writers: Tracy Berge and Anja Magnani
 Designer: Harlan West
 Photographers: Juan Ocampo, Gary Apodaca
 C.E.O.: David Solow
 Director, Communications and Development: Steve Lantz
 Manager, External Communications:
 Francisco Oaxaca
 Send comments or story ideas to
metrolinkmatters@scrra.net or to
 Metrolink Matters,
 700 S. Flower St., Suite 2600, Los Angeles, CA 90017.
 Published by the External Communications Department.

Printed on recycled paper with soy ink.

