

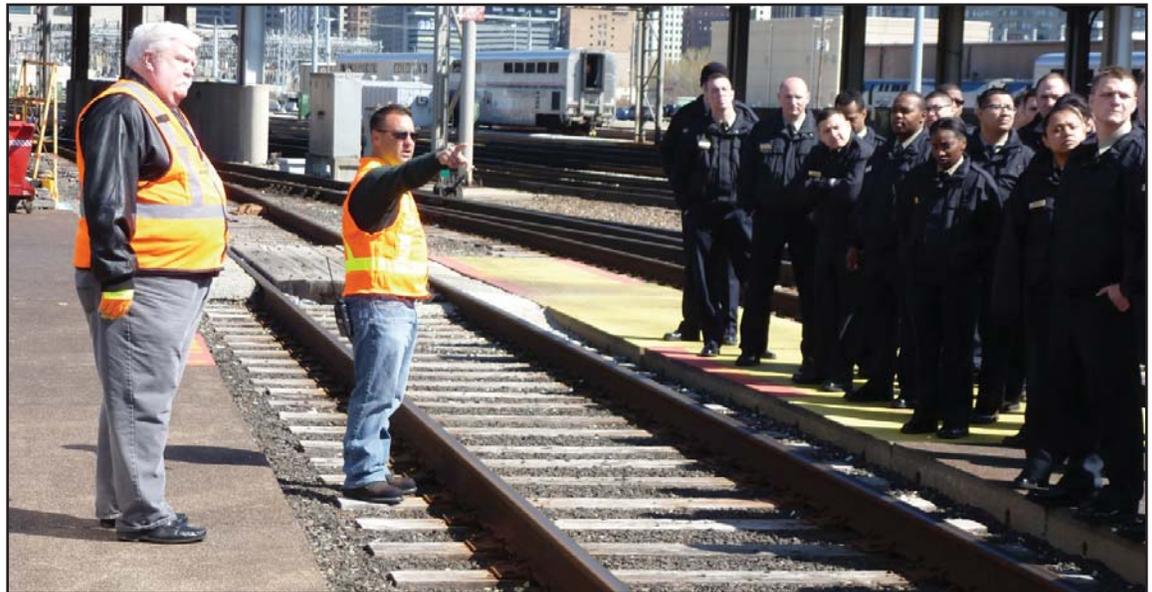


Safety comes first at Metra

It's early. You arrive at your station and hustle to the platform all caught up in your morning routine, running through your mental "to do" list, catching up with the news on your smart-phone, texting or simply listening to music. Most likely the last thing on your mind is safety. But at Metra, it's the first thing on our minds.

Metra takes a multi-faceted approach to ensuring that you and your loved ones arrive safely at your destinations. From the signage and platform announcements to the conductors making sure that you board and alight from your trains smoothly, safety is a part of our culture. We proactively work to educate our riders and the public about how to act safely around our tracks and our trains.

Through outreach programs such as Operation Lifesaver and crossing enforcement blitzes, Metra's Safety Department works daily to educate the public about the importance of safety. Our Operation Lifesaver team conducts nearly 950 free presentations across the region annually for schoolchildren at all levels, school bus drivers, truck drivers, emergency responders and other organizations. Our goal is to enhance awareness of the hazards of disregarding pedestrian and roadway railroad



Metra Emergency Preparedness Manager Tom Donegan, left, and BNSF Railway conductor Bobby Mitchell discuss train evacuation procedures with Chicago Police cadets during a training session in the BNSF yard.

warning devices and prevent accidents involving trains.

Metra's annual Safety Poster and Essay Contest is yet another way we engage our region's youngest residents about railroad safety, allowing them to take what they've learned through Operation Lifesaver presentations and classroom safety instruction to create their own safety messages. Through the contest website (www.metracontest.com), teachers, parents and students can access classroom materials and information about railroad safety. In its eighth year, the 2014 contest attracted more

than 2,000 entries from students across our region.

The safety team also goes out to approximately 50 stations a year to conduct safety blitzes, distributing literature and talking to our customers about respecting the warning devices and following other behaviors that will ensure their safety near our trains. In June as part of National Safety Month activities, Metra employees distributed safety literature to customers at all our downtown stations the week of June 9-13, and followed up with additional safety blitzes at outlying stations.

Sometimes simply talking and teaching about safety isn't enough, and that's where our enforcement programs come into play. Our Safety Department, in coordination with Metra Police, local police agencies and freight railroads across the region, also conduct periodic grade crossing enforcement blitzes to ensure pedestrians and motorists do not violate the grade crossing warning devices. And if our employees or customers report safety concerns at a particular location, we schedule additional enforcement activities for those
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Metra

On the Bi-Level

Published by Metra's Media Relations Department. Send letters, questions or feedback to On the Bi-Level, Metra, 547 W. Jackson, Chicago IL, 60661-5717. Or e-mail onthebilevel@metrarr.com.

We can't guarantee all letters will be printed or answered. Please keep letters to less than 200 words and include your first name, hometown and what line you ride. (Names are not required but strongly encouraged.) We reserve the right to edit letter for length and grammar.

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Metra holds DBE event, hands out awards

Metra's Office of Business Diversity & Civil Rights held a free networking event on June 18 in Chicago to give small, minority, and women-owned businesses and prime contractors an opportunity to meet and explore potential business relationships.

The event also featured an award ceremony. Recognized as Prime Contractors of the Year were Lion Construction 1, LLC; T.Y. Lin International Group; Kus-tom Seating Unlimited, Inc.; and John Burns Construction.

Recognized as Subcontractors of the Year were Rubinos & Mesia Engineering, Inc.; Geo Services, Inc.; and S & J Construction Co., Inc. The Emerging Small Business Awards went to Competitive Range Solutions, LLC; Material Service Testing, Inc.; and AAA



Metra DBE Certification Specialist Michele Sutton discusses the DBE process with attendees at our recent DBE networking event.

Engineering, Ltd. The Diversity Champion Award went to the Federation of Women Contractors.

Over the past 30 years, Metra's DBE program has sponsored

and participated in hundreds of workshops, training sessions, and exhibitor fairs that provide access and opportunities for small, minority, and women-owned businesses throughout Illinois.

Safety

(Continued from Page 1)

locations. The intention is to keep everyone who comes in contact with our railroad safe, and in some cases this requires that we issue a warning or a formal citation. In Illinois, fines for disobeying railroad safety devices start at \$250.

"Our goal with enforcement blitzes is not to punish our passengers but to remind them of the importance of putting their safety first," said Metra Director of Safety Hilary Konczal. "The dangers to anyone disobeying railroad gates and signals are very real. People don't think that it could happen to them and unfortunately this can lead to making unsafe decisions with potentially tragic consequences."

Metra's safety outreach also extends to our region's emergency responders. When an unfortunate event occurs on the railroad, local police and fire agencies are often the first on the scene and need to

understand how to safely conduct themselves around our tracks and equipment. Metra's Manager of Emergency Preparedness, Tom Donegan, is responsible for ensuring all emergency responders of the 110 plus communities we travel through are trained in evacuating Metra's equipment in the event of a major derailment or incident. This training is required by federal regulation and is offered free.

Metra currently has a dedicated classroom at the Chicago Police Academy and the Chicago Fire Academy where all new recruits are given the training as part of their curriculum. Metra also regularly schedules training with local municipalities across the region and in June participated in an all-day training session with our freight partner, the CN, in Lake Forest. The event drew 50 police and firefighters from 21 agencies across Lake County. In addition to training about Metra service and equipment, the CN provided training on crossing accidents and hazardous materials.

Metra also conducts full-scale disaster drills with local police, fire and EMS on an annual basis. The drills held at various locations across the region give participating first responders the opportunity to train for an actual emergency.

To extend our outreach efforts, Metra partners with several transportation and railroad safety organizations dedicated to enhancing railroad safety in addition to the national Operation Lifesaver organization. These include: DuPage Railroad Safety Council, Federal Railroad Administration, Illinois Commerce Commission, Association of American Railroads and American Public Transportation Association. We are also cosponsoring and participating in the 2014 Global Level Crossing Safety and Trespass Prevention Symposium hosted at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana, August 3-8. This is an international event with rail safety experts in more than 20 countries expected to attend.

SOUND OFF

Quietly enforcing

This note is to my fellow Quiet Car riders. I don't understand why if someone is talking you are not willing to politely say, "Excuse me," and inform them it is a Quiet Car. Most of the time the person talking has no idea that they sat in the Quiet Car and are happy to be quiet if you ask, but for some reason most people are not willing to say something. It is not confrontational if you ask nicely. You need to help keep our Quiet Cars quiet.

Paula

We understand people fear being confrontational, but we agree with you – most people will gladly comply if asked politely.

Still some nice guys

On Monday, June 9, on the way downtown, while frantically searching through my bag, I realized I forgot my monthly ticket at home. I take a few different trains in the morning but I was hoping the conductor recognized me. He came to my seat and I looked at him like a lost puppy dog, saying, "I left my pass at home." He said to me in his friendly voice, "You bad lady." I was relieved to know he was not going to throw me off the train at Franklin Park. Then I heard the conductor talking to a gentleman sitting across the aisle from me. The conductor turned to me and said, "You owe this man a hug." The man asked the conductor to punch his 10-ride ticket twice to cover my fare. That was probably the nicest thing anyone has ever done for me in 25+ years of commuting.

I thanked the man repeatedly and proceeded on to work with a smile on my face and pep in my step. It's nice to know there are

Great conductor

I wanted to share with you our experience on the morning train out of Elburn. I teach kindergarten at St. John's in Lombard and have been riding the train for a few years. This year my daughter began preschool at St. John's and has been commuting with me. It's unusual to see a little kid on the morning commuter train, but there she has been with me.

Mark Lily has been an outstanding conductor to us everyday! More importantly, to my daughter. He always makes it a point to say good morning and talk to her. He is so kind and caring to her and everyone he interacts with on the train. We truly appreciate him as a conductor.

This morning was her last ride on the train for the school year. When she got off the train she asked Mark, "Can I take a picture with you?" Without hesitation he said, "Of course you can!" Mark held her hand and



took a picture. As we left, he said, "Bye Morgan, I will miss you!" He is truly an outstanding guy and asset to Metra!

Please forward this email to executives to share with them the outstanding service Mark

is providing the commuters on his train.

Alicia

Thanks for the nice note. We're happy to give an outstanding worker some praise.

still gentlemen who commute on Metra. Thank you again!

Jaylon

We've said it before and we'll say it again: Metra riders are a great group of people.

What's the rush?

There is no need to bum rush your fellow riders just to be the first up the stairs and on to the train! And for what? To stop at the coach doors to see which side of the train to ride this morning? You come across so rude and selfish cutting in front of other people who patiently waited on the platform ahead of you.

Lynne

Not to mention the fact that you could hurt yourself. Let's all board safely and politely.

Praise for engineers

I would like to extend this appreciation to every engineer in Metra's system. These men and women have to worry, every day, every stop (and in-between!) about the possibility that someone or something will be on the tracks. Lots of us know that for the most part, it's a great job, but we also know there's this incredible responsibility and stress, and we are GRATEFUL!

JS

Consider it extended. Thanks.

Seat hog solution

Metra: I have a solution that would not only help with the seat hog problem but could also bring in additional revenue. Anyone who wants to be a seat hog should be required to wear a plastic pig snout. People would know who the seat hogs are and could avoid them, and conductors could charge them for the seat their belongings are taking up. After all, if I have to pay a fare why shouldn't their belongings?

Debbie

We like your creative thinking but something tells us this won't quite go over too well.

Summer Travel Notes

Metra offers pass, drawing for Lollapalooza

Music fans using Metra to get to Lollapalooza in Grant Park Aug. 1-3 will be able to buy a special \$10 Lollapalooza pass good for travel on all three days of the events – on Friday after 9:30 a.m. and all day Saturday and Sunday. We're trying to encourage the use of public transportation for the event. You can buy the pass now at all of our ticket windows, and they will be sold onboard trains on August 1 only after 9:30 a.m. And that's not all: Metra will be holding a drawing on July 28 to give away two three-day passes to Lollapalooza to one lucky winner. To enter, just fill out the entry form at www.metrarail.com. Winners will be contacted by Metra via email and the passes will be available for pickup on Aug. 1.

New board member from McHenry County

Marc J. Munaretto was appointed to the Metra Board of Directors last month by the McHenry County Board. He is a career real estate and finance executive with extensive experience in real estate development, financing, leasing, acquisition, disposition and asset management. He is currently the president and sole shareholder of M.J. Munaretto & Co., Inc., providing real estate brokerage and corporate real estate services including site selection, leasing, financing and development services. He served for 14 years as the elected member of the McHenry County Board in District One and was chairman of the Board's Finance and Audit Committee for ten years, during

which time he implemented fiscal controls that have since guided the county's financial policies and contributed to its sound financial condition. Munaretto was also instrumental in the formation of the McHenry County Convention and Visitors Bureau. He is a 1970 graduate of Kent State University. He resides in Algonquin with his wife, Denise. For a more complete biography, go to www.metrarail.com.

Help raise money for veterans

Jump on board your "Pony Express" and head over to Arlington Park to run or walk a 5K course through beautiful Arlington International Racecourse and finish on the track like a thoroughbred! See yourself on the Jumbotron as you "Win", "Place" or "Show." This twilight run at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, August 12, is just steps away from the Arlington Park Metra Station. It's easy to just get right back on and head home after enjoying the post-race party. What a perfect way to spend a Tuesday evening! Register online at www.saluteinc.org and click the Homestretch for Heroes button. Your \$30 registration fee includes a shirt, a free beverage and snacks. All proceeds fund the Salute, Inc. Emergency Assistance Program, which helps military families fill in the gaps to make the transition back into civilian life. Come join us for this fun run and help us Honor the Service and Remember the Sacrifice. Salute, Inc. is an official 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Questions? Call 847-398-8811. Check your UP Northwest schedule for travel times to Arlington Park.



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