

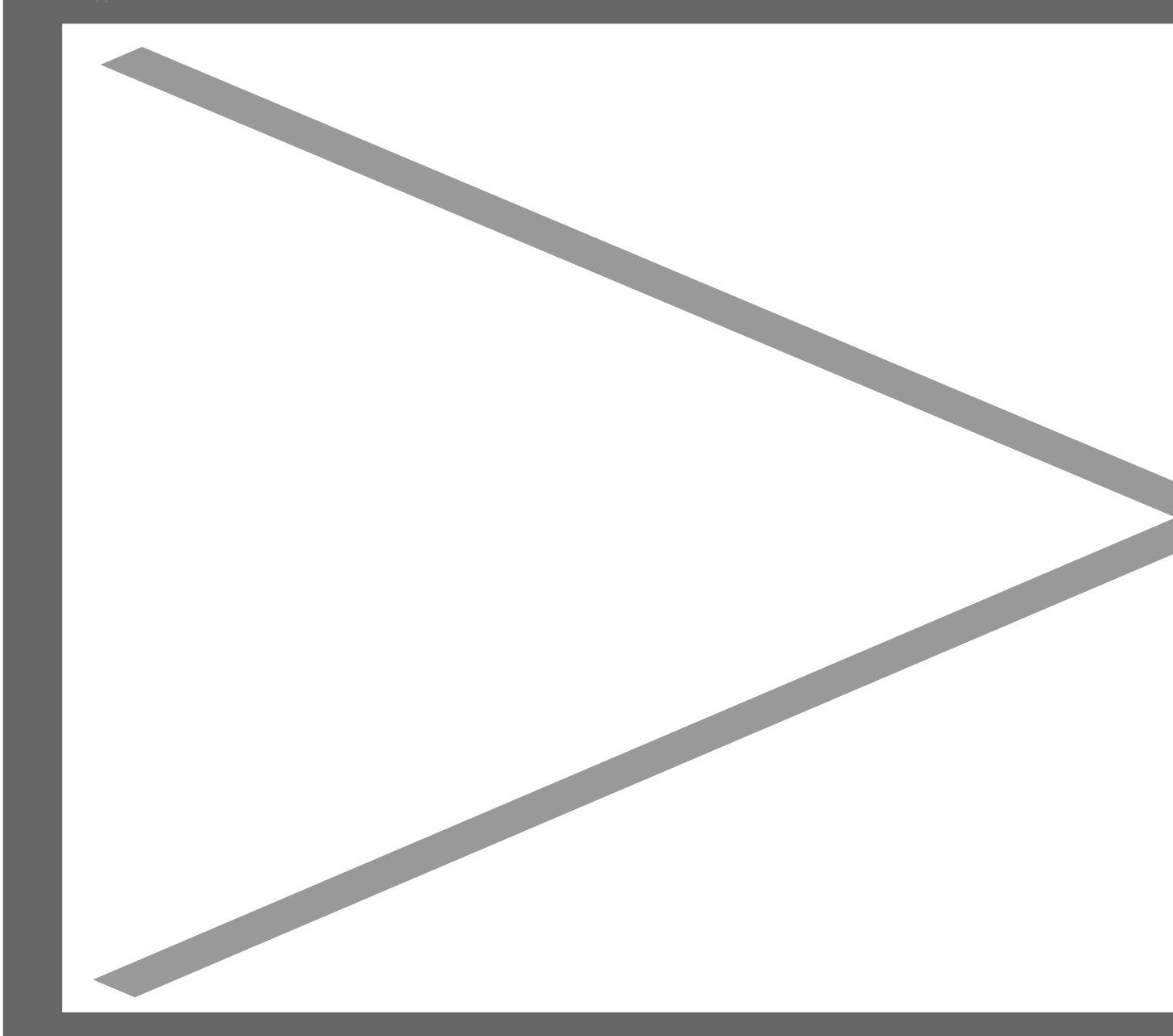


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While the majority of MTS Trolley ridership comes from day-to-day passenger trips, special events also play an important role in our system. On a yearly basis, MTS special event ridership

accounts for approximately 740,000 system trips.

In 2018, more than 280,000 of those special event trips came from Padres games. Last season's ballgame ridership to-and-from Petco Park was good, but we want to do better in 2019!

Here at MTS, prepping for baseball season is a team sport, requiring multiple departments to work together to provide fans with the best possible passenger experience when riding our system. Leading the charge is Tom Doogan, Special Events Coordinator. Tom and his team begin planning for the 81 Padres home games about six weeks prior to Opening Day, which is Thursday, March 28 this year.

While Tom strategizes for challenges as much as possible (hello, Paul McCartney concert in-between home stands!), Padres season also keeps the MTS operations team on its toes. Variables like extra innings, weather and changing pace-of-play can't be planned in advance.

"Last year, the Padres had a game on August 28 that lasted a mere 2 hours and 13 minutes. Exactly one month later on September 28, they had a game that lasted more than 5 hours," Doogan recalled. "Needless to say, there were some significant adjustments made on the fly to accommodate post-game crowds. Operations staff have to use a lot of judgement night-after-night to ensure we don't leave fans stranded."

In addition to Trolley operations staff, MTS Security and Ambassadors play important roles in the fan experience. Security will dispatch extra personnel to help manage crowds, as well as make sure riders are safe around the tracks. "Safety and security are always top-of-mind for the agency," said Manny Guaderrama, MTS Director of Transit Enforcement. "Any time we have larger than normal crowds on the Trolley, transit enforcement personnel are on high alert to monitor for any safety concerns and provide extra passenger assistance."

Joe Martinez, Revenue Supervisor, is responsible for staffing key Trolley stations to help provide customer information and fare media sales. "I have the best staff," said Martinez. "Special Events Assistants are the face of MTS and represent the organization in a friendly, reliable and courteous manner. Some of the Padres season ticket holders are on a first name basis with our staff, which is pretty cool to see."

One of those special events staff is Julie Bolton, who has been an MTS Ambassador for 20 years. While there have inevitably been some memorable stories to tell (someone once tried to tip over the booth at the Stadium Station!), she says she "[has] loved every moment of the job with its unexpected challenges...things that require flexibility and patience."

As a frequent traveler herself, Julie knows the importance of great customer service. "Our customers are so grateful for the assistance and a real person to help them with machines, directions, etc. There is no substitute for great customer service." In addition to the excitement around Opening Week, she most looks forward to seeing the diehard fans show up year-after-year, the days when Little League kids attend games and ride the Trolley to Petco, as well as the Military Appreciation Days.

For Doogan, he's keeping his eye on three major weekends where ridership should be highest:

- March 28 – 31: Opening Weekend vs. San Francisco Giants
- May 3 – 5: Cinco de Mayo Weekend vs. Los Angeles Dodgers
- August 23 – 25: East Coast-West Coast Showdown vs. Boston Red Sox

With the Padres announcing the largest baseball contract in MLB history earlier this year (a whopping \$300 million for Third Baseman Manny Machado), it's sure to be an exciting season at Petco Park, and MTS will be ready to provide a great travel experience for fans all season long.

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