

Matters

METROLINK NEWS & EVENTS • JULY 2008
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Trains Are Busy, Busy, Busy

In the first two weeks of June, Metrolink broke our all-time ridership record—four times! Summer is usually our slow season, as commuters take time off for vacations, but this year we've had significant increases in ridership. With gas costs skyrocketing, more people than ever—and more people than we ever expected!—are turning to Metrolink as a commute alternative. While increased ridership is great for the environment, we are well aware that it sometimes leads to frustratingly crowded trains.

We've been hearing your reports about crowded, standing-room-only trains. We know this is frustrating, so here are some tips that may offer relief. First, please know that very few trains are truly standing-room-only, even with record-breaking ridership. Only two of our trains are actually at capacity. There are typically seats available on even the most crowded-looking trains—you just might have to move to a different car to find them. You're free to move between cars, so go ahead and look for available seats wherever they may be on your train. (Tip: End cars tend to have the most seating available.)

Also, certain trains are much more crowded than others. It's possible that the train just before or after the one you usually ride has plenty of seats available. If you can, consider adjusting your commute schedule so that you can ride a less-crowded train. Visit metrolinktrains.com to view our schedules and consider alternate commutes that might work for you.

To ease congestion, we have 107 new cars on order. However, these won't be on the rails until 2010. Every major transit agency in the nation is experiencing rapid growth right now, and supplies are scarce. We're all facing a major, nationwide change in commuter habits. Metrolink is ahead of many agencies across the country because our new cars are already being built.

(continued on page 4)

Metrolink Update

Starting July 1, Metrolink riders will see an increase of 2 percent in system-wide average fares in addition to the previously approved fare adjustment of 3.5 percent (for a total of 5.5 percent) to keep pace with higher operating costs.

Metrolink's group-travel program will also see a fare increase, from \$7 to \$10 for a round-trip ticket; the minimum number of passengers necessary to qualify for the group rate will increase from 10 to 15.

For more information, please visit www.metrolinktrains.com.

Metrolink reached a milestone in June—50,000 riders in one day! Thank you to all of our passengers, first-timers and regulars alike. We appreciate your patience as we all adjust to the growing ridership. Together we're making a difference in the environment, traffic, and quality of life.

A Closer Look: Funding the Southern California Regional Rail Authority

This month, we take a closer look at the multiagency entity that operates Metrolink, noting how our structure affects your commute.

Metrolink service involves many different stakeholders. In 1991, the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) was formed to develop a regional rail service to reduce highway congestion and improve mobility throughout Southern California. A Joint Powers Authority, the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) is composed of the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro), the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA), the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC), San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG), and the Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC). The SCRRA operates Metrolink, which started operations on October 26, 1992. In 16 years, the system has grown from a five-day operation serving three lines, 12 stations, and approximately 5,000 passengers to a seven-day operation serving seven lines, 55 stations, and 50,000 daily passengers. Metrolink serves six different counties in a bustling, diverse region. While Metrolink communities share a desire for safe, convenient transit that is easy on the environment, each Metrolink stakeholder also has its own specific needs. When the member agencies come together in the SCRRA, these individual needs have to be negotiated and balanced by the member agencies to determine the path forward for the system as a whole.

One key area where the agencies must work together is funding. Apart from fares, Metrolink does not have its own direct funding

(fares make up less than 45 percent of Metrolink's operating costs). Rather, SCRRA receives the vast majority of its operating and expansion funding from its member agencies, and the member agencies' funds come from different sources. For instance, Metro mostly funds Metrolink via sales taxes made available through Proposition C, while VCTC uses mostly state and federal funds for Metrolink. Because each member agency faces its own constraints and priorities relating to funds, it can be challenging to ensure full group agreement to fund a new Metrolink initiative.

Challenging or not, it's essential. For instance, when we recently added more weekend service on the IEOC line, RCTC, SANBAG, and OCTA all had to agree to prioritize funding for that, because they're all partners in funding the additional service. Right now, we're building a new yard near Union Station—and all five member agencies are participating in funding it, which means they all had to agree it was an important project.

Metrolink is growing fast at a time when reliable, earth-friendly regional transit alternatives are more important than ever. The future could include a larger Metrolink system, with many more trains, riders, and route miles. However, to grow, Metrolink must continue to be supported and prioritized by the five individual transit agencies that make up the SCRRA.



Metro



OCTA



Riverdale County Transportation Commission



Working Together



ORANGE COUNTY FAIR JUST A FLYER AWAY!

The best-kept secret in Orange County is just a short ride away for Metrolink riders!

This year, getting to the Orange County Fair is easier than ever thanks to the OC Flyer service. The OC Flyer, an OCTA service, will directly connect Metrolink's Anaheim Canyon and Santa Ana stations to the Orange County Fair Grounds in Costa Mesa. Best of all, Metrolink ticket holders can ride the OC Flyer free to the fair, and will receive a coupon for \$2 off fair admission.

OC Flyer buses will operate Saturdays and Sundays, from 10 a.m. until midnight, Saturday, July 12, through Sunday, August 3. We encourage riders to plan ahead, check the train schedules, and leave plenty of time to get back to your scheduled Metrolink train from the fair to ensure a successful trip home.

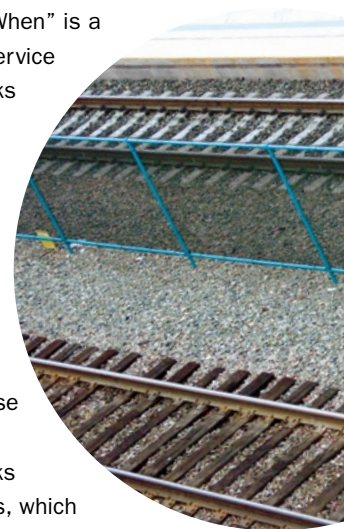
For more information about the OC Flyer, visit www.octa.net.



WHAT HAPPENED WHEN

This month's "What Happened When" is a reminder of the diverse causes of service disruptions. Because we share tracks with other rail agencies, a problem with another entity's train may impact service on our lines. For instance, at approximately 1 p.m. on May 7, Amtrak Train 774 struck a trespasser on a stretch of Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad shared by Metrolink, near the Buena Park station. Because of the investigation required by law under such circumstances, the tracks were shut down completely for hours, which meant we had to cancel Metrolink trains 704, 602, 686, 689, and 804. We re-routed train 684 to run on the San Bernardino Line to the Inland Empire–Orange County Line and then the Orange County Line.

To accommodate passengers of the canceled trains, we ran extra trains 602, 689, and 810. The tracks re-opened around 6:10 p.m., at which point Metrolink 600, 700, and 800 series trains were delayed while we waited for long-backed-up freight traffic and other trains to move through the area.



SAFETY MATTERS

Annually, 2,200,000 people visit San Clemente beaches. Fifty trains or more pass through San Clemente in both directions every day. Many beachgoers and surfers cross over the mainline tracks to get to the beach.

San Clemente is one of only a few areas in the United States with an active rail corridor along coastal bluffs and a narrowing shoreline, both of which create problems with public beach access. After much negotiation, Metrolink, the California Public Utilities Commission, the City of San Clemente, and others collaborated on the design and installation of the San

Clemente Beach Trail. The trail will provide an underpass at Mariposa and several crossings with active warning devices for beach access. This new pedestrian trail will address existing safety and adequacy issues with opportunities for public access to and along the coast in San Clemente. Overall safety will improve for pedestrians who cross the train tracks to access the beach. The San Clemente Pedestrian Beach Trail will also form a significant link in the statewide Coastal Trail, making more of the beach accessible to the public by creating a coordinated access system.



RAILROAD GRUB

BURBANK'S CORNER COTTAGE

Pssst. Metrolink rider Lisa Robertiello almost doesn't want to tell you about this place because she's afraid lines will get even longer, but she just can't keep it to herself: Corner Cottage in Burbank, she says, is a place "everyone deserves a chance to experience."

This is the place in the neighborhood for breakfast burritos, and locals pack in daily to eat them. Stuffed with potatoes, eggs, cheese, salsa, and your choice of meat, these morning favorites draw regulars like neighborhood police officers, fire fighters, and high-school students who willingly wait in line to get theirs. If you're not a breakfast-burrito person, try Corner Cottage's other breakfast- or lunch-grill standards: egg sandwiches, tacos, burgers, and chicken and beef bowls. Robertiello reports that they make their salsa from scratch.

Corner Cottage, open for breakfast and lunch, is located at 310 S. Victory Boulevard between Tujunga and Verdugo in Burbank—less than a half mile southeast of the Burbank Metrolink Station. Walk from there to your morning train to work off that breakfast burrito!



IRVINE iSHUTTLE

With Irvine's new i shuttle, commuting to—or from—the Tustin Metrolink Station just got even easier. Offering morning, midday, and evening routes between the Tustin Metrolink Station, the Irvine Business Complex (IBC), and John Wayne Airport, the i shuttle connects commuters who live or work in the area to their Metrolink train.

The i shuttle's Route A travels between the Tustin Station and John Wayne Airport along Von Karman Avenue. Route B travels between the Tustin Station and business and residential developments along Jamboree Road and Michelson Drive. A third route, C, operates within the IBC at lunchtime, so train commuters can lunch at local restaurants with ease although their cars are at home miles away. With stops every 10 to 15 minutes during weekday peak hours and every half-hour during off-peak weekday hours and on weekends, it's hard to think of a reason not to use the i—which is FREE to Metrolink riders with a valid ticket or pass—to get to or from the Tustin Metrolink Station. The i shuttle is operated by the city of Irvine, in conjunction with OCTA. Learn more at www.irvineshuttle.net.



\$7 Savings at the Circus

Be prepared to be astounded and entertained at the 138th edition of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circus. *Over the Top* is a wacky and whimsical circus spectacular. You'll see Bengal tigers, flying dogs, Asian elephants, aerial acts, a rare double-double-decker trapeze, motorcycle madness (seven speeding riders in the Globe of Steel), and much, much more!

Metrolink riders can save big and become part of the action. Receive a special savings of \$7 off \$25, \$19, or \$15 tickets for the shows listed below. Your ticket also includes admission to the all-access pre-show, where you can visit with the elephants, acrobats, and animal stars; try on some costumes; and learn how to juggle with the clowns. The fun starts one hour before showtime!

Present your Metrolink ticket or pass (same-day purchase required) at the STAPLES Center or Honda Center Box Office; go to ticketmaster.com (promotional code: "TRAIN"); or call Ticketmaster at (213) 480-3232 or (714) 740-2000 (promotional code: "TRAIN").

Train Savings Show Dates and Times

STAPLES Center

Thursday, July 17, 7:30 p.m.

Friday, July 18, noon and 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, July 19, 11:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.

Honda Center

Thursday, July 24, 1 p.m., 7:30 p.m.

Friday, July 25, 10:30 a.m., 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, July 26, 11:30 a.m., 3:30 p.m., and 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, July 29, 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, July 30, 1 p.m., 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, July 31, 10:30 a.m., 7:30 p.m.

Friday, August 1, 1 p.m., 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, August 2, 11:30 a.m., 3:30 p.m.



For more information about this special offer, go to www.ringling.com or www.metrolinktrains.com

Savings offer does not apply to Circus Celebrity, front row, or VIP seats. Limit is six tickets. No double discounts. Tickets based on availability. Service charges, facility fee, and handling fee may apply.

RULES OF THE ROAD: CELL-PHONE ETIQUETTE

Cell phones on the train—ultra-convenient or ultra-annoying? Most of us have strong feelings on the matter, and some of those feelings are in direct opposition—yet we're together, sharing space, on the same trains. So what to do? On some European trains, cell-phone use is banned altogether. Last year, the U.S. Federal Communications Commission voted to keep a rule that requires cell phones to be turned off during airplane flights. To enjoy the convenience of using your phone on the train without infuriating your fellow passengers, keep in mind some basics of cell-phone etiquette:



- **Keep it essential.** Avoid nonessential calls in a confined space where others are forced to listen.
- **Keep it brief.** Use the phone on the train if you must, but not for long conversations.
- **Keep it quiet.** Are people around you glaring? You're probably talking too loud.

Remember: The train car is a shared space. We're all commuting together, and we all deserve courteous treatment that keeps the whole Metrolink community in mind.

Trains Are Busy, Busy, Busy (continued from page 1)

In times like these, it's especially important to maintain a friendly, civil atmosphere on the trains. When conditions get crowded, tensions rise. Please keep the ride pleasant by observing every courtesy you can: avoid loud cell-phone conversations, set your game or headphone volume below the level where others can hear it, and be sure your backpack isn't bumping into anyone. Please do not take up seating space with your belongings. Frustrating though it may be, we can help each other weather these crowded times with common courtesy, patience, and a positive outlook.

So, for those times you simply can't find a seat, keep a pair of comfortable shoes in your bag and keep in mind: standing on Metrolink is still better than sitting in traffic, especially when that would mean idling away gas at more than \$5 a gallon!

GO TRANSIT TO THE L.A. SPARKS

Metrolink passengers can receive a 10 percent discount on L.A. Sparks games at the STAPLES Center box office on July 1, 2, 6, 9, and 14. Just show your valid ticket or pass. For more information, go to www.lasparks.com



METROLINK MATTERS

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For a chance to win a VIP package for four on July 25 at the Honda Center, simply fill out the entry form below and mail it by July 21, 2008, to Metrolink Matters, Over the Top, 700 S. Flower Street, Suite 2600, Los Angeles, CA 90017 or go to www.MetrolinkChancetoWin.com.

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One entry per person. All winners will be contacted by phone. For contest rules, go to metrolinktrains.com and click on "Special Events."