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Press Release

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LIRR

IMMEDIATE

LIRR Customers Broadway Bound

Longtime commuters win show tickets in Customer Appreciation Day raffle marking MTA Long Island Rail Road's 175th Anniversary

MTA Long Island Rail Road kicked off its 175th anniversary celebration by handing out free Broadway show tickets to two lucky customers.

LIRR President Helena Williams presented the tickets to Leon McDonald of Huntington Station and Michelle Contos of Bohemia after they were declared winners of a Customer Appreciation Day raffle held on February 24 at Penn Station.

McDonald won a family four pack to the hit children's show "Dora the Explorer" and Contos took home four tickets to "Thomas & Friends On Stage."

"This monthly giveaway contest is a way for the Railroad to say thank you to our customers," said Williams. "It's really wonderful that two people who won are monthly customers."

McDonald, who works at Lord & Taylor in Manhattan, has been commuting from Huntington for more than two decades. He said he would be taking his godchildren to see Nickelodeon's "Dora The Explorer" at Radio City Music Hall in April.

"They'll love it," said McDonald, who has spread the good news to his riding buddies on the 7:22 PM from Penn Station. "We do so much networking on that train. I've got my accountant there. I've got my lawyer. And I'm in the fashion industry. So when someone needs clothes they come to me."

Contos, who does marketing for IPC Information Systems in Manhattan, plans to take her young nephews and neighbor's children to see "Thomas & Friends Live! On Stage" at the newly refurbished Beacon Theater.

Contos, who is originally from Queens, moved to Suffolk County and has been taking the 6:12 AM train from Oakdale for the last nine years.

"I've made so many friends on that train," she said. "We have a big Christmas party on board every year. This year, we had it catered." Soon, she added, she and other regulars will be attending the wedding of a fellow commuter.

McDonald and Contos were among 1,200 LIRR customers who entered the raffle. To thank riders for their patronage, the LIRR is holding Customer Appreciation Days once a month throughout 2009, offering all a chance to win tickets to Broadway shows, sporting events and more.

The next Customer Appreciation Day at Penn Station is scheduled for Wednesday, March 18 when once again LIRR representatives will conduct a raffle for ticket packages – this time to the Broadway shows, "The Little Mermaid" and "Mama Mia."

Winners do not have to be present to collect their prizes, which are being provided at no cost to the LIRR by participating sponsors.

Look for more details about the anniversary celebration on our website www.mta.info/lirr. While there, don't forget to sign up for email service alerts.

The LIRR is the busiest commuter railroad in North America, carrying 87.4 million customers last year, with over 300,000 traveling each weekday on 735 daily trains. Chartered on April 24, 1834, it is also the oldest railroad in the U.S. still operating under its original name. The Railroad is comprised of over 700 miles of track on 11 different branches, stretching from Montauk – on the eastern tip of Long Island – to Penn Station in the heart of Manhattan, approximately 120 miles away. Along the way, the LIRR serves 124 stations in Nassau, Suffolk, Queens, Brooklyn and Manhattan.