



## this issue

- Award **P.2**
- Bus Drivers **P.3**
- New Faces **P.4**
- Training **P.5**

## 2018 DTA Memberships Renewed

I have received a total of 40 membership forms; 24 from North Dakota, 15 from South Dakota and 1 from Seattle, Washington.

**Our due date WAS  
February 28, 2018.**

Remember, if you need to be invoiced, send in your form and indicate your billing preference.

Jacque Senger,  
DTA Executive  
Director

## Lifetime Achievement Award

Submitted by Lindsey Richards to the  
Spearfish Chamber of Commerce, SD

The Lifetime Achievement Award is given to a business or individual that has supported Spearfish for over twenty years, continually advancing the community through dedication, vision and donations.

The official nomination that was submitted:

"As a lifelong resident of the Spearfish Community, I have seen first-hand the efforts that Barb has put into our community. Throughout the years I have seen her involved in many different organizations. I am happy to have this opportunity to recognize all of her efforts and show my appreciation and support. It is rare that you find one individual so committed to bettering the quality of our community in everything they do, but Barb excels at just that. So I am honored to be able to put her name in for the Lifetime Achievement award."

Barb Cline initiated the transportation program for seniors in Spearfish in 1989, operating just a few hours a day to get people to the local nutrition program.

**See AWARD, page 2**

## Award

Continued from Page 1

Starting out the fleet consisted of a single ten-year-old van (with no lift equipment) that transported seniors for a few hours a day in Spearfish. The program has since become a fully coordinated public transportation system covering an area more than 7 times the size of Rhode Island. And it continues to grow. Now sporting a fleet of 40 vehicles (mostly lift-equipped), the service is indispensable in more than a dozen communities in six counties in the Black Hills.



Pictured Above (L-R): Kelsey Darling, Barb Cline, Angie Black & Jenni Tucker

From a single parking space at the nutrition site, Prairie Hills Transit moved to a 10,000 square foot facility. The company then added bus facilities in Belle Fourche, Sturgis and Custer expanding their service foot print. In May, 2011, Prairie Hills Transit moved into a new 40,000 square foot facility – a regional intermodal transit facility.

Barb's passionate commitment to enhancing the lives of older citizens and helping them remain independent in their own homes has since grown to encompass riders of all ages.

Her commitment is the major reason rural transportation exists in the Northern and Southern Black Hills of western South Dakota. Besides the influence she has had in our local communities, Barb is a highly effective transit advocate on a local, state and national level. Her willingness to share her vision with and learn from others has not only changed Prairie Hills Transit, but other transit operations as well. She has gained support from city, county and state governments, and her support network spreads across the nation leading to many requests for speaking engagements at workshops and conferences.

Barb has a long list of accomplishments, awards and affiliations. She has demonstrated vision, courage, and strength of character while making significant contributions to the quality of life for transit communities. She is a respected leader who guides with determination, compassion and knowledge.

Barb recently served on Chamber Board of Directors for six years. Having had the opportunity to work with and learn from her over those years was irreplaceable. I have said more than once in public that I consider her a true mentor.

# Bus Drivers: RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT What Works?

Darrell Francis, Executive Director  
Souris Basin Transportation - Minot, ND

Speaking of Retention. I don't know what works. I have been working in the Transportation business since 1981 and one thing for sure, it will change just like the weather.

During 2017, price of oil has been on the increase, as well as the production of oil field activities and production. Therefore we are once again competing for the high pay and bright lights of the oil field employment life. Our most recent driver leaving, was Bob Dennis. Some of you may have met him at the DTA Paratransit Rodeo at Grand Forks last fall. He was the North Dakota Rodeo winner and represent us at the National Rodeo in June at Pittsburgh, PA. But he will not be able to make it.

He has worked for Souris Basin Transportation over the past 19 months, laid off due to the oil field slump in 2016. He started looking for something locally in Minot that would provide hours and benefits to support his family and at the same time enjoy doing.

After an impressive interview, testing, D & A, background check and a ride along, he accepted our offer for a job. His background in oil field employee's safety provided us with some additional experience and proved to be helpful in training and developing our present safety policies. Customer service was a plus for Bob. He enjoyed serving the community, riders of all ages and disabilities. His deep voice was his calling, and everyone recognized him. His communications skills were tested with each passenger until they got to know him and then the conversations would go on for the entire ride. He enjoyed transit because it provided a needed service for those who could not find a ride or afford one. He treated everyone with respect.

He communicated with us once the energy companies started to approach him and made offers. He waited for the right one but expressed his regrets on leaving this job. We could never offer what the oil companies can, but we appreciated his honesty and respect for all those he has served and this organization. I hope we can find more like Bob, but to retain their services will always be a challenge. Honesty and communication will always help any retention and recruitment.

Thank you Bob Dennis for your time in Transit Services and Good Luck in your new job.



## New Faces of Transit

Maureen Wegenke, Executive Director  
James River Transit - Jamestown, ND



I must say it is an honor and a privilege to serve as the new executive director at the James River Senior Citizens, Inc. and Public Transit; although I do have some big shoes to fill from the previous director, Laurie McGuire. She has done a wonderful job getting this Center to where it is today.

I promise to work diligently to keep her legacy going and continue to make the Center and Public Transit a place that follows our mission statement: “James River Senior Citizen’s dedicates itself to daily making a difference in the lives of those we serve by providing one meal, one outreach visit and one bus ride at a time.”

I began working here full time in December of 2017. I came here from South Dakota where I worked as the executive director of South Dakota Association of Towns and Townships for the past 8 years. There I dealt with many transportation laws, but they had more to do with roads rather than the vehicles. I’ll have a whole new set of laws and regulations to pick up on.

I’m hoping everyone will have patience as I wade through all the new information. Having said that, I’m excited to get going in this position. My passion has been helping people; whether it’s been volunteering for Hospice and trying to help them enjoy life and keep their dignity to the end, at camp working in the kitchen, or helping with the local soccer team, etc.

I hope to continue that passion here, helping seniors and the public through Transit and the Center, in any way I can.

## 2018 DTA Fall Conference

Jacque Senger, DTA Executive Director

Just a friendly reminder that our 2018 Conference is in the planning stages.

Our host hotel is the Hampton Inn and Suites, 605-697-5232 and our alternate hotel is the Fairfield Inn and Suites, 605-692-3500. Please go ahead and make your reservations early.

Our intent is to have our conference forms and TENTATIVE conference agenda on the web by June 1<sup>st</sup>.

## Training Update - Linda Freeman, PASS Coordinator

Phone: 701-848-6480 E-mail: lindaafreeman1@gmail.com

**Registration information is on our web site. Please go to the Dakota Transit Association web site to register drivers and for map information, etc.**

We have a PASS and PASS Recertification class set up in Groton for March 23 and 24. Classes will be held at the Groton Community Center, 109 North 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Groton, SD as follows:

PASS Class Day 1—Friday, March 23 starting at 9:00 am. Day 1—Saturday, March 24 starting at 8:00 am. Both days will end at 5:00 pm at the latest.

PASS Recertification Class—Saturday, March 24 at 8:00 am.

You may register for this class by e-mailing names of attendees for each class to Linda (see e-mail above). Please include agency address and e-mail.

We were not able to get a block of rooms at the state rate but did get 10 rooms at the GOV rate of \$93.00 plus tax at Best Western Ramkota Hotel. The block is under **DOT PASS Training**, the hotel staff indicated that attendees need to call and make reservations right away because they can't hold the rooms without a credit card. There are limited number of rooms available in Aberdeen for these dates so if attendees don't get the room reservation made at the Ramkota they may need to stay somewhere else.

Best Western Ramkota Hotel  
1400 8th Ave, NW  
Aberdeen, SD 574010  
605-229-4040

The attendees will have to pay for their own room and then submit for reimbursement.

We are still working on setting up a set of PASS, PASS Recertification, Defensive Driving and Maltreatment Awareness classes in Valley City. Please watch the web site for additional information when we finish with the arrangements.

If any of you are interested in becoming a PASS Trainer, the following information was sent to us:

Minnesota DOT has posted an RFP for a PASS Train the Trainer class which can be viewed on their web site: <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/consult/notices.html> The RFP states they will have room for 25 participants.

*Thought for the  
Month of March...*

*“The greatest pleasure in life is doing  
what people say you cannot do.”*



**Jacque Senger  
DTA Executive Director**

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**Tidbit Articles**

Please contact me with articles for your Transit Tidbit.

**Recycle**

Please share your Transit Tidbit with your staff and any interested person(s).

**Address**

Directors, please check with your bookkeepers as well as the rest of your staff  to assure they have the correct DTA mailing address.

Thanks to all!

- Jacque

[www.dakotatransit.org](http://www.dakotatransit.org)