WINTER EVENTS
Your 2023 Go Guide

METRA TRACKER IS HERE
Real-Time Train Tracking

DEI IS PART OF OUR DNA
Building An Inclusive Agency

DRIVING SAFETY WITH TRAIN SIMULATORS
Far be it from us to suggest our little magazine as an antidote for Chicago’s long winter, but we’d like to think we can at least provide a ray of sunshine or two, enough to hint of the spring that is slowly but inevitably on its way.

One of those rays is surely the recent launch of our new train tracking tool, metratracker.com, and related upgrades to our communications system. This is a major investment that is already paying significant dividends, giving you up-to-the-minute tracking data so you always know when your train is coming. You can read all the details on Page 6.

Another ray is the beginning of installation of our new ticket vending machines. There’s much work to be done, but eventually these machines will be available at all 242 Metra stations, so you can buy tickets easily and conveniently throughout our system. It’s another major investment for you. Go to Page 6 for that story.

And a third ray is the continuation of our $100 Super Saver Monthly Pass and other fare products this year. The variety of money-saving options helps keep Metra affordable for our My Metra riders. Read about those options, including the Transit Benefit program, on Page 7.

As we usually do, we’ve compiled a list of events and activities that can be reached via Metra. Why drive when Metra is fast, safe, and affordable? Don’t let the weather stop you – get out of the house, on to our trains and have some fun. See the list on Page 12.

There’s more information on these pages that riders should know about. We recently started a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion program at Metra because we recognize those values, those goals, will make us a better organization. That story is on Page 10. And Metra is finalizing the strategic plan that will guide our decision-making for the next five years. See that story on Page 11.

Finally, we are starting a feature this month to introduce you to the Metra Board Members who guide our agency. We’re starting with Director Steve Palmer, appointed by southwest suburban Cook County commissioners; Wes Becton, appointed by DuPage County; and Ric Estrada, appointed by the mayor of Chicago. Read about them starting on Page 8.

Stay warm, stay safe, and get ready for spring.

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TRAIN SIMULATORS
MAKE IT REAL
Training tool shows Metra’s safety commitment

Before we put anyone behind the controls of a locomotive that weighs 13 tons or more, costs several millions of dollars and can go up to 79 mph, we put them behind the controls of a simulator. Housed in the back of the first floor in Metra’s headquarters downtown, our simulator room lets would-be engineers learn how to operate any kind of Metra equipment over virtual versions of Metra lines. It’s a major component of the engineer training program and a quintessential example of Metra’s commitment to safety.

“It’s a lot of responsibility, operating a locomotive,” said William Greene, a senior operations trainer who supervises the simulator room. “When you’re driving a car, you have all your distractions, you have to pay attention to what’s going on, but you are probably alone. The engineers may have 400 to 500 people, maybe 1,000 people sitting behind them, and if they make a mistake, it’s not just them who could be affected.”

The simulator facility consists of one main room with several smaller rooms connected to it. Each smaller room has a working replica of the operating controls of various locomotives, cab cars (the cars equipped with operating controls for when the locomotive is pushing the train) and Highliner (Metra Electric) cars. Students use the controls to operate over accurate virtual versions of the lines, with video monitors in front and on the side of them displaying the tracks, signals, switches, crossings, stations, scenery, etc., as the train passes by.

Greene sits in the main room and watches the students’ performance on a bank of video monitors that show him what they are seeing in their simulator. He can adjust the simulation, so the students are operating at night, or in a snowstorm, or in the fog. He can throw surprises at them, such as a car or rail equipment on the tracks. The students are graded and critiqued on how they adhere to the line’s specific rules and how they operate the train.

“I like the simulators,” said Jordan Martinez, one of the students this fall. “I think they are a good teaching tool. They give you some comfort with learning the basics before you go out and touch real equipment. It’s a good tool to use before going out in the field.”

All five students in the fall class formerly worked as Metra conductors and then signed up for the 42-week program for internal candidates to become engineers. They’ll spend about four weeks of that on the simulators and about 30 weeks operating trains while being supervised by veteran engineers. (Engineers coming from another railroad have a shorter training period.)

“It’s a challenge—you really have to work at it and pay attention to understand every rule and the application of those rules,” said James Curtis, one of the students. “There is a lot to learn and a lot to remember.”

The simulator room will soon be adding simulators for Metra’s newest locomotive, an SD70MACH, and cab cars coming with its new railcar order from Alstom.

Joy Duren (top) and Jordan Martinez (bottom) operate trains on the simulators.

Trainee James Curtis picking up “passengers” on a virtual Metra line.

Senior Operations Trainer William Greene monitors the performance of trainees.
It enables us to do a better job of tracking trains and conveying timely, accurate information, and also includes a variety of interactive new features.”

The metratracker.com site, which can be reached directly through that web address or through metra.com, features three grey bars on the menu that provide the site’s main functions:

- **Station Times** — This option allows you to check for train departure times from your station.
- **Real-Time Map** — This interactive map allows you to see the location of trains along the line or lines that you select, so you can see exactly where your train is and how soon it will reach your station.
- **Trip Planner** — This option allows you to plan a trip using Metra and other modes of travel between addresses or locations that you select.

The new system required the installation of GPS tracking devices and other equipment on more than 1,000 railcars and in 238 stations. The system is fully operational on the Metra Electric, Rock Island, Heritage Corridor, North Central Service, Milwaukee District West lines; Milwaukee District North, and the Kenwood, Lakeshore East, and Metra Electric lines. With high gas prices and parking fees, Metra has always been a better value than driving. In fact, Metra offers an array of fare options to save you money traveling to work, shopping, going to school, or just going out and about. Here’s a brief review of ways Metra can save you time, stress, and, of course, money:

**Day Passes**

Our $6 Day Pass offers unlimited travel within up to three zones all day. It’s ideal for short commutes, shopping, or travel in and around your area. Our $10 Day Pass gives you unlimited rides across all Metra lines and all zones, all day. Both passes are available only in the Ventra app.

**10-Ride Tickets**

If you’re an occasional commuter or leisure traveler, this is a great choice. It’s good for 90 days from date of purchase and can be shared by people riding together.

**Super Saver Monthly Pass**

Only $100, our flat-rate Super Saver Monthly Pass delivers unlimited travel across our entire system. You could save hundreds, even thousands of dollars throughout the year.

**Regional Connect Pass**

If you’re a Metra Monthly Pass holder who also takes the CTA or Pace, this pass gives you unlimited monthly rides with no time restrictions when you connect to CTA or Pace — all for only $30.

**Weekend Passes**

Our Saturday or Sunday Day Passes are good for unlimited rides on either of those days for just $7. Plan to travel throughout the weekend? Our Weekend Pass, available only in the Ventra app, is just $10 for unlimited travel on both weekend days.

**Reduced Fares for Seniors, Students, and More**

Senior citizens, military personnel, students, and children 11 and under can receive reduced fares. With Family Fares, kids even ride FREE on weekends and select holidays. The Fair Transit South Cook Pilot also provides lower fares on Metra Electric and Rock Island Lines.

Stay on track with Metra Tracker.

Metra this winter started the rollout of metratracker.com, a new real-time train-tracking website that lets you see precisely where your trains are and when they will reach your station. The new site, made possible by a wholesale replacement of Metra’s current train tracking system, also makes it easier than ever to view schedules and plan a trip.

“This new train tracking system is a major upgrade and will be a dramatic improvement in our communications to Metra customers,” said Metra CEO/Executive Director Jim Derwinski.

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MEET DIRECTOR WES BECTON
Julius W. Becton III, who goes by Wes, serves on several boards, including the Metra Board of Directors (appointed in 2021 by the DuPage County Chairman). But while being a Board member was not new to him, Metra certainly was. The Elmhurst resident, father of three and grandfather of two has enjoyed learning the ropes. He is the CEO and co-founder of George Washington Street Partners, a consulting firm that specializes in business consulting and executive leadership coaching.

What do you like best about being on the Metra Board?
It’s something completely different and I have enjoyed learning and understanding the business and environment.

Tell us something about yourself that people don’t know.
I did a TED Talk earlier this year. The topic was, “Be Curious. Don’t be Judgmental”—if you ever watched the show, Ted Lasso. That’s where I stole it from. It was an opportunity to share a message about not being judgmental, which I think has resonated with people.

MEET DIRECTOR STEVE PALMER
Last year was a significant year for Director Steve Palmer, who was appointed to the Metra Board of Directors in 2016 by southwest suburban members of the Cook County Board. After owning and operating his family restaurant, Palmer Place in his hometown of LaGrange, for 20 years, Palmer sold it last year and opened the Stadium Club at the Max restaurant in McCook. He is married with two adult children.

Do you like being on the Board?
Love it. I love learning about the railroad business and the incredible work that goes into it. I love being a part of government and doing work for the citizens and our riders. And I love immersing myself with the various departments—observing a tie gang at work, getting a detailed outline from the DBE Department—and learning even more.

What are you looking forward to at Metra?
The new cars are going to be amazing and game changing. What does My Metra mean to you?
For complete Metra Board interviews visit: metra.com/MeettheBoard

MEET DIRECTOR RICARDO ESTRADA
Director Ricardo Estrada, who was appointed to the Metra Board in 2021 by Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot, is currently the CEO of Metropolitan Family Services, one of Illinois’ largest human services agencies. He’s no stranger to big organizations, but Metra’s complexity was a surprise. The resident of Chicago’s Northwest Side is a father of two adult daughters.

Do you like being on the Board?
I enjoy it, but I still feel like I am new in many ways. This is a big, complicated business within a giant industry that has so many interrelationships, agreements, permissions and so on. The logistics are very complex.

What are you looking forward to in Metra’s future?
There are going to be significant investments in everything related to capital, from bridges to rails to stations to ADA compliance. I’m looking forward to seeing that transformation. I’m looking forward to piloting new battery-powered locomotives and trainsets. And I’m looking forward to improving accessibility in neighborhoods that are far south and in other places, so everyone has better access to our wonderful downtown.

Is that a skillset that helps you be a good boardmember?
It helps me ask better questions. When you take a step back and you ask a question because you’re curious, it usually comes across different and draws people in instead of pushing them away and making them defensive.

What does My Metra mean to you?
It means we are there when you need us. We’re a resource and an opportunity to help simplify your life.

Tell us something about yourself most people don’t know.
As a young man, I was pretty adventurous. I’ve traveled to over 35 countries and 100 cities—mostly on pennies. One of the highlights of those experiences was running with the bulls in Pamplona. It was one of the most exhilarating and stupidest things I ever done.

What does My Metra mean to you?
It means we should all think about it as our public resource. We are as taxpayers directly subsidizing this public resource that is meant for us, and helps the city and region thrive.
PUTTING DEI IN OUR DNA

As part of its commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), Metra is implementing an initiative to build a sustainable and inclusive organization.

“This is a very high priority for Metra and our Board of Directors, and we are fully committed to this initiative,” said Metra CEO/Executive Director Jim Derwinski. “We understand the importance of fostering an environment where everyone feels valued and may contribute their talents. The outcomes will make us a better and more productive agency.”

Metra is following a two-year pilot program developed by the American Public Transportation Association that provides APTA members with a tangible roadmap for advancing racial equity within their organizations as part of a comprehensive framework for diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The roadmap includes:

• Making the initiative a strategic priority and business imperative
• Performing a cultural assessment
• Analyzing demographic transactional data to inform our strategy
• Testing existing policies, programs, and practices to ensure racial equity
• Providing dedicated resources and engagement

Metra’s DEI initiative, being carried out in conjunction with consultant R. J. Harris & Associates, will align with APTA’s roadmap. It will include executive coaching for senior Metra management team members as well as training for more than 2,000 employees; ongoing communication; holding leaders accountable for changing how we function; and tracking our progress in support of the mission. Already more than 500 employees have gone through the first phase of training.

After soliciting public comment in late 2022, Metra has finalized its next strategic plan, My Metra, Our Future. The new plan, which will guide our decision-making through 2027, focuses on identifying and addressing the operational and financial challenges of a post-COVID world.

The document is an update to Metra’s last strategic plan, On Track to Excellence, which covered the years 2018-2022. It includes refined mission and vision statements to make them more concise, responsive, and relevant to new realities, and calls for moving towards a “regional rail” service model that provides more frequent service throughout the day.

Mission: Metra provides safe, reliable, efficient, and affordable commuter rail service that enhances the economic and environmental health of Northeast Illinois.

Vision: To proactively address evolving transportation needs, Metra will provide regional rail service that supports sustainable connected communities.

To fulfill its mission and move towards its vision, the strategic plan is built around five equally important and related goals. They reflect the evolving priorities of Metra, regional transit needs, and the voices of customers. They are:

• Enhance service to grow ridership and provide mobility choices
• Make the Metra experience safe, easy, and enjoyable for all our customers
• Attract a diverse workforce and invest in our employees
• Innovate to become more efficient and effective
• Be a socially responsible organization committed to equity and sustainability

The full document can be viewed at metra.com/strategic-plan.
Looking for a Cure for Cabin Fever?

HEAD OUT WITH METRA’S WINTER GO GUIDE

Want to beat the winter blues? Get on board Metra! There are indoor and outdoor activities across our region. So, grab the family, bundle up, and head out. There’s a lot happening, and Metra can help you experience it all.

As you travel around our region, why deal with pricey parking, high gas prices, and traffic jams? Metra offers you great ways to get around and save. Start by visiting metratracker.com to plan your trip and check out train schedules. Then, save money every day, any day, and all week long riding Metra. Did you know that with our Family Fares kids ride FREE on weekends and select holidays? Check out the array of money-saving fares on page 7.
Michelle Blake and Chris McCarthy met on a Metra train in 2011 and he proposed to her on a Metra train three years later, so it’s appropriate to feature them near Valentine’s Day. Their love, and their love of Metra, remains strong.

Is the romance still going?  
Chris: Yes, we’d say it’s right on track! 
Michelle: Did you catch what he just did there? Lol! 

When you ride Metra, do you think about how it all began?  
Michelle: Yes, every time I’m on the train and approach the area where we got engaged, I’ll think of that day and text Chris if I’m riding solo.

What do you use Metra to do?  
Chris: Visit family and explore different parts of the Chicago area.

What do you remember about the day you met, and the day you got engaged?  
Chris: When we got engaged, I was really nervous before getting down on one knee in the train. Afterward, there was a whole Girl Scout troop in our car cheering us on.

Michelle: When we first met, I remember sitting next to Chris and noticing he was wearing nice socks and also studying for a securities exam. I thought to myself, “I should say hi to this guy.”

Why is Metra so important to you?  
Chris: Without it we would not have built our life together.

Michelle: We both took the train so many times before meeting each other that day. We really think the stars were aligned or something was in the air to have us both go to the same car and sit in the same area.

What would your life be like without Metra?  
Chris: I’m not sure we would’ve met.

Michelle: Before meeting Chris I was always thankful for not having to drive into the city or sit in traffic. Now, Metra has an all new meaning. Now, I’d say the train changed my life.

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One of the behind-the-scenes jobs at Metra is keeping the power going on the Metra Electric Line so trains stay running. Ed Schafroth, Director of Electrical Maintenance, heads that team.

How long have you worked for Metra?  
35 years

What’s your background? Or what was your training for this role?  
Experience – starting at the bottom working my way up. My first job was at a hardware store cutting glass and threading pipe. I joined Metra as a carpenter in our Buildings and Bridges Department and have moved up through the ranks to my current role.

What do you like most about your job?  
The daily challenges of the job and changing technology.

What is the biggest technology change you’ve experienced?  
SCADA, which stands for the Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition system. This is what the power desk in Metra's dispatching center uses to monitor and turn the power supplied to the overhead catenary system on and off. Another big change was going from copper wires to fiber optic cable.

What are your biggest challenges at work?  
Working with outside consultants. Trying to keep them on the same page with the same goal, so that Metra gets what it needs from each project.

What do you want our customers to know about your work?  
Electrical Maintenance is a behind-the-scenes department doing our best to provide safe, reliable transportation for our customers by keeping the power working, lights lit, trains running and stand-by power in the yards working.

What does Metra mean to you?  
My Metra means opportunity. I try to use myself as an example for our employees, to show how someone can start at the bottom and work their way up.
It is the terminus for all three of Metra's Union Pacific lines and in pre-COVID days served over 100,000 riders daily. It remains one of the nation's busiest railway stations dedicated solely to commuter traffic. While the Ogilvie Transportation Center looks modern, its origins date back to 1911. Over 100 years ago, the Chicago & North Western Railway built its terminus on this very spot. As today, it had 16 tracks elevated above street level. For decades, trains came into and out of the terminal from across the nation. In 1984, the headhouse was replaced by the 42-story Accenture Tower (formerly Citigroup Center). Finally, in 1991, Metra purchased the train shed and over a period of four years rehabilitated the location.

OGILVIE TRANSPORTATION CENTER
A destination in itself

The center is named after Richard B. Ogilvie, a lifelong railroad proponent, who, as governor of Illinois, created the RTA. Today, it is a welcoming destination for thousands of travelers and downtown workers. As part of Accenture Tower, there are retail stores, including an Amazon Go store, and a large, popular food court. It's also the gateway to Chicago's French Market. Founded in 2009, the French Market brings a flavor of Europe to Chicago. With its 30+ vendors, travelers and area residents find an array of international culinary delights—many the product of local producers. The French Market is open from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday-Friday and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturdays.

DINE BY YOUR LINE

In this issue, we take you to the Edgebrook Station on the Milwaukee District North Line to Dakota 94—a family-owned restaurant serving everything from bread pudding French toast to jalapeno margaritas. Opened in 2019, Dakota 94 has become a neighborhood staple with its many delicious menu selections.

“We serve home-cooked meals because that’s the feeling you get when you come to Dakota 94. It feels just like home,” said General Manager Maria Proa.

Co-owner Kayla Lardakis came to Chicago by way of North Dakota after finishing up eight years in the U.S. Army as a combat medic. She met her husband Peter—owner of Kanela Breakfast Club—and the two have been making restaurant magic ever since. Although navigating a new restaurant through the pandemic was tough, the two worked tirelessly to ensure their business and employees survived.

“Long mornings and long nights, the restaurant became home. We even joked we should just put cots in there and sleep at the restaurant,” said Maria Proa.

The Lardakis' love for homestyle cooking is apparent throughout their menu. Whether you’re looking for a cozy breakfast spot, romantic dinner setting, or a fun place to grab drinks with friends, Dakota 94 has you covered. Menu highlights include biscuits and gravy, a 1/3-pound bison burger, and homemade meatloaf.

Dakota 94 brings friends and neighbors in Edgebrook together. With a bar serving up specialty cocktails, catering and private party services, and trivia on Wednesdays, there’s something for everyone. It really does capture the essence of an old-fashioned neighborhood spot.

So, if you’re in the area, be sure to stop by Dakota 94 for breakfast, dinner, and everything in-between.

Dakota 94 is at 5304 W. Devon Ave. in Chicago. For more information, visit them online at dakota94.com.

THE THING TO TRY:
Kayla’s Grilled Cheese and Tomato Soup
Sourdough bread, cheddar cheese, avocado, bacon, and their delicious tomato basil soup.

If you have a favorite restaurant near a Metra station, let us know by emailing marketing@metrarail.com, and it could be featured in our next issue!
HEADING TO A POPULAR DESTINATION?

Get there faster and for less with Metra

While many think of Metra in terms of commuting to work, Metra is also a great choice for leisure travel throughout our area. When you ride Metra, you avoid the expense and hassles of driving. With our Metra Tracker website and money-saving fares (see pages 6-7) planning an outing is easier than ever. Just consider a few of the many area attractions you can access via Metra.

Guaranteed Rate Field – Opening Day is April 3 and getting to the game is easy on Metra: just use our Rock Island Line and exit at 35th Street/“Lou” Jones Station and walk west to the ballpark.

Soldier Field and Museum Campus – Just exit our Museum Campus/11st Street Station via the Metra Electric Line.

Ravinia – Our UP North Line stops right at Ravinia Park’s front gate and your Ravinia ticket gets you a free train ride to and from the park on concert days.

Brookfield Zoo – Go wild and get there on our BNSF Line, just board at Union Station and ride to the Hollywood Station.

Museum of Science and Industry – You can board at Millennium or Van Buren Street Stations, exit at the 57th Street Station and walk two blocks east.

Chicago Botanic Garden – Welcome spring by hopping aboard our UP North Line and exiting the Braeside Station. There’s a nice walk path to the Garden. On Sundays, in the summer, get off at Glencoe Station and take a ride on the Garden Trolley.

Pullman National Historical Park – Visit this historic site via the Metra Electric Line, exiting at the 103rd Street/Rosemoor, 107th Street, 111th Street/Pullman, or 115th Street/Kensington Stations.

The Art Institute of Chicago – Picasso, Van Gogh, Monet, and others are waiting for you. The museum is accessible from both the Van Buren Street and Millennium Stations on the Metra Electric Line.

United Center – Catch NBA and NHL action (and save on expensive parking) by taking the No. 19 United Center Express Bus that connects with Millennium, Ogilvie, and Union Stations. For more info, visit our website. Then, plan your visit via metratracker.com.

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Most common items found in Lost and Found

1. Umbrellas
2. Work IDs/Building access cards
3. Glasses/sunglasses
4. Hats and gloves
5. Phones
6. Bluetooth headphones/charging cases
7. Keys
8. Cellphones
9. Purses/briefcases
10. Jewelry

Most unusual items found in Lost and Found

1. Venetian blinds
2. Guitar
3. Hearing aids
4. Dentures
5. Prosthetic leg
6. Electric skateboard
7. Funeral urn
8. Crutches
9. Walker
10. Prescription drugs

HAVE YOU TAKEN OUR ONBOARD SURVEY?

You’ve probably seen the stickers we placed on our cars inviting you to take a brief survey. If you haven’t done it—or haven’t done it lately—now’s the time.

After all, we want you to think of Metra as My Metra. We have had over 14,000 responses to our survey, and we’ve used the information riders have shared to implement scheduling and service changes and identify areas of improvement. We have also used the survey to answer questions and comments via email. In total, we have contacted over 2,200 riders.

As we continue to gain back riders, and gain new riders, we want to hear from more of you. So, take a few moments, scan the QR code, and let us know how My Metra is doing.

Scan the QR Code and share your opinion!
We’re always excited to see photos of our trains taken by Metra riders—often featuring beautiful sunsets and the colors of the changing seasons. If you have a photo you’d like to share, send it to social@metra.org. Each week, our social media accounts post a rider-supplied photo for #MetraFanPhotoFriday. Then, each month, we choose one entry to win a FREE round-trip ticket. So enter today.

Photo taken by @metra

STATION BREAK

Bartlett Station

Until 2008, Bartlett Metra riders waited for their trains in the last remaining original depot left along what used to be the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad. That depot, which dates from 1873, was replaced with a new prairie-style building large enough to handle the growing ridership from the booming suburb. The smaller original depot remains, however, now serving as a museum dedicated to the legacy of the community’s railroad heritage.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS
1. Actress in Fantastic 4
5. Too bad
9. Better than good
14. Cover for camping
15. Carry
16. Musician in Fab 4
17. Above
18. Fidel’s city
20. Market index
21. 4th president
23. Eye cover
24. Metal source
25. Jazz guitarist Paul
26. Rescue
27. Combat
28. News network
31. Placido, Jose and Luciano
33. Spanish red
35. You sow them when young
36. In the middle of
40. 4th _____ (punt or go for it?)
42. 4th _____ (media)
44. Big party
45. Bewildered
48. Latin for by or in itself
49. “_____ bet.” (No way)
51. Not happy
52. Time zone
55. FBI agents
56. Accessibility law
58. Metra’s Parisian counterpart
59. Third-year students (abbr.)
60. 4th pope
64. The Greatest
65. Handy
67. Final 4 org.
68. Rob
66. Space group
70. Eye part
71. Premature
72. Shakespeare’s do
73. Belongs to us

DOWN
1. Small part
2. Hot rock
3. Reproduced
4. 4th month (conventional)
5. One of 4 musketeers
6. Lend
7. 4x4
8. Caulk
9. 4th, maybe not as smart as a 5th-grader
10. Sm. state
11. Enrich
12. Greek marketplace
13. Tall structure
14. 4th month (Revolutionary France)
15. Carry
16. Musician in Fab 4
17. Above
18. Fidel’s city
20. Market index
21. 4th president
23. Eye cover
24. Metal source
25. Jazz guitarist Paul
26. Rescue
27. Combat
28. News network
31. Placido, Jose and Luciano
33. Spanish red
35. You sow them when young
36. In the middle of
40. 4th _____ (punt or go for it?)
42. 4th _____ (media)
44. Big party
45. Bewildered
48. Latin for by or in itself
49. “_____ bet.” (No way)
51. Not happy
52. Time zone
55. FBI agents
56. Accessibility law
58. Metra’s Parisian counterpart
59. Third-year students (abbr.)
60. 4th pope
64. The Greatest
65. Handy
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FAN PHOTO

We’re always excited to see photos of our trains taken by Metra riders—often featuring beautiful sunsets and the colors of the changing seasons. If you have a photo you’d like to share, send it to social@metra.org. Each week, our social media accounts post a rider-supplied photo for #MetraFanPhotoFriday. Then, each month, we choose one entry to win a FREE round-trip ticket. So enter today.

Photo taken by @metra

WHAT TYPE OF METRA TICKET DO YOU BUY?

Here is a recent monthly breakdown:

1. Super Saver Monthly Pass: 33%
2. 10-Ride Ticket: 23%
3. Day Pass: 19%
4. One-Way Ticket: 19%
5. One- or Two-Day Weekend Pass: 5%
6. Super Saver 30-Day Pass: 19%
7. Unlimited Pass: 5%
8. Rail Pass: 4%

SUDOKU

Scan the QR code to find the solution to this month’s puzzle.
after the morning rush and then
reattach them for the evening rush;
we do it in some cases but in others
it’s more efficient to leave them at-
tached. For your reverse commute
trips, we may not need all the cars
going out, but we may need them
all when the train turns around and
comes back in. We did expand the
UP-W schedule on Dec. 5.
We recognize the need for running
more trains more often and we are
trying our best to do so, but there
are a lot of factors that may hold us
back. Do we own the tracks? (We
don’t own the tracks on most of our
lines, including the three UP lines.)
Do we dispatch the trains? (Again,
on most lines, we don’t, even on
two lines we own.) Is there freight
traffic on the line? Can we afford it?
Do we have to leave windows for
track maintenance? And, a more
recent issue, do we have the man-
power?

Good question! Diesel fuel is, perhaps
surprisingly, much less flammable
than gasoline so there is no risk from
the switch heaters. It requires a far
higher temperature and air pressure
to ignite, as opposed to gasoline,
which needs merely a spark.

Are there plans to modify some
train schedules to run shorter trains
more often? I reverse commute on
the UP-W and it seems really energy
efficient to pull so many train cars
that are not used! In addition, having
trains more often would really
make my commute a lot simpler
and enhance productivity.

Making the trains shorter wouldn’t
enable us to run more trains within
the same budget. Each train, no
matter how short, needs a loco-
motive and a crew, and paying for
those are the main costs. And it is
not so easy to cut cars from a train
after the morning rush and then
reattach them for the evening rush;
we do it in some cases but in others
it’s more efficient to leave them at-
tached. For your reverse commute
trips, we may not need all the cars
going out, but we may need them
all when the train turns around and
comes back in. We did expand the
UP-W schedule on Dec. 5.
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track maintenance? And, a more
recent issue, do we have the man-
power?

How are Metra’s mileposts deter-
mained? Is it a measurement of
distance from a downtown terminal
to the location of an outlying station’s
building/shelter? If not, what end-
point is used?

Every milepost is calculated by the
distance from the downtown terminal.
That is also how we determine our
zones for fares - each line is broken
up into 5-mile segments using the
downtown terminal as the starting/ end
point.

I understand that Metra uses switch
heaters during the winter to prevent
ice from building up and clogging
the switches, but in looking at one of
Metra’s videos on YouTube regarding
winter operations, the trains roll right
over the switches while the flames
are turned on. How in the world can
Metra do this without the risk of
causing the train to catch on fire?

Here’s an opportunity for you to ask us anything
about Metra. If you have something to ask us,
email your question to mymetra@metrarail.com.
BANK OF AMERICA Shamrock Shuffle®

2023 RACE WEEKEND
Friday, March 24 - Sunday, March 26
Festival | The Mile | 8K Run | 2-Mile Walk

SHUFFLE ON CHICAGO

Let Metra take you to the Bank of America Shamrock Shuffle!

Join in all the weekend activities from March 24 - March 26. Metra is a quick and convenient way to travel downtown and at $7 our unlimited ride Sunday Pass is a win for your wallet.

To learn more, visit metra.com