



TRANSIT TIDBITS

Issue 14-November, 2012

GREETINGS TO ALL TRANSIT PROVIDERS AND TRANSIT SUPPORTERS

BY JACQUE SENGER, EX DIR DAKOTA TRANSIT ASSOCIATION

This issue of the Transit Tidbits will AGAIN be a bit lengthy as we have inserted the remainder of our 2012 Fall Conference articles on our speakers. I hope for those of you who attended, you enjoy refreshing your minds, and for those who could not attend, get a better feel of what you missed.

TRANSIT IMPACT FALL 2012 DTA CONFERENCE BY CHERYL JONGERIUS, DICKEY COUNTY TRANSPORTATION

One of the sessions at the DTA Conference in Brookings was called "Transit Impact in the Dakotas" and featured 2 speakers.

The first speaker was Dave Ripplinger who shared insights from his study through the Upper Great Plains Transit Institute at NDSU titled "Organizing Transit in Small Urban and Rural Communities" Two of the findings Dave shared from his study included that provision of transit across a large rural region by one provider was not found to necessarily be economically efficient. This finding does not align with conventional wisdom of consolidating smaller transit agencies into a single operating agency. One of the other findings was that across the rural transit network there was an excess capacity of rolling stock.

Dave's report, which was completed in July 2012, can be found in its' entirety at:

<http://www.ugpti.org/pubs/pdf/DP251.pdf>

The second study was shared by Bruce Lindholm of the South Dakota Department of Transportation. The full study that was completed in December 2011 is called "Costs and Benefits of Public Transit in South Dakota." One of the main points of the study was to measure the economic impact that public transit provides. The study found that for every dollar spent on public transit in the state generated \$1.90 of economic activity. We received a brochure that summarizes the study - "Public Transit in South Dakota - It's more than Transportation" This brochure and study was referenced in an earlier edition of "Transit Tidbits this year." For access to the full study or the brochure just go to:

<http://www.sddot.com/transportation/transit/forms/Default.aspx> and scroll to the bottom of the page to find both documents.



BUS BURNING BY MIKE MULLANEY BROOKINGS AREA TRANSIT ASSOCIATION

Have you ever pondered what would happen if a bus you were driving caught on fire? Would anyone come to your aid? How long would you have

to get yourself and your passengers to safety? These questions were answered at the 2012 DTA Conference held in Brookings, SD. With a little help from the Brookings Volunteer Fire Department, attendees of the conference witnessed first-hand just how quickly a nice drive could turn into a horrible nightmare.

After a refresher course in first aid and the use of fire extinguishers, the fire chief struck a match and initiated the much anticipated bus burning. Spectators quickly backed up as the flames were much hotter than they had expected. The flames had fully engulfed the bus within less than a minute and a thick black smoke rolled upward filling the air. Ten minutes later, the fire had dwindled and was extinguished.

I'm not sure the onlookers of this demonstration were prepared for just how quickly this bus was consumed in flames- I know I wasn't. There was no talking or noise except for the roar of the fire. As the fire subsided, there was suddenly an uneasy feeling surrounding us. Spectators began to chatter about what they had just witnessed. About being in their home towns, doing the jobs they enjoy daily, and what their reaction would be if a fire occurred in the bus they were driving.

What could you do all by yourself in one minute? Would the bus already be destroyed by the time help arrived? These are scary, but real questions that we hopefully will never have to encounter first-hand. We would never want a fire on our bus or harm to come to our passengers. We all strive to be good, defensive drivers who try to keep clear of accidents. But what if an accident did happen? How would you react?

YOU'RE DTA BOARD
WISHES EACH OF YOU A
HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

FRANK CONDON
RTAP WEBSITE BUILDER
BY MISTY CURN, BIS-MAN TRANSIT

Transit agency directors and employees are overwhelmed with a large variety of tasks, so marketing can easily fall by the wayside, especially

for rural providers. RTAP (Rural Transit Assistance Program) not only provides financial assistance for rural transit providers, but also has other resources, including a newly launched Website Builder that allows rural agencies to create and host free web sites.

Frank Condon, technical support specialist for the RTAP Website Builder, shared information about the program during one of the DTA Fall Conference sessions. He provided insight about the capabilities and shared examples of web sites that have been created using the program.

Several agencies in North Dakota and South Dakota have been working on getting their sites established and the new DTA web site that will be launching soon was also created using the RTAP Website Builder. The program is easier to use if the designer has some knowledge and background in web design, but tutorial videos online can help guide the novice designer through the process.

You can find more information on National RTAP resources including the Website Builder by going to www.nationalrtap.org.

2013 MEMBERSHIP DUES
REMINDER

DTA will be mailing out your 2013 Membership Dues Invoice the first part of December. Please watch your mail.

BYRAN MC COY
ND COMMUNITY ACTION
PARTNERSHIP
TRANSPORTATION COORDINATOR

Bryan McCoy is the new South Central Region Transportation Coordinator under contract with North Dakota Community Action Partnership, in

conjunction with NDDOT. He currently works with four transit agencies in an 11 county region. The position is a result of State Senate Bill 2223 which required the development of two coordination pilot projects and recommendations from the Small Urban & Rural Transit Center, including the Couth Central Region.

Originally from the Nashville, Tennessee area, he has a B.S. in Public Administration from Middle Tennessee State University and a Masters in Public Administration from the University of North Dakota. Prior to joining North Dakota Community Action Partnership, he interned at the Grand Forks Metropolitan Planning performing duties such as GIS mapping, data analysis, and document preparation. While in Grand Forks, he also worked at The Northland Rescue Mission. His primary professional interests are in community development and local government.

As the regional coordinator, his role will be to maintain an efficient public transportation system for transit providers, riders, human service agencies, and other interested parties in the area. Other responsibilities include providing technical guidance, outreach, and coalition building. Bryan will also be working on statewide transportation related issues with North Dakota Community Action Partnership and their regional agencies.

He enjoys staying physically active, live music, and reading about a variety of subjects. Bryan also considers himself a “political junkie”. Despite only living in North Dakota for only a few years, he has quickly fallen in love with the landscape and uniqueness of all the towns scattered throughout the state.

**LAMAE BERGEN
DEVILS LAKE TRANSIT/SENIOR
MEALS AND SERVICES
DEVILS LAKE, ND**

Greetings from Beulah, ND! It’s official, we are finally moved and along with that, the end of a 17+ year career in transit for me. I am looking forward to whatever lies ahead! I want to express my appreciation

for the transit friendships I’ve made throughout these years. I will cherish them always. Who knows what the future will bring, but one thing I know, there is a good chance we will meet again. Best wishes to all of you as you continue to provide for those who need and want transit services in your communities! Till we meet again, take care.

MARKETING PANEL SESSION BY RANDY HARTMAN SIOUX AREA METRO

Though Sioux Area Metro has been a member of DTA for some time now, I am new to DTA and am a new member to the Board, replacing Karen Walton. Karen had asked me if I would take her place on the Board. She said the people who belong to DTA are a good group of people and I would really enjoy being a member and working with them. I accepted her offer to replace her on the Board and the DTA Board members have welcomed me with open arms! The DTA Fall Conference is the first DTA conference I have attended and am very thankful I went. Due to scheduling conflicts, I was unable to attend all of the sessions, but I was able to attend the Marketing Panel Session. The Marketing Panel consisted of Moderator; Scott Brogren (CTAA), Misty Curn, Kristin Heismeyer and Mike Mullaney, all members of DTA.

Many ideas and suggestions were presented during the session from the members of the Marketing Panel. Some of the ideas and/or suggestions are as follows:

- When creating a web page, brochures, posters, etc. to market our transit services, we should use only one font for the printing and not use several different fonts to try to attract attention to the web page, etc. Also, when creating the web page, leave “white space” between notices, paragraphs and statements to allow the eyes to rest between readings. A “busy” or overcrowded page can discourage someone from reading it and they may possibly miss the message you are trying to get

across. Also the color of paper and the color of the font are very important. Example: white lettering on black paper or red paper is difficult to read. It was suggested to stay with the basics of black or a dark color of lettering on a lighter shade/color of paper for more easily readable material.

- To encourage children to get involved with public transit, have them “name a bus”. Children can give names to buses and possibly have the child’s poster displayed in the bus. This gets parents, grandparents, and other family members involved in public transportation and possibly new riders and supporters!
- Going above and beyond in providing exceptional customer service is a goal that I consider extremely important. A company, whether it’s private or public, relies on excellent customer service to get people to support the business or to ride the bus. ‘Word of Mouth’ is one of the best marketing tools we have! If we provide a reliable, friendly and convenient service, and go beyond what is expected to satisfy the customers, those customers will continue to ride and support public transportation and spread the good word!
- I appreciated the suggestion that we should be thankful to the people who support public transportation. If you respect and appreciate the support from members of the community you serve, City officials, government officials or anyone else who supports you and public transportation, write them a thank-you note! Let them know how thankful you really are!

There were several other suggestions and ideas mentioned during the Marketing Plan session and I could go on and on but I just wanted you to get an idea of what we discussed.

**VENDOR SHOW
BY JESSICA PICKETT
SENIOR SERVICES EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR
CITY OF MITCHELL**

This year’s DTA Conference hosted an amazing Vendor Show with many amazing deals offered to our members!

If you were looking for routing software or cameras for your buses or bus barn, there were many different options to choose from. There were also many dealers available to show off their latest and greatest options for your next new transit vehicle. Other vendor offered replacement floor treads replacement seats and seat covers, lifts, securement systems and any part or accessory you could ever think of! Other vendors included insurance options, building and construction management, security systems, energy services, promotional items as well as many educational and training resources.

The Vendors were not only generous with all of their donated door prizes and handouts, but were extremely helpful. Their knowledge and expertise in their products helped answer many of the participant’s questions. Many of the Vendors even provided follow-up after the conference to make sure all of our questions were fully answered and to see if there was anything else they can do to help us perform the best job we possibly can.

**JERRI JURGENS
REGIONAL TRANSIT COORDINATOR
SOUTHWEST REGION OF ND**

Hi, I am Jerri Jurgens. I was recently hired as a Regional Transit Coordinator for the Southwest Region of North Dakota. I was raised around transportation as my mom was a bus driver for many years and my dad was a truck driver. I guess you could say it is in my blood. I am married and have 7 children and 10 grandchildren. I started working for a taxi company in 2003 and that is how I became familiar with transit services. I look forward to meeting

everyone and the challenges that this position has to offer.

PASS TRAINING

PASS, PASS Recertification, Defensive Driving and Maltreatment Awareness Training Sessions are planned for Spearfish, SD, for December 27th, 28th, and 29th which is a Thursday, Friday, Saturday. A second group of the same classes are planned for March 27th, 28th & 29th, which is a Wednesday, Thursday, Friday. More information will be available soon on the dakotatransit.org web site.

Last weekend's 1 (ONE) day PASS Recertification class had to be postponed due to weather and it has been rescheduled for Saturday, December 8th from 8am to 5pm. Please e-mail Linda at wandm@restel.net if you want to attend and are not already scheduled for the session.

FAREWELL TO ONE OF OUR OWN

Kevin Disburg passed away on October 31, 2013. He was a loyal employee of River City Transportation for 15 plus years. Please keep Kevin's family in your thoughts.



ADVANCED TRANSIT MANAGEMENT BY BRENDA SCHWEITZER BROOKINGS AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY (BATA)

There are many training opportunities for many positions, if we're so fortunate. If you've attended any CTAA conventions, there are two-hour to two or three day training sessions available for the transit industry. Private companies also have training available for Safety, Human Resources, IT, etc., etc. DTA is very supportive of the PASS training for the drive staff we employ. The key is to better you for whatever position you hold in participating in available Training.

In the past 12 years in public transit, I've participated in whatever training I can possibly do to gain knowledge in the transit field. A few years ago Carol Wright with SURTC presented the training, "Introduction to Transit Management"; a training session that she authored designed specifically for transit management personnel. I've long said that this class is, by far, the best transit training available. Carol's personal transit manager's experience, along with her research has helped her in producing an invaluable training product. Carol took this excellent

course one step further in developing and authoring “Advanced Transit Management”.

Carol Wright and Keven Anderson of SURTC presented this advanced class to 21 participants from North Dakota and South Dakota November 6-8, 2012, in Aberdeen, SD. Extended information was provided on Human Resources, Financial Management, Performance Measures, Strategic Management, ITS, Emergency Management, Leadership. Additional resource materials were provided. The class participated through their electronic tabulation capability, sharing experiences, providing examples, etc. This interaction kept the three-day course alive and interesting.

I’ve spent this week working on many directions provided by this class, with the binder open on my desk as I write this. Having the resource materials available at our fingertips is invaluable. One day and one area at a time, I will use this excellent training to serve my project better. Thank you, SURTC, Carol and Keven for another wonderful course.

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