

# dakota transporter

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Summer 2004

## Congratulations Den Kuehnemund and Dennis Ulmer

**Den Kuehnemund** was the top driver in the national body-on-chassis competition at the 2004 Community Transportation Association Expo Bus Rodeo in Seattle, Wash. Kuehnemund won by a decisive eight points. Winning is not new to Kuehnemund, he won first place in the 2000 Rodeo Body-on-Chassis Division in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. In 1997, he won first place in the Van Division and was the Ricon Driver of the Year.



Den Kuehnemund, Bruce Fuchs, Dennis Ulmer, Midge Kuntz

**Dennis Ulmer**, Elder Care driver from Dickinson, N.D., missed taking home an award at the national competition in Seattle by the slimmest of margins, one point.

Ulmer has been driving buses for 31 years, starting with the Dickinson School District and for the last 20 years, Elder Care. Ulmer says, "The Seattle course was a very tight course, especially the right hand turn and tire clearance along with the left hand turn were too close together."

Ulmer likes North Dakota's rodeo because there's lots of space between all the turns. He says it's spread out and that gives everybody a good chance to win. Ulmer's tip to other drivers who wish to be competitive at bus rodeos, "is just to relax, have fun while doing it, and chat with all the drivers you can; it helps."

He attributes his driving skills to workshops, rodeos, and everyday driving experiences. Ulmer says the best way to prepare for competition is to "review notes from past rodeos and study Rules of the Road." He also says, "I do many wheelchair transportation trips everyday, so that is good for me. In addition, we do vehicle inspections daily, which helps too."

(Drivers – continued on back page)

Souris Basin Transportation can be proud of its top-notch quality driver. Kuehnemund, now a second-time national champion body-on-chassis bus driver, has driven buses for 28 years beginning in 1976. His experience includes driving for Bay Metro, Bay City, Mich., Harley's School Bus and Charter Services, Rugby, N.D. and Souris Basin Transportation, Minot, N.D.

Kuehnemund attributes his driving skills to years of experience, driving a variety of makes and models of buses. He says the focus on safety and sharpening driving skills at the rodeos is very helpful in performing his daily tasks at work. To other drivers who would like to become champion drivers, Den says, "Make sure you compete in every state rodeo, they are a great experience." He also thinks the Dakota rodeos are a great learning experience and prepare drivers well for national competition.

## Connections, Coordination & Cooperation

Dakota Transit Association

20<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference

September 20-23, 2004



## Take Time for Learning Opportunities

Ron Baumgart, River Cities Transit President, Dakota Transit Association

It's a busy summer for all of us. With the rising prices at the gas stations and the word of mouth spreading about the convenience and ease of using public transit, most are seeing increased usage. That can be a blessing and a burden as we try to satisfy our riders' needs.

It was difficult, as busy as this summer has been, to take off the time to attend the CTAA Conference in Seattle, but those of us who attended came away with our experiences of renewed spirit and were encouraged to work even harder. Seattle was beautiful and we were well-entertained, but the workshops and classes allowed us each to learn new things and look at concepts in a different way. It was an excellent place to network with others; and to build a national understanding and comparison of the industry.

I would encourage anyone who can possibly attend next year's CTAA conference in St. Louis, Missouri, to do so. It will be held May 21-27, 2005. We'll be providing more information as we receive it on the DTA Web page.

The Paratransit Rodeo and Workshops will be here before we know it – Aug. 28 & 29. The forms for entering are included as an insert to the newsletter and on our new Web site – [www.dakotatransit.org](http://www.dakotatransit.org) – for ease in registering. You need to send fees separately. The deadline for registering is Aug. 16. Two great workshops will be presented: Passenger Service and Safety by Rick Thoms and Darrel Francis; and Behind the Wheel Driving by Darrell Michalenko. The PASS workshop includes a test and qualifies you for initial certification.

Also, a block of rooms has been reserved at the International Inn in Minot. Make your own reservations by Aug. 23 by calling (701)850-3161 or (800)735-4493 and telling them that you are with the Paratransit Rodeo. The rooms are offered at state rates (\$45.00 + Tax).

Rodeo competitors will compete against others from their own state. We'd like to thank the North Dakota group for including South Dakota drivers in the Rodeo, and we'd like to see a good showing from both states.

Congratulations to Den Kuehnemund and Dennis Ulmer for placing first and sixth respectively in national competition at the CTAA Expo 2004 in Seattle, Wash.

Plans for the 20th annual convention September 20-23, 2004 are continuing. A block of rooms has been reserved at the Holiday Inn in Sioux Falls, S.D. Please call

(605)339-2000. The DTA Board of Directors met July 11 and 12 to finalize plans. We encourage you to attend this important conference and annual meeting. We will offer workshops important to all of us. They will be planned around our theme of "Connection, Cooperation and Coordination." We'll be sending out more information as it becomes available.

The Board is in the planning stages of creating two task forces to research and investigate some very important issues, including a look at insurance pools and future training needs for DTA. We will be calling on the expertise of our membership and others to assist in this effort.

Finally, be sure to continue to check out our new Web site at [www.dakotatransit.org](http://www.dakotatransit.org). New information is being added all the time. Be sure to register early for our 20th annual DTA Conference held in Sioux Falls this year.

## The Importance of Ridership Reporting

Bruce Lindholm, SDDOT

It seems pretty obvious – ridership reporting is important. Sometimes, I get the sense that between the drug testing, the employee issues, the financial pressures, and the day-to-day operational problems the importance of reporting rides can get shuffled to a back burner. If your organization provides a ride, but does not record and report it, you may have helped the customer, but not your organization.



As discussed in my last article, ridership statistics are closely examined both on a state and federal level. Ridership is the report card of transit. If you seem busier than ever, but your ridership is flat, you may want to investigate. If your miles and fuel usage is up, but ridership is flat, you should be taking steps to find out why.

I encourage everyone to examine your reporting procedures to ensure that rides are recorded and reported accurately. Your drivers are the first line in ridership reporting. Make the effort to help them understand how important this is. We really need to be able to get credit for everything we do. Reporting is the way we do that.

## No more excuses. . . .

There's no excuse for not attending the Dakota Transit Association 20th Annual Conference.

### I DON'T HAVE THE TIME. . .

Through sessions and networking, you will learn techniques and shortcuts that may save you hours of time in the coming year. The conference's theme, "Connections, Coordination & Cooperation," focuses on helping you capitalize on good ideas developed and used by transit managers across the region.

### I CAN'T AFFORD IT. . .

Remember that the Rural Technical Assistance Program will help offset the cost of attending the conference. But more importantly, the investment you make in the conference will pay dividends in the good ideas you take home. Jill Hough of the Small Urban and Rural Transit Center will present a round table on partnerships for funding. You'll also learn about state and federal funding. And through networking with other transit managers you'll pick up lots of little ideas that could save big dollars. Can you afford not to attend?

### THERE'S NOTHING NEW. . .

Check the agenda. Paul Beddoe, Ph.D., associate legislative director, Western Interstate Region - Public Lands, will talk about communicating with legislators and other government officials and why it's important in light of legislative trends at the state and national level. Lobbyists for the DTA in North Dakota and South Dakota will update you on legislative trends. Chris Zeilinger, assistant director of CTAA who oversees governmental affairs and training for CTAA, will lead us in a journey that starts with the changing dynamics in Washington, D.C., and thence to what lies ahead in North and South Dakota, in terms of transit demand and funding. Stopping along the way in what he calls the "hot growth" transit markets of older persons and youth, Chris will help develop Dakota-specific and community-specific strategies for being effective transit providers in the coming decades.

### WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME. . .

Training, networking, useful information. Managers of both large and small transit operations will find useful information and valuable contacts. DTA is your organization, so the conference is geared toward you and your colleagues in the Dakotas. The DTA annual meeting is an opportunity to make your voice heard and influence your organization for the coming year.

Holiday Inn – City Centre  
Sioux Falls, SD  
1-605-339-2000

<http://www.ichotelsgroup.com/h/d/hi/1/en/hd/fsddt>

Sept. 20-23, 2004

A block of rooms has been reserved. You must make reservations by August 20, 2004, to ensure the group rate.



CONFERENCE UPDATES CAN BE FOUND AT  
[WWW.DAKOTATRANSIT.ORG](http://WWW.DAKOTATRANSIT.ORG)

## NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

### DHHS Proposed Rules

Taken from [FTA Drug and Alcohol Regulation Updates, Spring 2004](#)

On May 13, 2004, the DOT Office of the Secretary, issued an informational notice in the Federal Register (Vol. 69, No. 93, page 26641) to notify individuals interested in the DOT drug testing program that the DHHS was proposing important new drug testing procedures. The DHHS proposal was published in the Federal Register (Vol. 69, No. 71, pages 19673-19732) on April 13, 2004.

The proposed revisions to the Mandatory Guidelines for Federal Workplace Drug Testing Programs (Guidelines) include scientific and technical guidelines for alternative drug testing methods including hair, sweat, and oral fluid specimens in addition to urine specimens; scientific and technical guidelines for using on-site tests to test urine and oral fluid at the collection site; requirements for the certification of instrumented initial test facilities; and added standards for collectors, on-site testers and medical review officers.

Even though the Guidelines do not apply to DOT-regulated entities directly, DOT-covered employers, employees, and service agents involved in the DOT testing program should be aware of the DHHS notice since the DHHS and DOT drug testing procedures have a statutorily recognized relationship established in the Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991 and the Guidelines have historically served as the basis for the DOT testing procedures defined in 49 CFR Part 40.

Hair testing increases the time period over which drug use can be detected, is easily collected, transported, and stored, and is more difficult to adulterate than urine. The proposed revisions will allow testing hair (1.5 inches long) representing a 90-day sample for pre-employment, random, return-to-duty, or follow-up testing. This method would not be applicable for post-accident.

Oral fluid testing (saliva) is readily available, less invasive and more easily observed than urine specimen collection. Drugs can also be detected in oral fluids within one hour of use. However, current procedures cannot distinguish between actual uses of marijuana and second hand smoke. Thus, a urine specimen test must also be conducted anytime an oral fluid specimen test is positive for marijuana. Oral fluid testing is best suited for pre-employment, reasonable suspicion and post-accident testing.

Sweat testing is conducted by collecting perspiration on sweat wipes or a sweat patch. Sweat collection is a non-invasive procedure, but can result in a rash or skin irritation. Drug use can be detected for as long as the patch remains on the skin. Sweat testing is best used for return-to-duty and follow-up testing, but is not suited for pre-employment, random, reasonable suspicion or post-accident testing.

Stay tuned for more information as it is made available, also you may go to their Web page at: <http://transit-safety.volpe.dot.gov/Safety/DATesting/Newsletters/issue27/html/pg3.htm>.

### Federal Transit Administration Launches Nationwide Transit Safety and Security Awareness Program

FTA Administrator Jennifer Dorn announced a new nationwide safety and security awareness program designed to encourage the active participation of transit passengers and employees in maintaining a safe transit environment.

"Safety and security are top priorities of the Bush Administration and Secretary Mineta," said Administrator Dorn.

The Transit Watch campaign was developed in collaboration with industry partners, including the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA), the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU), and the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).

Transit Watch was designed for easy and low-cost implementation. The Transit Watch Toolkit containing a downloadable CD with the campaign logo and tag line, a brochure, signage and poster slicks, a template press release and fact sheet and a one-page guide entitled "5 Easy Steps to Launching Transit Watch" is available at no-charge. It is critically important that all transit agency employees know what to do, if and when passengers bring safety and security concerns to their attention.

To view the complete article, please go to <http://transit-safety.volpe.dot.gov/security/TransitWatch/>

To download the Transit Watch brochure please go to <http://www.dakotatransit.org/> and click on the transit watch logo.



## Bismarck Celebrates a Fixed-Route Bus Service

Robin Werre, Executive Director, Bis-Man Transit

CAT is roaming the streets of Bismarck-Mandan. After more than three years of planning, Capital Area Transit (CAT) fixed-route bus service launched with a grand opening and ribbon cutting May 6.



Bis-Man Open House

CAT has six buses operating on 11 routes: six main routes, four alternates and a circulator that runs between Bismarck's two

malls. For the rest of May and June, CAT did not charge fares to encourage ridership and help residents become familiar with the service.

"Everything is going smoothly. After we started charging a fare, ridership dropped in half which is about what we expected," said Robin Werre, executive director of Bis-Man Transit. The months of May and June were free for the benefit of riders wanting to experience the fixed-route system. The number of phone calls has dropped significantly, and the maps are still going fast. We have printed about 28,000 maps and there is still strong demand.

Werre says Bis-Man Transit has operated a demand/response transit service for 13 years. "As studies indicated a need for a fixed-route service, we've worked on planning and funding. The funding is a mix of federal and local dollars including a one mill increase in local property taxes." The agency is hoping for additional funding when the federal transportation bill is approved.

CAT operates out of a central transit center in Bismarck that also serves as the headquarters for the demand-response system and the rural transit system. Bis-Man Transit contracts with Taxi 9000 to operate both the demand response system and CAT. Rural transit is provided by West River Transportation Council. The Bismarck depot for Greyhound is also located in the building.

The building, built in 1998, includes maintenance bays, wash bays and a bus storage area. The storage area was expanded to accommodate CAT's new buses. "The facility works great for us. It puts all of our transit-related operations for the area in one spot," Werre says.

## The Fruits of Cooperation and Coordination

Ron Baumgart, Director of River Cities Transit  
Pierre, South Dakota

Through the cooperative effort of the South Dakota Department of Transportation's Air, Rail and Transit office with Oahe Child Development and River Cities Transportation, a new bus for River Cities Transit and Head Start was procured for Hughes and Stanley counties. The effort is the first of its kind nationally and could become a model for other similar cooperative efforts.

The coordinated effort is an answer to the federal government's increasing demands that transportation resources be shared as much as possible. "There is a big push on the national level to share these vehicles. Every year, the FTA becomes more and more serious about what they call 'coordinated transportation,'" said Bruce Lindholm, program manager for the South Dakota Department of Transportation's Air, Rail and Transit office.

River Cities Transit was the facilitator of the \$84,000 grant that purchased the dual purpose bus. River Cities will be able to use the bus for transit when it is not needed by Head Start. "All transit operations are working to do more coordinated, community-type transportation," said Ron Baumgart, River Cities executive director.

"I was concerned about not being able to purchase a bus," said Mary Kirk, director of the Head Start program. New federal regulations made the organization's present buses obsolete.

This new bus complies with the new regulations. Head Start contributed about \$17,000 matching funds toward the bus.



Head Start & River Cities Transit Bus

This presents a win-win situation for both

Head Start and River Cities Transit. Funding for Head Start is dependent on the number of students attending. With the new transportation, more students will be able to attend. River Cities Transit will also be able to count Head Start riders, about 18,000 rides a year, when it applies for funding and grants.

The consortium is already at work applying for funds for the purchase of a second bus for Head Start. It is expected to arrive within the next year.

## 2004 CTAA Annual Conference and Expo

Community Transportation Association of America recently held its 2004 National Conference and Expo in Seattle, Washington, with a number of transit professionals representing North and South Dakota.

Attendees from North Dakota included Bruce Fuchs, ND Department of Transportation; Linda Freeman, Kenmare Wheels & Meals, Kenmare; Den Kuehnemund, Souris Basin Transportation, Minot; and Dennis Ulmer and Midge Kuntz, Elder Care, Dickinson. South Dakota attendees included Bruce Lindholm, Jackie Mattheis, Melissa Schofield, and Laurel Selken from SD Department of Transportation. South Dakota transit operators included: Carol Seurer and Kathy Holman, Community Transit Inc., Sisseton; Jolynn Hanson and Larry Moir, Palace Transit, Mitchell; Ron Baumgart, Keven Disburg, and Carl Rathbun from River Cities Transit, Pierre; Velda Bentson, Rural Office of Community Service, Lake Andes; Brenda Schweitzer, Arrow Public Transit, Lemmon; Barb Cline and Janet Sechser, Prairie Hills Transit, Spearfish; Peggy Morris, Spink County Public Transit & Senior Center, Redfield. Gary Hegland, Jim Miller and Dave Ripplinger represented the Small Rural and Urban Transit Center of Fargo.

This year's Expo and Conference was excellent in terms of location, training session speakers, the special one-, two-, and three-day intensive training, the special guests including Jennifer Dorn administrator of the Federal Transit Administration, as well as the entertainment. Many who attended have written articles for this newsletter sharing with you what they have learned. I want to thank everyone who has taken time to write and submit articles. More information is available at the CTAA Web page <http://www.ctaa.org/>.

### Be a Leader!

Peggy Morris

Spink County Public Transit & Senior Center  
Redfield, SD

To be a leader is more than just running buses. Leaders work from all walks of life: big, small, city, county and private nonprofit. "To Be a Leader" was moderated by Scott Bogren, CTAA, and the presenters were Rex Knowlton, CCTM Wheels of Wellness, Philadelphia, and Ken Hosen, KFH Group, Bethesda, Maryland. You need to start with a vision and a direction for your organization. To be an effective leader, pace yourself – don't over work yourself; don't get so involved that it takes hold of your whole life. Be prepared for Mondays. Be prepared before you leave on Fridays. Don't let someone paint you into a corner. Never be afraid of change — prepare for what's ahead.



If you have a mission statement, goals and vision, post them where all staff can see — that's the first thing they see and they remind you of what you are doing. Don't make it long, keep it simple.

A leader must always look to improve and change. He or she should be a strong community partner and be respected by businesses and other community leaders. You need the support and respect of your staff and your board. Always provide quality service.

Rural areas have undergone a drastic change. Challenges include providing effective service, adapting technology, and software & computers.

As a leader, you need to look for opportunities to help fund your transportation program.

You need to get out and get large business chains to help support you because you are doing them a service by bringing customers to their business. We know this is a vital resource. Mostly, you need to operate your project like a business.

Always speak with encouragement when needed, be positive, be appreciative and say thank you. Get out and see what's going on with your employees. Ride the bus. Meet the people. Find out just what your service is all about.

Public and community transit leaders can build successful teams and operations with constant changes. Look out for new opportunities. We as transit leaders can learn from one another. Managing people and motivating people can bring positive results. Always think win/win. Hire smart and don't sweat the small stuff!

Remember this quote from Albert Einstein: "The significant problems we face today can not be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them."

## Montana Transit Association

Montana Transit Association (MTA) received the State Leadership Award at the CTAA 2004 Conference and Expo recently held in Seattle, Wash. Lyn Hellegaard proudly accepted the award on behalf of the MTA stating that she strongly believes the success of the MTA is due to the fact that all members take very seriously the part they play in improving transportation for the citizens of Montana. They realize that all efforts, no matter how small they may be perceived, can have an enormous impact on the national level.

## It All Begins with Your Drivers: Recruitment and Retention Strategies

Jolynn Hanson, Palace Transit  
Mitchell, SD

The most important workshop for Jolynn Hanson was "It All Begins with Your Drivers: Recruitment and Retention Strategies," given June 17. The three presenters were Otis Reed, Jr., Contrans, Inc., Tacoma, Wash.; Betsy Katchmer, Coordinator, Indiana Urban Technical Assistance Program, Bloomington, Ind.; and Mark McGregor, CCTM, Va. Regional Transportation Association, Purcellville, Va., Hanson says the workshop was beneficial to her because participants discussed "new and interesting incentive programs, and we also learned new and creative places to recruit bus operators."



Hanson has worked for Palace Transit for just over 12 years and this was her first National CTAA Conference. Hanson says, "I was lucky enough to attend this conference with one of our drivers (Larry Moir) and he also attended this class with me. It was very interesting to get his point of view on the subjects while they were being discussed during this session. There were many activities to attend while at the conference. If you are involved in transit this is a great place to get a wealth of information about the industry."

Hanson indicated it was also very nice to talk to those involved in other transit projects to see what inventive things they are doing to keep good drivers. "I also found the Expo very interesting. It was great to see all the different vendors," she said.

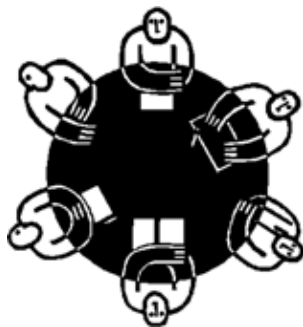
## THE DTA BOARD – Challenging & Rewarding

Three board seats are open this year:

- North Dakota – 1
- South Dakota – 1
- At-large position – 1

Please think about volunteering for one of these positions this fall at the 20th DTA Annual Meeting and Conference.

Take an active role in shaping the future of DTA.



## Issues in Head Start and Child Transportation: A Round Table

Velda Bentson  
Rural Office of Community Service  
Lake Andes SD

The most interesting class I attended in Seattle was the round table discussion on Head Start and child transportation. The issues discussed were of great interest to me since Rural Office of Community Service (ROCS) Transit contracts with Head Start in the areas of Wagner, Chamberlain, Yankton and Lake Andes.



Round table presenters included Glenda Moseley from Hill County Transit District in Texas; Victor Reyes from Maui Economic Opportunities in Hawaii; Ron Baumgart, River Cities Transit, Pierre, South Dakota; and Betty Newell, Community Association for Rural Transit (CART), Virginia. Moderator was Chris Zeilinger, Community Transportation Association, Washington D.C.

Glenda Moseley provided and reviewed an excellent form she uses to improve communication between the parents and bus drivers. In the event a child needs to be picked up from or dropped off at a different address than on the enrollment form, this form must be filled out and given to their child's bus driver. For a change of pickup in the morning, the driver must have this form the day before. If your child is to be delivered to a different address in the afternoon, this form must be given to the driver on the morning of the day the change is to take place. In case of emergency, Head Start will take the responsibility and sign the form. This policy would really help our drivers.

I was interested in the fact that Ron Baumgart from Pierre had the first Head Start/Public Transit bus ever made. Also, I was interested in how Hawaii used their Head Start buses for all groups of individuals needing transportation. Coordination and the inevitable hurdles that we must cross to accommodate all individuals and their specific transit needs will be accomplished when we all work together and compromise.

A copy of the form is available on the DTA Web site at [www.dakotatransit.org/forms/](http://www.dakotatransit.org/forms/).

## "In The Arena"

Gary Hegland • Small Urban & Rural Transit Center

One of the two-day intensive training sessions presented in Seattle by the staff of CTAA was "In the Arena." It was facilitated Monday and Tuesday, June 12 and 13, by Scott Bogren, communications director for CTAA. The four main focuses of the class were timeless values and mission, good communication and service efficiencies regarding finance, information technology, and a best practice session. The theme title came from President Theodore Roosevelt's 1910 speech before the Sorbonne in Paris and this well-known quote,



"It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually **in the arena**, whose face is marred by the dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcomings; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory or defeat."

This session and the Expo edition of the Community Transportation magazine was built on this theme. There were 11 guest speakers besides Dale Marsico, CTAA executive director, who gave a session welcome, and Scott Bogren.

Mike Noel, of Lazaro & Noel, was the first presenter and talked about mission and values. Mike started with a quote from Proverbs 29:19, "Where there is no vision, the people will perish." Mike went on to talk about personal mission, core values, organizational mission, organizational values, and performance code. These codes, also explained in an article in the Community Transportation Expo edition, include: report to work on-time and fit for duty, practice safety in all work activities, demonstrate high levels of skill in your jobs, respect the property of the company and co-workers, treat co-workers with dignity and respect, treat customers with dignity and respect, and present a positive image of the company when performing job duties. Mike pointed out "principles" sometimes work better than rules for guiding behavior in the workplace.

Effective and meaningful communication was the second highlight of "In the Arena." Scott shared his views and was followed by two effective communicators from

Washington State – Martha Rose from Island Transit in the Puget Sound area and Karen Parkhurst from Thurston County. Scott talked about the importance of good communication for transit operators. He said, "if you don't tell your story, someone else might, and you may not like that story." The two women presenters shared how 'great communication' helped them overcome crises in their local communities.

The importance of great communication with our internal and external customers, the community, all elected officials including county and city commissioners, and state and federal legislatures was strongly emphasized that day.

Rex Knowlton, executive director from Wheels of Wellness, in his presentation "A Fresh Perspective" gave a new twist to efficiencies. He spoke of a never-ending effort to provide quality transportation and seek to expand community and public transportation services where there are none; government/public services are more about increasing services than improving the bottom line, as the private sector does, with efficiencies.

In rural and small urban communities we are always looking for opportunities to improve efficiencies and provide one more ride to the young or old, healthy or sick, living in our rural or small urban communities.

## Expo Overview by Linda

Linda Freeman • Kenmare Meals and Wheels  
Kenmare, ND

I truly appreciated the opportunity to attend the Expo in Seattle thanks to RTAP funding. I judged the "Judgment Stop" for the body-on-chassis division on Sunday with a transit director from New Jersey and a volunteer from Montana. It's a great chance to share methods and ideas on providing transit.



It was really exciting to find that Denny from Souris Basin placed 1st and Dennis from Dickinson placed 6th out of 60 drivers in this division at the evening banquet. Of course, we had a variety of weather from cool & rainy in the morning to warmer & windy in the afternoon. We were prepared with our winter coats and rain gear this year. Also, CTAA provided us with umbrellas!!

I attended a one-day intensive training session on Tuesday entitled, "Show Me the Money!" which covered both public and private funding sources along with grant-writing procedures. The instructors were Charlie Rutkowski, Community Transportation Association, Washington, D.C., and Fred Schmidt, University of Vermont, Burlington, Vermont. Check the DTA Web site for specifics on this session. Federal Transit Administrator, Jennifer Dorn spoke to us at the Annual Conference Luncheon on Tuesday. She really understands transit, what

we are doing and what our challenges are. She also urges all of us to work on coordinating with other agencies to make our services even better. Of course, the awards dinner was great. It was followed by 'gambling fun' where I learned how to play craps. I even got to be the "shooter."

I attended two different sessions on Wednesday: "Innovative Transit Marketing" and "When and Where to Look Outside Your Organization for Help." Both sessions were packed with great ideas and solutions. Some highlights: 1) Planning and marketing are two halves of the same function and must work in combination to be successful. 2) No amount of marketing will sell service that doesn't meet the need. 3) Coordination with others can greatly cut marketing costs and increase service. One thing I did the minute I got home was put our services on the local access channels in my area. It's free and it's really amazing how many really small towns have this service. I can't believe I wasn't taking advantage of this before now! More specifics will be on the Web.

On Thursday, I drug myself kicking and screaming to the session on "Maintaining an Effective and Compliant Federal Drug and Alcohol Program" which turned out to be very good. As usual, there are changes coming, but not until HHS has finished evaluating. There will also be more on this session on the DTA Web site. We had a marvelous time at the Experience Music Project and Space Needle on Thursday evening.

As a multi-service provider, I am really pleased that transit agencies are serious about coordination efforts. It is true that seniors will only be able to stay in their homes if we are able to provide for their needs, and transit is a vital part of the effort! CTAA again, put on a great expo. Their efforts on our behalf are so beneficial to us. Do go to their Web site. Many of the PowerPoint presentations for our sessions will be available there.

A special thanks to Bruce, the gang from the Small Urban & Rural Transit Center, and the Dickinson groups for inviting me to tag along for meals & fun. It was great!

## Partnerships: School and Community Transportation

David Ripplinger • Small Urban & Rural Transit Center



Individuals from western Washington, Denver, and northeast Iowa presented innovative techniques they have introduced using public transportation to meet the needs of both local schools and communities.

Dave O'Connell, Mason County Transportation Authority, Shelton, Washington, implemented a late-run school bus service to give students involved in extracurricular activities and others in the area a new transportation opportunity. Planning included a study of relevant legal requirements as well as a formal agreement between the Mason County Transit Association (MTA) and the school districts involved. The new bus service also spawned another partnership: the local Boys and Girls Club cleans area bus stops for the MTA in exchange for free field trips.

Jane Yeager, Seniors' Resource Center, Denver, Colorado, talked about a number of partnerships established between them and area groups. For example, a local senior resource center coordinates demand-response rides aboard the group's buses. They also provide fixed-route service, which is open to, but not regularly used by the public, to and from area Montessori schools.

Monica Roderick, transit system coordinator for the Northeast Iowa Community Action Corporation, described the partnership between the area's Head Start program and school districts which use the same drivers to provide service, especially during the summer months, sharing vehicles for field trips, and completing other group's courses, such as defensive driving and Commercial Driver's License, to complement their own.



## Great Idea!

Dona M. Schaff, Project Director  
Southwest Transportation  
Bowman, ND

Many transit operators are looking for ways to make transportation more affordable for their clients. Dona of Southwest Transit has found a way to do just that in southwest North Dakota. She has contracted with both West River Health Clinic, since 1997, which serves the four counties Southwest Transit serves, and the two clinics in Dickinson as well as Dickinson's hospital, since 1998. These hospitals and clinics pay half the travel fare for the clients Southwest Transportation brings them for services. Schaff says the clinics and hospitals also feel a benefit from these agreements.

## Legislative update: Still in a Holding Pattern

Gary Hegland  
Small Urban & Rural Transit Center

## Calendar of Events

### August 26-27, 2004 Transit Finance and Development Workshop

Sponsored by FTA  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

### August 28-29, 2004 15th DTA Annual Paratransit Roadeo

Minot, North Dakota

### September 16, 2004 Marketing on a Shoe String

Sponsored by SURTC  
Videoconference sites in ND, SD, MT, WY

### September 20-23, 2004 2004 Dakota Transit Association Conference

Sioux Falls, South Dakota  
(This is the 20<sup>th</sup> annual meeting and conference for DTA. The first one was also held in Sioux Falls, SD, back in 1984.)

### October 4-6, 2004 2004 Minnesota Public Transit Conference

Minneapolis, Minnesota

### October 10-13, 2004 APTA 2004 Annual Meeting

Atlanta, Georgia

### January 9-13, 2005 TRB 84th Annual Meeting

Washington, DC

On June 23, the U.S. House of Representatives passed another extension to the TEA-21 reauthorization. You may have also heard that we may not get a bill passed until January.

The President issued the Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act (SAFETEA) last fall proposing to spend \$256 billion over the next six years. The Senate bill, S.1072, passed Feb. 12, calls for \$318 billion in spending over the next six years and would require an increase in gas taxes. The House bill H.R. 3550, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (TEA-LU), proposes a spending limit of \$275 billion over the same term. According to Mr. David Sprynczynatyk, director of the North Dakota Department of Transportation, North Dakota favors the Senate bill because there is more money for North Dakota due to fewer earmarks.

On June 9, a Highways and Transit Reauthorization Conference Committee was named. The committee has 14 republicans with Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska) as chairman, and 11 Democrats with Rep. James Oberstar (D-Minnesota) as ranking democrat. The goal of the committee is to negotiate the differences between the House and Senate bills and present Congress with one bill to pass and send to the President. The President has said he will veto anything over \$256 billion. The joint committee has met twice, on June 23 and July 7, 2004, trying to reach agreement.

What does this mean for North and South Dakota? Both states have received a portion of their funding equal to the 2003 funds from Federal Transit Administration. However, Bruce Fuchs says they have delayed funding for purchasing 16 buses, 7 buildings, 15 computers, plus for the three larger communities in North Dakota receiving funds directly from FTA.

In South Dakota, Bruce Lindholm reports that they have received 9/12 of their capital funding, and operating funds the remaining 3/12, or about \$250,000, is still on hold.

## Upcoming Training

### Upcoming Training Sessions: Dates are all "to be determined"

- Web Page Development
- Survey Development
- AND MORE!

## Marketing on a Shoe String Budget

Thursday, Sept. 16, 2004  
10:00am - 2:00pm (CDT)

This seminar will provide fresh ideas for promoting your services through professional looking marketing pieces on a shoe-string budget. Mark your calendars. The instructor will be **Lyn Hellegaard**, Director of Community Affairs, from Missoula Ravalli Transportation Management Association (MR TMA). She came to MR TMA from a 20-year career in the financial field, serving as an assistant vice president at First Interstate Bank. Please go to <http://www.surtc.org/training/shoestring/> for more information and registration.

## Cutting Edge Transit

Gary Hegland

Small Urban & Rural Transit Center

The Dakota Transporter will have a new column, Cutting Edge Transit, sponsored by SURTC in each issue. This column will focus on one or two research projects per newsletter that are applicable to rural and/or small urban transit. Many nationally sponsored research projects are geared toward large urban projects and rail. The rural and small urban projects that are reported on are usually conducted and viewed from a national perspective and not geared toward a specific region. Our work at SURTC is rather unique because it is geared specifically for those of us in the upper Midwest.

The first report I will share in this issue is *Integrating School Bus and Public Transportation Services in Non-Urban Communities*. It is Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) Report 56 published in 1999 by the Transportation Research Board (TRB) and sponsored by the Federal Transit Administration. The executive summary says this report explores the coordination of student transportation and public transportation services in non-urban areas.

The study included a research component and a survey to determine the scope and breadth of this type of coordination across the country. Case studies were conducted to obtain detailed information about communities that have successfully coordinated or integrated some aspect of student and public transportation. An on-line copy of this report is available at [trb.org/news/blurb\\_detail.asp?id=2562](http://trb.org/news/blurb_detail.asp?id=2562) and hard copies can be ordered.

Of the 80 sites that coordinated services, the most popular type of coordination involved placing regular education students, Head Start, and/or agency clients on public transit vehicles. Only 30 communities used school buses in coordination services. Of these, 10 comingle and 20 did not comingle the public with students. The back of the publication also has an implementation guide.

For some background, here are three research sources. Probably the oldest and most prominent transportation research organization is the TRB, based in Washington, D.C. TRB is a division of the National Research Council, which serves as an independent advisor to the federal government. The National Research Council is jointly administered by the National Academy of

If you have ideas for articles and features in coming newsletters let us know. We welcome submitted articles and photos. To make submissions, or for questions, contact Gary Hegland: P:(701) 231-6436; F:(701) 231.1945; or [gary.hegland@ndsu.nodak.edu](mailto:gary.hegland@ndsu.nodak.edu).

## Elder Care

**Richard Sand** passed away Monday, July 5, 2004 after battling cancer. Richard has been a driver for Elder Care for over 10 years. Services were held on Thursday, July 8 in Dickinson, ND. Richard was known for his compassionate, kind manner with his passengers, and will be missed by all.

"Our sympathy and prayers go to Elder Care in mourning their loss."

Sciences, the National Academy of Engineering, and the Institute of Medicine. The mission of the Transportation Research Board is to promote innovation and progress in transportation through research." TRB's Web site, [www4.trb.org/trb/homepage.nsf/web/about/](http://www4.trb.org/trb/homepage.nsf/web/about/), is a great source of information on transit, highways and transportation issues.

The Transportation Research Forum (TRF) is another research organization. Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute is the current home for TRF. The Transportation Research Forum is an independent organization of transportation professionals. Their purpose is to provide an impartial meeting ground for all transportation workers, researchers and government officials and others seeking an exchange of information and ideas related to both passenger and freight transportation. Its Web site is [www.trforum.org/](http://www.trforum.org/). TRF publishes a journal called *Journal of the Transportation Research Forum* and has annual conferences for sharing of research topics.

The University Transportation Centers (UTC) program was established at institutions of higher learning in 1987 by the Surface Transportation and Uniform Relocation Assistance Act. One center was competitively chosen to operate in each of the 10 federal regions. North Dakota State University in Fargo is the university for region eight, which includes Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming. The U.S. Department of Transportation's UTC program was created to advance innovative education, research, technology transfer, and outreach at selected institutions of higher learning, throughout the United States.

SURTC is a part of the UTC program and is geared to researching subjects focusing on small urban and rural transit environment. This column will include reports on research projects from both SURTC and other sources that include a national perspective, and are relevant to our environment – rural communities with populations of fewer than 50,000 and small urban communities with populations between 50,000 and 400,000.

Here are the top six standings for the national rodeo at the 2004 Community Transportation Association national competition in Seattle, Washington. See how well North Dakota's drivers competed with 60 drivers from other states.

Place	Score	Name	System	City	ST
1	895	Den Kuehnemund	Souris Basin Transportation	Minot	ND
2	887	Gunther Yaconetti	Pierce Transit	Lakewood	WA
3	866	Danny Stallard	Mountain Empire Older Citizens	Big Stone Gap	VA
4	859	Dwayne Brannan	BRATS	Robertsdale	AL
5	854	Dave Schmoe	Yakima Transit	Yakima	WA
6	853	Dennis Ulmer	Elder Care	Dickinson	ND

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The **Dakota Transporter** is a North and South Dakota newsletter, geared toward the rural, small urban, and specialized transit industry, in keeping the DTAs transit providers up-to-date on the news and information from across the nation and the states.

If anyone has any news or items of interest they would like to share with us, please send it to the **Dakota Transporter**. We also welcome your comments about the newsletter.

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