



TRANSIT TIDBITS

Issue 19, April 2013

Happy Spring to each of you. Where I live the sun is shining daily, temperatures are in the 80's and the grass is as green as you want. Now if you believe that, well..... I hope our snow quits soon and we all get to enjoy something called "spring".

Your Board of Directors has been working diligently to get your 2013 Fall Conference up and running. Our theme this year is "**Safety is no Accident**". We have secured many excellent speakers and spoken with many vendors who are excited about attending this year's conference.

**2013 FALL CONFERENCE
BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA
RAMADA INN (FORMALLY
THE DOUBLEWOOD INN)**

**The dates for the Fall Conference are:
Rodeo September 14th and 15th
Conference September 16th, 17th and 18th
Please mark your calendars as this proves
to be an exciting conference.**

**Nancy Surprenant
SD DOT
Pierre, SD**

Although MAP-21 may have generated some more

unfavorable rules and regulations from the Federal Transit Administration, it also created some new and different programs from the Federal Highway Administration. After much thought, I decided I couldn't resist the 'fun' of these new programs and the opportunity to work with another group of Feds.

So, as of March 28th, I'll be leading up the SDDOT's new Transportation Alternatives Program and will be coordinating the State's Scenic Byway and Bicycle and Pedestrian Programs.

Of course, the down side to this new opportunity is that I will be saying goodbye to the SD Transit Program and the chance to work daily with the great team of Bruce Lindholm and Melissa Hull. You won't find two folks who work harder or are more committed to public transit in South Dakota -- or two better people to work with! Words cannot express the level of appreciation and respect that these two fine folks deserve -- thanks Bruce and Melissa for letting me part of your team!

Finally, I want to extend a special thank you to those South Dakota providers who approached each day with a great attitude -- even on the darkest of days. There is a select group of you who answer the phone with a smile every time, who continually look at the bright side, who when faced with less money and more regulations -- search for new ideas, who are part of the solution—not the problem...and when given the choice to laugh or cry – choose to laugh. You know who are...thanks for the opportunity to work beside you!

Keep in touch!



Left to Right: Matt Varelik, Homer Carlisle and Senator Tim Johnson. The individual with his back to us is FTA Administrator, Peter Rogoff.

BARB CLINE
Prairie Hills Transit
Spearfish, SD

On March 28, 2013 the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs held a field hearing on “Improving Transportation Options in Rural States and Tribal Areas like South Dakota and in Indian Country.” The intent of the hearing was to examine how the new federal surface transportation law, “Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Center Act” or “MAP-21”, improves public transportation services and transportation options in rural states like South Dakota. Those testifying included FTA Administrator Peter Rogoff and SD Transportation Secretary Darin Berquist.

Chairman Senator Tim Johnson, SD invited 7 individuals to testify at the hearing in Sioux Falls, SD. I was asked to testify to discuss the views of Prairie Hills Transit concerning MAP-21’s public transportation programs and investments. I was encouraged to cite how specific programs and policies will affect the services that Prairie Hills provides and to offer recommendations regarding the implementation of MAP-21 by FTA. They were also interested in hearing my views on

the demand for public transportation services in coming years in rural areas and the capacity of South Dakota’s transit providers to meet future demands.

In regard to the Bus and Bus Facilities Program I stated that the program is much smaller than the version that existed under SAFETEA-LU. While the formula based bus funds are appreciated, ultimately that dollar amount doesn’t begin to touch the replacement needs of PHT or other agencies in our state.

I encouraged FTA guidance with safety and security to use a common sense approach so an undue burden wouldn’t be placed on smaller agencies. In fact there is a safety and security accreditation through CTAA that would meet many of the FTA requirements. Small agencies would not be able to maintain a separate Safety and Security officer.

Non-emergency medical transportation is one of the fastest growing services we provide. We must begin to place a definable value and measurable outcomes for our critical medical needs. We must continue to be innovative and diversify programs our transit systems already work with. How do we measure and meet the need of a small community with a 40 bed nursing home filled with Medicaid residents that is 153 miles from the closest major medical center? Even more importantly how do we fund their transportation, provide a vehicle and ensure residents a quality of life?

I hope my statements were reflective of all SD and ND agencies.

**MASS TRANSIT
BETTER TRANSIT THROUGH BETTER
MANAGEMENT
FEBRUARY 2013 EDITION
www.MassTransitmag.com**

Attached is the Mass Transit website for your information. You can read the article featuring MATBUS from the *Mass Transit Magazine's* February 2013 edition. *Mass Transit Magazine* is distributed nationally and showcases transit agencies of all sizes, including the large urban systems in New York City, Los Angeles, Chicago, Orlando, etc. It is a tremendous honor to have Fargo-Moorhead showcased as the cover story. (Congratulations Julie Bommelman & Lori Van Beek).

Written by Editor Leah Harnack, the attached is an excellent article showcasing the coordination between the two cities, the profound benefits of our trade agreements and the successful marketing strategies implemented to increase our ridership and overall visibility in the community.

**BE THINKING AND
PREPARING FOR AWARDS FOR
YOUR UPCOMING
CONFERENCE. DEADLINE FOR
SUBMITTING AWARDS IS JULY
15, 2013!**

**Jessica Pickett
Palace Transit
Mitchell, SD**



Left to right:
Senator Mike Vehle
Governor Daugaard
Bob Miller, Lobbyist
For SD DTA

Senator Mike Vehle (District 20) was the prime sponsor of SB 78. The new law was suggested by the City of Mitchell transit system because of a Federal Court Case. The new law will allow transit systems to provide a physical examination for their drivers and bring South Dakota into compliance with the latest Code of Federal Regulations for Transit Systems.

Last week Governor Daugaard signed the bill into law.

At the signing, Bob Miller commented that this measure would not have passed without the leadership shown by Senator Vehle.

REGISTRATION FORMS FOR THE FALL CONFERENCE WILL BE PLACED ON THE WEBSITE SOON. BE WATCHING.



BARB CLINE
CTAA BOARD PRESIDENT

Newly elected CTAA Board President Barb Cline -- Executive Director of Prairie Hills Transit in Spearfish, South Dakota has been involved in community and public transit at the local, state and national levels for nearly 25 years. With a service area of more than 12,000 square miles, Cline's experience in providing rural transit meeting health care, employment and general public transit needs, has helped guide her efforts with the Dakota Transit Association and with CTAA. From safety certification to bus capital needs to non-emergency medical transportation, Barb feels very fortunate to be involved in many vital transit topics.

As I begin my tenure we are already preparing information that will influence the next surface transportation act.

I feel very fortunate to have been elected by the CTAA . I will be the first transit operator in the last four years. It is sobering and exciting at the same time. We have all experienced the great training programs, excellent support from the Senior Management at our DTA conferences, responsiveness from CTAA staff and overall enthusiasm.

I know I can count on all of you to provide support and guidance in my upcoming term. Our states exemplify the great work we do by working together. Leadership is not an "I" but rather a "we". Thank you for guidance as we begin this journey together.

If you would like to hear more about Barb's goals as President, please join her CTApodcast with Communications Director Scott Bogren. It can be found on the CTAA website.

Pam Kwasniewski
Watertown Area
Transit
Watertown, SD

Pam Kwasniewski started In Law Enforcement Communications under the Attorney General's Office for the State of South Dakota in July of 1983. In 1993 a move to Watertown, SD., brought 9-1-1 services to the Communications Officer career at the Law Enforcement Communications Center in Watertown, SD. A promotion to Chief Communications Officer resulted in officially resulted in leadership for the Communications Center for the City of Watertown and Codington County.

The last year eight years of the career involved working extensively with several surrounding counties developing policies, 9-1-1 protocols and being instrumental in coordinating the infrastructure with many agencies and companies to launch a successful cooperative and regional dispatch center between several entities. The cooperative effort brought about nationally recognized Medical and Fire Protocols for certification to the Communication Center.

September of 2009, was the time for eligibility for retirement after 26 years in public service. Retirement came and went and a new career in public service began as a Code Enforcement Officer for the City of Watertown. This lasted seven months with public

transportation seeking an individual with leadership for the job responsibilities of Public Transportation for Watertown in October of 2010.

The past two and half years have been spent working to expand and develop Watertown Area Transit, Inc. as a growing and lasting legacy for public transportation for the City of Watertown. Public transportation seeks to augment the cities many resources and strengths. Ridership has grown two-fold making it an invaluable asset to the community.



March, 2013 Spearfish Class Photos:



Class Attendees: Ray Kidd, Ray Reynolds, Martha Ludens, Doug Hayes, Lisa Mathis, Tom Schrepf, Rick Rand, William Ingalls, Jerry Wood, Tony Monroe, Ron Cline, Michael Kayras from Prairie Hills Transit and Garry Lane from Lemmon, SD with Arrow Public Transit. A "BIG" Thank You to Mike Kayras and Ron Cline for helping with the class & to PHT for the great facility and refreshments.

Also a big THANKS to Mike Mullaney for doing the March class in Brookings. Attendees were: Burdette Posey, Dean Doss, Gary McKeown, Jerry Raabe, Nicholas Swisher, Ryan Eggen, Virgil Anderson, Terrence McKeown, all from BATA; Terry Brewer from Siouxland Regional Transit, Vernon Frye from City of Dell Rapids, Iowa, and Todd Finn from City of Brandon.

COMING UP

We have several training sessions in the works so be sure to go to our web site: dakotatransit.org for registration and information.

GRAFTON, ND: May 9-11, 2013: Room for up to 40 participants. Defensive Driving and Maltreatment

Awareness will be on May 9 with PASS Class May 10-11 (PASS Recert May 11). We couldn't arrange a motel in Grafton but have made arrangements with the Alexander House in Park River. Please go to the DTA web site for addresses and maps.

BISMARCK, ND: June 5, 2013: PASS Recertification class only at West River Transit in Bismarck. If you have drivers who need the full PASS class, you can have them do the class on line at CTAA web site and then attend the Recertification Class in Bismarck for the hands on portion.

Linda Freeman, DTA PASS Coordinator

PAT HEJLIK
Services Director
DL/Eddy Co. Transit
Senior Meals & Services
Devils Lake, ND

The NDDOT Spring Coordination Summit was held in Bismarck April 9th. Kim, Becky,

Darcy, and Justin, the "worker bees" (as they were termed at the meeting) worked hard to get these speakers here. Linda Gehrke, FTA Regional Administrator Region, from Denver CO; Amy Conrick, Joblinks Program Manager, CTAA; Shirley Wilson, Director, public Transit Div., MDOT; Jeff Osgood, District 6 Mobility Manager, CTA of ID; Tom Coogan, VP, Business Development & Strategic Planning, RouteMatch Software, Denver CO; Rich Burns, Director of Operations, VIA Mobility Services, Boulder, CO via skype; Damon Mustaca, Assistant Director, Medical Motors, Rochester NY via skype.

Emphasis was on coordination and treating the customer with respect. All of the speakers offered good ideas. Linda Gehrke showed such enthusiasm for her job and genuine care for the people she serves. Many felt that Delta Rides logo was a great way to show commonality. With many of us on the way to

using Route Match software, coordinating efforts between agencies should become easier.

The quarterly provider meeting was excellent. A presentation by Amy Conrick on “How to write and prepare a successful grant application” was an excellent idea. She offered helpful tips on grant writing, things we can do all year to make the process easier and how to give an “elevator speech” when asking for funding.

SURTC, Jon Mielke, proposed a Workforce Development and Succession Planning study.

DTA’s mailing address is PO Box 973, Devils Lake, ND 58301. E-mail address jacque.senger@hotmail.com, phone number 701-662-2465. Please contact me with any items you would like to see in the Transit Tidbit.