



TRANSIT TIDBITS

Issue 5 – February, 2012

PLANNED TRAINING SESSIONS

We have two driver training sessions planned and we hope many of you will take advantage of them. Please go to dakotatransit.org to register for either class. Please register early. You may use paypal on the web site or ask to be billed for the sessions. All meals in both sessions will be on your own. Remember to fill out your state RTAP request to attend.

1. **Brookings** Area Transit to be held at 418 Western Avenue in Brookings:

March 14—9:00 am Maltreatment Awareness
1:00 pm Defensive Driving.
March 15 & 16—8:00 am PASS Training
(Note-PASS recert will be March 16)

Room arrangements will be made by SD DOT at the Fairfield Inn. Information that is required from you is name, agency, nights you will be staying and e-mail address. This information needs to be sent to Linda Freeman. Please do not contact motel yourself.

Deadline is February 23rd.

Fees for this session: Maltreatment Awareness-\$30, Defensive Driving-\$30, PASS-\$65, PASS Recert-\$50.

2. **Bismarck.** Classes to be held at Bismarck Transit Facility Meeting Room March 22-March 24:

March 22—9:00 am PASS Training
March 23—8:00 am PASS Training including PASS recert.
March 24—8:00 am, Maltreatment Awareness
1:00 pm—Defensive Driving

Block of rooms for March 24 & 25: Comfort Inn – 701-223-1911 (6 rooms at state rates) 1030 E. Interstate Ave. Second block: Main Stay – 701-223-9119 – NE corner of 9th street and Gate (6 rooms at \$89 plus tax) You will need to make your own room reservations – Specify Dakota Transit Assn. block when you call. **Deadline-March 7th.**

Fees for this session: PASS-\$125, PASS Recert-\$50, Maltreatment Awareness-\$40, Defensive Driving-\$40.

INTERNATIONAL TRANSIT STUDIES PROGRAM

Perhaps you just received a copy of the Spring 2012 International Transit Studies Program request for nominations. Was it another piece of mail that was tossed, or have you ever reviewed this TRB Transit Cooperative Research Program, which is funded by the FTA?

Admittedly, I knew little about this program; just enough to be curious, understanding that the trips included some research, amazing opportunities and networking with other transit ‘junkies’, so to speak. Almost two years ago one of these nomination letters came across my desk. I’ve nominated others for studies, however, as I’m reading it, learning of the mission, I find that it is a mission study that **I’M** really interested in! About that same time, I received a call from another transit colleague saying she would like to nominate me for this study, “Public Transportation Systems as the Foundation for Economic Growth”.

Through the nomination and selection process, this organization reviews applicants, with a desire to find a cross section of transit professionals across the United States with an interest and/or background in the particular study. It can be very competitive, yet representation from the rural sector of transit is minimal. Twelve are selected for the team, with program support staff attending as well.

I was thrilled to be chosen, along with other transit professionals from Illinois, Colorado, Mississippi, Kansas, California (four, unusual), Georgia, Utah, and Ohio. An FTA Deputy Administrator from Atlanta joined us, as well as the Senior Program Office of the TCRP program. The trips are choreographed by Kathryn Harrington-Hughes, who does an incredible job of planning, organizing and deploying the entire trip.

Our two-week mission took us to Istanbul, Turkey, Cairo, Egypt, Johannesburg, South Africa, and finally to Cape Town, South Africa. We met with transit professionals and community developers in these communities to learn of their challenges and successes in the role transit plays in the economic development of their cities. While I represented the very rural, almost frontier sector of the United States,

I could relate to the challenges each community was experiencing. Istanbul and Cairo was working with plans to move the large masses of people out of the city center, encouraging economic development in the great city areas. Johannesburg and Cape Town were working to bring the people INTO the cities, as due to apartheid and cultural difference, the people of South Africa live in very distant, remote areas, away from the cities.

This transit mission opportunity provided an experience of a lifetime. It was intense, with little down time and did require me to write a report on my assigned related topic for the compilation of the final report. The collaboration with the other team members was invaluable; the personal and professional growth it allowed me has been wonderful. I would strongly encourage you to apply if there is a mission that would interest you. Call me with any questions you may have.

Brenda Schweitzer
Brookings Area Transit Authority/605-692-5416

2012 CONFERENCE AND ROADEO
WILL BE HELD SEPTEMBER 21 through
26 IN BROOKINGS, SD. *See you there!*

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

I look forward to working with each of you on our many new transit avenues. Please keep in mind I would love to hear from you with any concerns, suggestions or positive comments. My e-mail address is jacque.senger@hotmail.com and my phone number is 701-662-2465.

