

DAKOTA

TRANSPORTER

Volume 17 • Issue 1

Spring 2005

Legislative Issues

Ron Baumgart, DTA President

DTA has hired two lobbyists, one in North Dakota and one in South Dakota. The purpose is to assist transit operators in developing congressional bills, monitor their movement through the congressional process, and update transit operators when hearings occur and when support for their bills is needed in either Pierre or Bismarck. The transit systems throughout both states struggle each year to raise sufficient local match dollars for the federal dollars and to finance the current level of services to their clients. For many transit operators, the task of raising money for local match demands as much, or more, of their time as running their primary business of transit.

Here are the two lobbyists working for South and North Dakota and a short bio of each. This is followed by some information on the congressional bills that are in the respective state legislatures.

South Dakota



Steve Willard is the President and CEO of Willard and Associates in Pierre, SD. Since 1989, Steve and his four-person staff have served as the administrative and support staff to several different statewide associations, including the SD Broadcasters, the SD Funeral Directors, the SD Beef Industry Council, the SD Board of Dentistry and the SD Oilseeds Council. He is

the executive officer of each.

He has lobbied for those groups and others since the 1990 legislative session, making this his 15th session. He also lobbies for the SD Municipal League, the SD Firefighters, the American Petroleum Institute, and the SD Association of Community Based Services.

Steve is a long-time presenter to grassroots organizations, has served as the treasurer on three statewide initiatives, and consults as a long-range planner to many

(South Dakota continued on page 4)

North Dakota

Erica J. Cermak is originally from Mandan, ND, and has resided in the Bismarck-Mandan area for most of her life. The exception was a few years while she was attending college before returning and graduating from the University of Mary in 2004, with a bachelor's degree in social work.



Erica was hired as the Executive Director of the North Dakota Senior Service Providers (NDSSP) May 1, 2004. Although she is new to the transportation arena, her experience primarily stems from her education at the University of Mary, and particularly her internship with America Association of Retired Persons (AARP), North Dakota. She is a registered Lobbyist for the NDSSP, a member of the Graying of North Dakota Coalition and has participated in several other key organizations geared at improving the lives of the aging population in North Dakota.

Since beginning her employment with NDSSP, she has had the opportunity to meet many Dakota Transit Association members as well as staff with the Small Urban & Rural Transit Center. "I would just like to state how excited I am to be working with such great organizations," she says. "I am truly amazed at the level of commitment each of you has for seeing that your organization moves full-speed into the future. I truly hope that I can become a continued part of that effort. This year has been exciting to say the least! Thank each of you again for supporting my position, and for the enthusiasm you bring to your organization, it has truly been a pleasure. I look forward to working with each of you."

Erica J. Cermak, Executive Director
North Dakota Senior Service Providers
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From the President

Ron Baumgart, DTA President
River Cities Transit
Pierre, SD

Happy New Year everyone. I think 2005 will be a very exciting year for the members of DTA.

Both North and South Dakota have legislative issues that are very important to the future of transit in the two states. DTA also needs to work with our Congressional delegation to get a Federal Transportation Bill authorized. As transit providers we need to work hard to tell our story; we cannot expect our state DOT's to do our work.

DTA has taken a very aggressive role in promoting our needs and story to legislators in both states. We have hired lobbyists in North and South Dakota. Erica Cermak, Executive Director of ND Senior Service Providers, is working for us in North Dakota and Steve Willard of Willard and Associates will be working for us in South Dakota. We all need to help provide people at the hearings and support to our lobbyists so we can accomplish our goal of improving funding for transit.

The DTA board met Jan. 6 in Fargo and faced an agenda that kept us very busy. The alliance with SURTC is a great asset to DTA. Jill Hough, Gary Hegland and the rest of the staff at SURTC are a great help to us and the DTA members. I will mention a few of the items that we worked on at our meeting.

Hegland and staff have created a very high quality newsletter for DTA. We also have more planned for our future newsletters. We are now selling advertising in our newsletter. This allows businesses to target the transit market with their products and services and helps defray some of the costs of our newsletter.

We ask our members to help sell ads. If you know a business in your area that provides supplies or services to transit approach them about advertising with us. You can get the information on costs and size of ads from Hegland, a board member or on our Web page, dakotatransit.org. We also encourage our members to show preference in conducting business with the businesses that purchase ads for the newsletter. This will encourage those vendors to keep purchasing ads.

The DTA board spent several hours working on this year's conference to be held in Minot, ND. The

conference will be in conjunction with the bus roadeo. We will be working with the folks in Minot to coordinate all the details of the combined roadeo and conference. Mark Sept. 17-21 on your calendar now to save those dates to attend the roadeo and conference.

DTA is working with vendors to add a vendors' show at the conference. The vendors' show will be Sunday afternoon and Monday morning. With the vendors' show starting on Sunday, we hope drivers attending the roadeo will have some time to spend at the show. The conference will be held at the Holiday Inn Riverside in Minot. The hotel has plenty of room in their indoor facility for our vendors' show.

The show is just one of the highlights of this year's conference. We have most of our speakers and trainers lined up at this time. This will allow us more time to promote the great things happening at our 2005 Conference and Bus Roadeo. Hope to see all of you there.

DTA has two task forces, one on insurance and one on training, that are beginning to work on issues that are very important to our members. The insurance task force will be working with Gary Hegland and others to come up with recommendations on insurance pooling for transit. We know this process will take time and will not be easy. Our hope is through pooling we might be able to save some money on liability and property vehicle insurance or at least reduce the increases that we all seem to face. The training task force has begun researching topics or issues could be addressed through training. DTA has made a commitment to the members to provide a minimum of two training sessions a year. The task force will determine the topics and priorities of the training. The DTA board looks forward to working with both task forces and to the many great things we will accomplish by working together.

I have to say how enthused I am about the future of DTA. Our alliance with SURTC and having a home address and base is just another step forward in our work with public transit. I also want to remind all of you, we cannot succeed in our efforts whether it's legislative issues, training, insurance or funding without hard work and a united voice from our DTA members.

I hope by our next newsletter we can report on the legislative successes that came about because of our united commitment and hard work.

NDDOT Report

Bruce Fuchs, CTPA
Transit Program Director



For those of you in North Dakota, this is a reminder to contact me regarding the bus to EXPO in St. Louis. We are scheduled to leave Bismarck Saturday morning, May 21, and arrive in St. Louis on Sunday evening. We would need to spend one night at a hotel about half way there. For the return trip we would leave St. Louis on Friday morning, May 27, and arrive in Bismarck on Saturday evening; again with one overnight someplace. We would make stops along I-94 and I-29 to pick-up and discharge passengers.

I did some checking and we have a decided lack of certified transit managers in ND. We have only one person certified by the University of Wisconsin and NONE by the most common certification agency in the country. I would encourage all managers to pursue a Certified Community Transit Manager (CCTM) designation and I will even participate in the expenses involved. Get more information on the CTAA website and remember that the classes you take in St. Louis count toward the certification. Because of the expense involved with the test, I will need some advance notice before anyone signs up to take it.

For those of you who have not followed through with the picture ID badges and uniforms it is time for you to contact me so we can work something out. It is in our best interest to become more professional, an easy first step is in our appearance. The items I have addressed above: training, certification, ID badges, and uniforms will be constantly on my mind and should also be on yours. REMEMBER: being a professional is a state of mind and the mind needs DAILY exercise.

Feeders for Intercity Buses

Bruce Lindholm
SDDOT



The loss of Greyhound Bus Lines service to South and North Dakota should reveal to everyone the fragile economic realities of intercity bus service. The deregulation of the airlines and increasing use of private vehicles has been very hard on intercity bus companies. Still, there is a segment of the population that either cannot afford to fly or prefers not to. Many of these people do not have access to reliable private vehicles or simply are not comfortable driving long distances. In addition, bus service covers a much bigger geographic area than air service. In other words, you can get closer to your destination rather than being dropped off at a regional airport, an important consideration for some people.

So, what does this have to do with transit? As some of you know, Jefferson Lines likes to use public transit agencies as "feeders." This service is allowed under 5311(f) "planning and marketing for intercity bus transportation ...and coordination of rural connections between small transit operations and intercity bus carriers." If your transit agency is located in a town that does not have intercity bus service and is reasonably close to the route of an intercity bus carrier; I strongly urge you to contact the bus carrier to see what you can work out. Jefferson Lines pays mileage to the transit agency and also pays commission on ticket sales because the transit agency becomes an agent for Jefferson Lines. It's a good deal for all involved.

The intercity bus lines are like any other business — if they do not have customers, they go out of business or restructure to somewhere they can make money. We have seen this with Greyhound and Jackrabbit. Let's do what we can to get those passengers to the bus lines and help keep this important transportation option available.

(South Dakota continued from page 1)

different groups around SD and the country. Steve and his wife Marla have lived in Pierre since 1989 and have two children, Sam (16) and Jesse (13). He is proud to be able to assist the Dakota Transit Association accomplish its goal of establishing long-term funding from the state.

Steve Willard of Willard and Associates
106 West Capitol Avenue, Suite 7
Pierre, South Dakota 57501
Phone: (605) 224-1591
Email: steve@willardandassociates.com

The South Dakota Legislature is working on **Senate Bill 103**:

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED, An Act to authorize the funding of public transportation from the state highway fund. BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA:

Section 1. That § 10-12-6 be amended to read as follows:

10-12-6. The secretary of revenue and regulation may levy annually a sufficient tax, not to exceed one-tenth of one dollar per thousand dollars taxable valuation for any year upon each dollar of the taxable valuation of all taxable property in this state, to provide a special fund in the state treasury to be known as the state highway fund. All money received by the state treasurer pursuant to ~~such the~~ levy shall be placed in ~~such the~~ fund, to be used and expended under the direction of the Department of Transportation, for the purpose of constructing and maintaining highways and bridges in this state ~~and~~ paying the salaries and expenses of the Department of Transportation, and funding public transportation, as the ~~same moneys~~ may be appropriated for these purposes by the Legislature.

Section 2. That § 31-2-14.2 be amended to read as follows:

31-2-14.2. All moneys in the state highway fund shall be used only for the construction, maintenance, and supervision of highways and bridges in this state ~~and~~ for the administrative costs necessary to perform such duties, and for the funding of public transportation.

(North Dakota continued from page 1)

The North Dakota Legislature is working on several bills:

- **House Bill 1458.** A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 24-02 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to transportation funding; and to amend and reenact section 57-43.1-02 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to motor vehicles fuels tax; and to provide a continuing appropriation.
- **Senate Bill 2348**
39-04.2-03. Additional registration fee - Deposit in fund. At the time of registering a motor vehicle subject to registration under section 39-04-19, the owner shall pay to the director in addition to the registration fee a fee of two to three dollars for each motor vehicle registered. The fee must be deposited with the state treasurer, who shall credit the fee to the public transportation fund.
- **Senate Bill 2267**
SECTION 1. APPROPRIATION. There is appropriated out of any moneys in the general fund in the state treasury, not otherwise appropriated, the sum of \$3,000,000, or so much of the sum as may be necessary, to the department of human services for the purpose of providing matching funds for services and programs for senior citizens under North Dakota Century Code section 57-15-56 for the biennium beginning July 1, 2005, and ending June 30, 2007.

The Congressional delegation on the Web

NORTH DAKOTA:

Byron Dorgan • <http://dorgan.senate.gov/>
Kent Conrad • <http://conrad.senate.gov/nd/se-nd.html>
Earl Pomeroy • <http://www.pomeroy.house.gov/>

SOUTH DAKOTA:

John Thune • <http://www.johnthune.com/>
Tim Johnson • <http://www.senate.gov/~johnson/>
Stephanie Herseth • <http://www.hersethforcongress.org/>

Mark your calendars!

**2005 DTA Bus Rodeo & Conference
Minot, ND**

September 17 - 21

***Professional development through
networking and training.***



Featured trainer
Robin Silverman presents

Take a Load Off!™

*Robin is creator of the Fullistic Living
program and author of "The Ten Gifts"*

Fundraising Success Story

Wells Sheridan County Aging Council, Inc. (WSCAC) conducted a lucrative radio-a-thon fundraiser in October. The purpose was to raise local match money for a minivan to serve in their transit program. Garnet Lukenbach, Site Coordinator for WSCAC in Harvey, ND, contacted local radio station KHND to see if it would sponsor the event. After Lukenbach completed her sales pitch, management enthusiastically agreed.

WSCAC has sponsored two previous tele-a-thons to raise money for their center's program. Both of these were outstanding successes. One reason for the past success was that local talent provided more than four hours of entertainment, which could be seen live on local television. However, this past fall, when Lukenbach approached the cable television company they turned down her request. The station was concerned about being inundated with requests from other non-profits and determined that they were unwilling to continue the effort. Rather than give up, Lukenbach modified her plans and instead contacted the Harvey radio station. One obstacle to the new plan was keeping people entertained with live performers. To create the same excitement, Lukenbach knew she would need to find a way for people to be able to see performance as well as listen to it on the radio.

Next, Lukenbach contacted the Harvey Eagles Club. The club agreed to host the event at their location so the radio station could do a live-remote broadcast. This allowed a live audience to watch the show, in addition to people listening in from their homes, cars, work and other locations. It was an excellent way to encourage more participation and generate a larger audience.

The key to the success of this event was having another "draw" to increase the audience. The Harvey Eagles had planned an Oktoberfest German Supper and they allowed

the WSCAC to coordinate with that event's success by planning the radio-a-thon as the entertainment for the supper. The radio-a-thon ran from 3 to 8 p.m.

The local paper and the radio station provided free advertising. The Eagles had posters advertising their upcoming Oktoberfest supper and entertainment. Local organizations provided the phone bank while also volunteering to staff the phones and take pledges. A host and hostess served as masters of ceremony for the event and also provided entertainment throughout the afternoon and evening between scheduled acts.

The entertainment was arranged in advance of the event. Walk-ins were also welcomed. Many advance pledges were also set up and read aloud to encourage callers. Some innovative pledgers served as challenges to other groups and organizations, spurring some friendly competition and increased revenues. Audience members became enthused watching the performances and made pledges and offered challenges to others. People from outside the community, listening to the radio broadcast, also made contributions.

The fundraising goal set for this event was \$8,500. The event actually raised more than \$10,000. There was no problem collecting the pledges, which were mailed to WSCAC's offices. This event was a big success thanks to a big effort by the agency's staff, board of directors and volunteers. It also required the support of the Harvey radio station and Eagles Club. If you have questions or would like more information on this event, contact Garnet Lukenbach at 701-324-4032.





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A half page ad is \$500

2 consecutive ad runs are \$475 ea.

4 consecutive ad runs are \$430 ea.

A quarter page ad is \$250

2 consec ad runs are \$235 ea.

4 consec ad runs are \$200 ea.

Cutting Edge Transit: The Hiring Process

Gary Hegland
Small Urban & Rural Transit Center



Do you take short cuts in your hiring process, my only advice is **DON'T!** Tim Zejdlik from Job Service ND has developed a 10-step hiring guide. This article simply lists the steps; please go to the manual and judge for yourself if your hiring process is above average in quality (www.jobsnd.com/news/news.detail.html?newsId=5000&locationId=2). If you decide you want a published hard copy please contact myself or any Job Service in North Dakota.

Step 1. Study and know about employment laws that affect the selection process. There are nine federal and four state laws for North Dakota. For South Dakota employers, the South Dakota Career Centers recommends this website: www.state.sd.us/dol/default.asp?navid=408.

Step 2. Conduct a position analysis. Learn everything possible about the job (processes, performance factors, working conditions, etc.) to determine what the essential functions are and what is required in terms of knowledge, skills and personal traits (abilities) to perform the position's duties satisfactorily.

Step 3. Prepare and issue a vacancy announcement. This should include all essential information such as position title, regular or temporary, name of supervisor, compensation, purpose of position, narrative description of position, responsibilities and duties, minimum and preferred qualification.

Step 4. Prepare application-screening criteria. If an interview is necessary to conduct an initial screening of applicants, prepare questions and screening criteria.

Step 5. Screen applications and, if necessary, conduct initial screening interview based on established criteria in Step 4. Select the top-ranking individuals for interviewing (three to five).

Step 6. Conduct interviews based on established criteria in Step 4. Be aware of what types of questions are not allowed in an interview and be careful, making only promises you intend to fulfill.

Step 7. Make your selection decision and conduct reference checks on your choice. Do not select someone who does not meet your minimum qualifications. Your employees are your company/organization, so choose them with diligence.

Step 8. Desired and realized benefits from a good orientation for new employees include:

- better understanding of job functions
- a higher level of motivation
- improved learning curve
- improved employee retention rate
- ultimately, improved productivity for the organization.

Step 9. Application of veteran preference, know how applicants must apply and who meets the qualifications.

Step 10. Probationary period customarily runs from 3 to 6 months. This is for you and your new employee to decide if this job is a good match.

Congratulations Bruce for CTPA Certification

Bruce Fuchs, Public Transit Programs Manager, North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT), Bismarck, ND, was designated as a Certified Transit Program Administrator (CTPA) by the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA).

The Certified Transit Program Administrator Program recognizes state-level transit agency personnel for specific skills they have acquired through experience, education and professional development and a passing score on the certification exam. Bruce, through years of dedicated public service, has demonstrated proficiency in human resources, finance, operations, development and administration of transit programs.

Two years in the making, this program is the first of its kind in the community transit industry. The program marks a giant step forward in the professionalism of the community transit.

Community transportation is an essential public service without which millions of Americans would be shut off from the mainstream of community life. Certified transit program administrators play a vital role in making transportation more accessible, affordable and available.

CTAA is a national, professional membership association for more than 4,000 organizations and individuals committed to removing barriers to isolation and to improving mobility for all people. Its headquarters is located in Washington, DC.

United We Ride

The United We Ride program started by Federal Transit Association now has its own website at www.unitedweride.gov. Its goal is to further coordinate human service transportation. It works closely with and reports on the activities of the Federal Interagency Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility. The Federal Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM) is an interdepartmental council created by an Executive Order that directed the coordination of a variety of federal programs funding transportation for older Americans, individuals with disabilities and persons with lower incomes. To effectively meet the charges outlined by the President, CCAM has developed six overarching goals.

The website lists the deliverables associated with each of these approved goals.

GOAL 1: Education and Outreach – To develop an education plan for coordinated human service transportation resulting in enhanced customer access at the local level for individuals with disabilities; older adults; and individuals with lower incomes.

GOAL 2: Consolidated Access – To simplify access to transportation services and to enhance customer service through the development of a comprehensive and coordinated transportation system.

GOAL 3: Regulatory Barriers – To reduce restrictive and duplicative laws, regulations, and programs related to human service transportation at the Federal level.

GOAL 4: Coordinated Planning – To ensure comprehensive planning for the coordination of human service transportation for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and persons with lower incomes.

GOAL 5: Cost Allocation – To standardize cost allocation processes.

GOAL 6: Useful Practices – To document successful strategies in coordinating human service transportation at the Federal, State, Tribal, and Local levels.

The departments involved include Transportation, Agriculture, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, Justice, Labor, Veterans Affairs, Council on Disability, Social Security Administration, and the White House. It looks like more emphasis will be placed on working together in partnership, and coordinating agencies efforts.

The Transportation Cooperative Research Program has recently published a *Toolkit for Rural Community Coordinated Transportation Services*. This toolkit helps rural communities identify elements of setting up and implementing transportation services. The report recognizes coordination as the technique for success when power, responsibility, management, and funding are shared across organizations and throughout the community.



**North Central
Planning Council**
Richard Anderson, Executive Director

LAKE REGION TRANSPORTATION

Jacqueline Senger
Transportation Coordinator

Benson Country Transportation
Cando/Towner County Transit
Cavalier County Transit
City Cab, Devils Lake, ND
Devils Lake Taxi, Devils Lake, ND
Devils Lake Transit, Ramsey County
Eddy County Transit
Nutrition & Support, Rolette County
Nutrition United, Rolette County
Royal Coach, Turtle Mountain Reservation
Spirit Lake Transit

For additional information contact
701-662-8131/jacquencpc@gondtc.com

The 2005 transit membership dues are due. Please either complete the online application at: www.dakotatransit.org/join/ or complete the written application below and mail to the designated address. If you complete the online application you still have to mail the dues check.

DAKOTA TRANSIT ASSOCIATION 2005 MEMBERSHIP

Membership Categories (Please check one):

- Regular Member - \$100.00
 Associate Member - \$100.00 (non voting member)

Agency/Business _____

Contact Person _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____

Fax Number _____

E-mail Address _____

Please mail a completed copy of this form with your payment of membership to:

Dakota Transit Association
PO Box 5074
Fargo, ND 58105

Explanation of membership categories:

- 1. Regular Membership** - composed of any governmental agency that provides transportation service and/or non-profit specialized transportation providers.
- 2. Associate Membership** - composed of any governmental or professional agency that is indirectly involved with public transportation and any commercial public transportation agency or other individuals interested in public transit.

Calendar of Events

March 28-29, 2005

DTA Board Meeting

Fargo, ND

May 4, 2005

Web Page Development

Fargo, ND

May 15-18, 2005

APTA 2005 Bus & Paratransit Conference

Columbus, OH

May 21-27, 2005

CTAA - EXPO 2005

St. Louis, MO

Sept. 17-18, 2005

DTA - 2005 Rodeo and Training

Minot, ND

Sept. 19-22, 2005

DTA - 2005 Annual Conference

Minot, ND

Sept. 26-28, 2005

ATPA - EXPO 2005

Dallas, TX

No Flies on This Cat

by Frederic Smith for the Tribune

Bismarck-Mandan's new scheduled, fixed-route bus service, Capital Area Transit, is not doing just well. It is doing better than twice as well in the early going as a consultant told us to expect when CAT was being pitched to Bismarck voters three years ago.

Then, we were told to look for 34,000 new rides a year, to start, on top of Bis-Man's existing taxi-style, "demand-response" service for the elderly and disabled. That worked out to only 93 rides a day over 365 days, but was represented as something to build on.

CAT is for the public at large at the same price as for the elderly and disabled.

Instead, as parent Bis-Man Transit Director Robin Werre told the Bismarck City Commission last week, CAT has hauled 43,252 riders in its first seven months of revenue service, July 2004 through January 2005. That's an average of 6,178 a month, which projects to 74,146 a year — 203 rides a day.

(No Flies continued on page 12)

DTA Website

Below is the home page of the DTA website, located at www.dakotatransit.org. SURTC designed this page for easy navigation. On the top black bar on the right hand side you see four links: "Forms," "Events Calendar," "Newsletters" (current and previous), and "Links" i.e. links to pertinent transit websites.

Dakota Transit Association

Forms Events Calendar Newsletters Links

Home
About Us
Conference
Roadeo
Legislative Issues
Transit Tips
Members
Join DTA

Members Only Login

Home

Welcome to the Dakota Transit Association (DTA). The Dakota Transit Association was formed in 1985 to address the need for greater communication between transportation providers and to serve as a unified voice for public transportation agencies within the states of North and South Dakota at the national level.

News & Updates

- 01.26.05 We've added a [Legislative Issues](#) option to the left menu.
- 01.04.05 The Board Meeting minutes for Nov. 9, 2004 is now available under the members only area. To login, click "Members Only Login" to the left.
- 12.02.04 The [Fall 2004](#) newsletter is now online.
- 12.01.04 The updated DTA [By-Laws](#) are now available online under About Us.
- 11.18.04 We've added a [Join DTA](#) option to the left menu.
- 11.15.04 Pictures and results for the [2004 Annual Conference](#) held Aug. 20-23 are now available.
- 10.29.04 The [2004-05 board members](#) list is now available under "About Us".
- 10.28.04 Several links to meeting minutes are now available under the members only area. To login, click "Members Only Login" to the left.
- 10.27.04 New "Members" option to the left contains the list of 2004 DTA Members.
- 10.26.04 Pictures and results for the [12th Annual Paratransit Roadeo](#) held Aug. 28-29 are now available.
- 10.02.04 Curious about when the DTA was established or why? Then check out our new [History](#) page available under About Us.
- 07.21.04 Federal Transit Administration Launches Nationwide Transit Safety and Security Awareness Program. For more information, click on the Transit Watch logo below.

Home | [About Us](#) | [Conference](#) | [Roadeo](#) | [Legislative Issues](#) | [Transit Tips](#) | [Members](#) | [Join DTA](#)
[Forms](#) | [Events Calendar](#) | [Newsletters](#) | [Links](#)

Site Updated: 01.27.05
Dakota Transit Association (DTA)

Any questions or comments?
Please use our [comments form](#).

Site maintained by
[Small Urban & Rural Transit Center](#)

On the left hand column are navigation links which provide access to the main areas of the website:

- "About Us" contains the mission and vision statements as well as the by-laws, history, and pictures of board members along with their contact information.
- "Conference" and "Roadeo" have information on last year's events and soon about next year's event in Minot.
- "Legislative Issues" has information on the bills before the North and South Dakota legislatures.
- "Transit Tips" currently there is funding tips from Linda Freeman, a report from last year's CTAA conference in Seattle.
- "Join DTA" is just that, information about and the opportunity to become a DTA member.
- "Members Only Login" has meeting minutes from previous board and member meetings and as the name suggests, it's for members only.

In the center you'll see the "News and Updates" section of the page. This is where we note recent updates to the website.

The Transitwatch logo, at the bottom right hand side of the page, links to the Federal Transit Administration's launch of a Nationwide Transit Safety and Security Awareness Program. That program is promoting the concept if *every employee and passenger contributes a little* it can make a huge difference.

That may sound like no great shakes in the greater transportation scheme of things. But it shows that CAT has been embraced by the niche market for which it is intended and — extremely important — should have no trouble living within its means.

Only about one-third of CAT's support has to be made out of the farebox. The rest comes from modest mill levies in Bismarck (3 mills) and Mandan (2.5 mills) and from state and federal grants.

Congratulations are due Bis-Man Transit and its partner in development of the new service, the Metropolitan Planning Organization, for designing a product that has been a hit right out of the chute.

There were always two selling points for CAT. The first and most obvious was public need. (The constituency may be small, but you still do what you can for it, within your means.) The other was, frankly, bus envy on the part of city and economic-development officials.

Bismarck-Mandan sized cities are expected, by the kind of companies being courted by those officials, to have public transportation — almost whether they need it or not. Indeed, the MPO's consultant said Bismarck was the only one of eight "peer" cities in four Upper Midwest states to be doing without.

So, now our officials don't have to sneak around or apologize any longer about our lack of public transportation. If that puts an additional spring in their step, so much the better.

The Tribune is proud of CAT, too, and wishes it continued success. (It shows no sign of flagging — January was its second-best month.) More of us who think we are married to our cars should give it a try. (Editorial reprinted from the Feb. 16, 2005, Bismarck Tribune)



Small Urban &
Rural Transit Center

**Workshop
uses
Dreamweaver
The popular
software for
beginners**

**Software is
available for only
\$99.00**

Create Your Own Website!

Let SURTC help you get on the Web

**May 4, 9 am - 4 pm
NDSU campus, Fargo**

**\$25 Cost
meal, parking
& training**

Organization _____ Name _____

Phone _____ Email _____

***Registration online at www.surtc.org**

***Space not reserved until payment received**

Mail registration to: SURTC, P.O. Box 5074, Fargo, ND 58105

Meet the DTA Board . . .



Ron Baumgart

Executive Director, River Cities Transit
Pierre, SD
DTA President

Ron Baumgart was born and raised in Hughes County, South Dakota, where he grew up on the family farm 15 miles from Pierre, SD. He graduated from Riggs High School in Pierre, attended South Dakota School of Mines for one year and then transferred to South Dakota State University where he achieved a degree in crop science. He started farming and ranching in 1972, joining his parents in the family farm operation. Later he expanded the farm to include a confinement hog operation, large cow calf operation, custom harvesting business and crop production in three counties.

In 1989, Baumgart was elected to the Hughes County Commission. He served as a commissioner for 12 years and on the board of directors for South Dakota County Commissioners Association for nine years and as president for one year. Baumgart took a leadership role in creating the Expo building, including hockey facilities and the public safety center.

Ron, his wife Shellie and son Ryan still live on the farm, but they have retired from farming and now the land is rented to a neighbor. Baumgart missed the involvement in his community so in 2002 he applied and was hired for his current position as executive director of River Cities Transit. Baumgart is very proud of the growth and attributes it and the support of the transit agency to his ability to work with governmental entities and knowing the value of great employees.

Baumgart's hobbies include his family, camping, snowmobiling and watching Ryan race his stock car in the summer. Baumgart's annual Fourth of July celebration is probably one of his favorite events, attracting over 200 family and friends each year for fun, food, music and a large fireworks display. Ron hopes to see some of you there this year.

Carol Wright

Director, James River Transit
Jamestown, ND
DTA Vice President



Carol is the executive director of public transportation for Stutsman, Wells and Sheridan Counties which cover 6,800 square miles in central North Dakota. She is responsible for all aspects of public transportation including small urban and rural, community-to-community, paratransit, dial-a-ride and contracted services in the three counties. In addition, Wright is director for all Title III Older American Act programs including congregate meals, home delivery to urban and rural as well as outreach services for these counties.

Wright has a master's degree in human development/education/gerontology. She is a member of the Small Urban & Rural Transit Center's steering committee which helps guide the center's research projects. She is a past president of the North Dakota Service Providers Association and recently participated in a South America study trip on innovations in bus, rail and special transit sponsored by ENO Transportation Foundation. Wright serves on a number of other boards in her home community and state. In 2001 she was named Administrator of the Year by the North Dakota Dietary Manager's Association.

Barb Ballensky

Director, Vermillion Public Transit
Vermillion, SD



Barb has been director of Vermillion Public Transit (VPT) for seven years. She has worked for South East South Dakota Activity Center, (SESDAC), Inc., the parent agency of VPT for 18 years in various positions, mainly working with people with developmental disabilities. Barb initiated the coordination of transportation in Vermillion. She developed and organized the program as it operates today.

She is looking forward to helping the Board expand the services for the members. She notes, "There are some great things happening!"

Four years ago, Barb went back to school for massage therapy and also has been operating her own part-time business for the past three years.

Peggy Morris

Spink County Public Transit &
Senior Center
Redfield, SD



Peggy has been married for 35 years, has one daughter, 2 beautiful grandchildren and a golden lab. It's a small family that keeps her busy.

Peggy started working for the Senior Center & Public Transit in 1988, shortly after the old senior center had burned down. The agencies were housed in a temporary building. "The previous director and secretary quit and left the mess for me," Peggy recalls. "I came into a job I knew nothing about."

An old grocery store was renovated to become a senior center and Peggy learned the ropes to the transit world and began pushing public transit. The first transit system in the community was the senior citizen's bus. "Would you believe today some still call it the Senior Citizen's Bus?" she asks. "Some just don't like change." The Spink County Public Transit program has grown and so has Peggy's job. Ridership increased from 2,000 rides in 1988 to 24,000 in 2003. "I love my job and hope when I retire (in maybe 5 years) the program continues to grow and progress," she says.

"This is my second opportunity to serve on the DTA Board and I have seen many changes. I feel we need to keep this important association growing by always involving new members and staying focused on transit issues," Peggy says. "I am very proud to have served as the Association's past president and feel so honored to serve with such a wonderful hard working board now. I look for very good things in our future."

Jacque Senger

Transportation Coordinator, North
Central Planning Council
Devils Lake, ND



Jacque has been transportation coordinator for 18 of her 22 years with North Central Planning Council (NCPC). Prior to NCPC, she worked with Vocational Rehabilitation for 17 years. Her background is in working with handicapped individuals. "I am pleased to join the DTA Board," she says. "I believe everyone should have the right to independent living and I look forward to many new ideas and concepts to enhance the transportation projects in Region III and the State of North Dakota."

Brenda Schweitzer

Director of Transportation
Arrow Public Transit
Lemmon, SD
DTA Secretary



Brenda's start with transit began in April of 2000. Previously, she worked with Dacotah Bank for 19 years as an independent insurance agent and customer service representative.

Arrow Transit's sponsoring agency is Live, Inc., an adjustment training center facility that has a training center as well as group homes and independent residents. The need for transportation for these individuals was met through grant-funded vehicles with full time public transportation following as the need became apparent. This full-time service became known as Arrow Public Transit. Arrow Public Transit has six buses and three vans serving people in Lemmon, Bison and Faith, SD. The Transit Director position also manages the fleet of vehicles used by Live, Inc., which include another nine vehicles. The door-to-door service has a current annual trip count of a little less than 60,000 traveling about 140,000 miles per year.

Schweitzer has three sons, Garrett 21, Grant 17 and Gaven 12. She has learned the game of football and even come to enjoy it! Additionally, she has acquired an interest in baseball, basketball, fishing, hunting, cars, etc. She has been involved in the community of Lemmon as past Chamber Board member, Emergency Vehicle Operation Course (EVOC) driver for the Ambulance Association, ACS, St. Mary's Church and has just resigned as president of the city council. Brenda is in the process of moving to Brookings, SD. Recently, she was hired for the position of director of transportation, Brookings Area Transit Authority (BATA). Work at her new position began February 14, 2005.



Linda Freeman

Director, Kenmare Wheels & Meals, Inc.
Kenmare ND
DTA Accountant

Linda graduated from Norwich grade school, Granville high school and earned a two-year business degree at

UND. "I'm still working on graduating from the school of life!" she says.

She has been married to "Stan the Man" for 38 years. They are parents to four children: three girls (all have "grown up" with the youngest turning 30 this year) and one boy who is in his second year of college. They are also grandparents to two boys (ages 12 and 10) and one girl (age 2).

Freeman has worked at Wheels & Meals for 23 years, first as a part-time bookkeeper, then as bookkeeper and co-director and finally as director and bookkeeper. She still works on a part-time basis only because that's all Wheels & Meals can afford. She has worked for the U.S. Soil Conservation Service as secretary and tree planter, and was secretary to a doctor, an optometrist and a pastor before her responsibilities expanded with Kenmare Wheels and Meals.

Her hobbies are music, flying, traveling and pit woman for her favorite auto racing star and she loves meeting people through her work. Freeman says she'll have to live another 150 years to accomplish all the things she dreams of doing.

Joan Campbell

Director, South Central Adult Services Council
Valley City, ND



Joan was born in Frederic, Wis., and grew up in Minneapolis. She graduated from Mounds View High School in New Brighton, a Minneapolis suburb, and attended Minnesota School of Business. She worked for the Munsingwear Corporation for several years before moving to Fargo in 1965.

In 1969, Joan began working for the City of Fargo as the Social Services Coordinator for the Model Cities Program. She was responsible for the planning and implementation of a Title III - Older Americans Act, Senior Citizens program for the city. Part of her responsibility was to work with the Fargo Park Board for the purpose of developing park and recreational opportunities in the designated Model Cities area of Fargo.

In 1976, Joan moved to Valley City, ND, where she became the director for Barnes County Senior Citizens Council. In 1983, she became the director of a newly formed agency that provided services to the elderly in three counties. Between the years of 1985 and 1987 three additional counties were added to South Central Adult Services Council organization, for a total of six counties, located in south central North Dakota. Next year she will have served as director for Barnes County for 30 years.

In 1991, Joan was given the Civil Service Award by the Fraternal Order of Eagles-Valley City Aerie 2192.

Joan was blessed with two wonderful children, Tim and Renee. In 1979, Joan married Jim, a widower and became the stepmother to five additional children. As a result of this union there are now 14 grandchildren. The first is a boy, then came 12 girls and the tailgater is also a boy.

From the end of March until the end of October Joan is at the lake, on "her" pontoon enjoying the wonders of nature and grandchildren. People ask when she is going to retire and her standard answer is, "When it isn't fun anymore."

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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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