



TRANSIT TIDBITS

Issue 13-October, 2012

FALL CONFERENCE SYNOPSIS

Jacque Senger, Ex Dir.

Dakota Transit Association

I would like to start this Tidbit with a SPECIAL thank you to the Board of Directors, for all your hard work; the Speakers, for all your words of encouragement and information; the Vendors for all your participation and support; and to the **GENERAL MEMBERSHIP**, for you are the backbone of this organization.

I have received many thank you notes from the general membership. I am so pleased you felt the 2012 Fall Conference gave you something to take home to your projects.

Following you will have the opportunity to read many synopsis of the conference. We have 13 individuals who wrote about a session. We will put some in this edition and continue in November.

HUMAN RESOURCES CONTRACT OPTIONS FOR TRANSIT PROJECTS

By Velda Bentson

Yankton Transit

Jeni Norwood and Roxie Loftesness with Availability Employment Services was quite a welcome to this years' 2012 conference as they shared their expertise

with us regarding the employment application and interview process that we all frequently visit periodically in our everyday jobs. A job application sample and a list of interview questions (what to ask and what not to) was received. Other areas of discussion, covered the Fair Labor Standards Act, Mandatory Benefits, Social Security / Medicare and Worker's Compensation. Thanks ladies, it is always good to revisit these areas as we all struggle to remain in compliance.

2012 ROADEO BROOKINGS, SD By Darrell Francis Rodeo Marshall



On Saturday, 22nd of September, we held the Annual DTA Paratransit Rodeo at the fantastic Swiftel Center in Brookings, SD. The 24 SD drivers, 15 ND drivers, and over 30 volunteer judges provided a very successful event that was fun to watch as well as participating. The drivers attended an early morning training session on wheelchair securement followed by a written exam before the group walk through of the obstacle course, pre-trip and securement stations.

Event started about 9:15 and ended by 1:30 in the afternoon, so everyone could take advantage of the bus burning event, the simulator from Kentucky, and other driver's related training topics. After a full day of training, the awards banquet included a great meal and a fun night of audience participation with the band's help.

Winners SD: 1st Lance Kuper (River Cities Transit), 2nd Eric Petersen (River Cities Transit), 3rd Russ Christensen (Brookings Area Transit Authority), 4th Lisa Mathis (Prairie Hills Transit) and 5th Dave McFarling (River Cities Transit).



Winners: ND: 1st Den Kuehнемund (SBT), 2nd Elaine Cudmore (Walsh County Transportation), 3rd Terry Comeau and 4th Jeff Watson (Standing Rock Transportation) and 5th Gordonna Toepke (West River Transit).



I wish to thank everyone who participated and sponsored the event; we could not do it without your help. Hope to see you all next year.

Sally Damn, Pазie Ponderings By Barb Ballensky Vermillion Pubic Transit

Inspirational Send-Off

At the luncheon on our last day of the conference, we were in for a treat. The speaker, Sally Damn, spoke about a story she knew all too well—her own. Dressed in clothes from the past, Sally told a story of a woman who did not have an easy life raising her children on a South Dakota prairie farm. One goal kept her going. She was committed to her children and making their life better. She saw to it that all her children, no matter what the obstacle, would graduate from high school. That woman was Sally's mother and she taught her children many lessons, the biggest being, work hard and never give up. On the farm, it was a way of life for them.

In this day and age, there are many organizations that help folks with advocating for their rights and reaching for their dreams. When Sally grew up, she didn't have these organizations available to help her. Her only advocate was her mother, who worked hard to assure that Sally would get an education and reach her highest potential. Today, Sally continues the tradition by advocating for the people she works with at the Nursing Home and spreading her story of inspiration to many through speaking engagements, such as our luncheon. She encouraged us to work hard and never give up in our own lives and for the folks that we serve. At this year's conference there was a theme of making connections, fostering relationships with and working with our elected officials and the leaders in our communities to get support and assistance for the services we provide. We need to borrow from Sally's presentation and use the inspirational stories from our own communities to spread the message of what transit means to the people who depend on it and how it helps them to reach their highest potential.

**EFFECTIVE
COMMUNICATIONS
AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT**
By Susan Fossen
Benson County Transportation

As a first time attendee to a DTA conference I applaud the work that everyone did to make it successful. I brought my 2 drivers to attend. It was a first time for us to see the Roadeo. We attended Sunday morning's driver training given by Rick Senger on "Communication and Crisis Intervention". He gave an excellent presentation. He discussed with us the importance of non-confrontation on the verbal or physical side when dealing with an upset passenger or the general public.

What wonderful insight he gave us on the way we can use our tone of voice, facial expressions and body gestures to help calm the person we're dealing with. He showed us that there are three kinds of people in the world: Nice, Difficult and Sneaky. How we always need to have our "Professional Face" on when we go to work. Leave home at home. How to be a good listener and give feedback to make sure you have confirmation that you understand the person and the person knows you understand what he/she said. Most importantly Leave your **"SIGNATURE"** for people to remember. A very important thing to do in the Transit World. Thanks again to DTA for bringing Rick's presentation to us.

NEW NEW NEW NEW NEW NEW

**A FEW PEOPLE SENT CHECKS
AND/OR REGISTRATION FORMS TO
THE FARGO ADDRESS. PLEASE
CHANGE YOUR DTA ADDRESS TO PO
BOX 973, DEVILS LAKE, ND 58301
THANK YOU.**

**PADUCAH TRANSIT'S MOBILE
DRIVER TRAINING SIMULATOR**
By Kim Adair, ND DOT



In order to enhance and attract more drivers to the DTA Fall Conference and Roadeo NDDOT along with DTA contacted Paducah Transit Authority to lease the simulator for the event. The newly remodeled state-of-the art driver simulator was paid for with RTAP funds. Bus, cutaway and car simulator training involves the use of a simulated bus driving compartment, which provides behind the wheel, hands-on training in a virtual environment. This technology has been effective in improving safety and can be cost-effective addition to driver training programs for small operators when taking a regional approach.

The simulator was in Brookings for 2 ½ days and I believe everyone that went through the training really enjoyed it. The Roadeo judges encouraged everyone to participate in the training and the simulator trainers did an outstanding job with all our drivers and directors from South and North Dakota. I heard a lot of surprising comments about the experience after people went through it, I don't think anyone was expecting so much technology in a tractor trailer.

We at NDDOT can see the value of a great tool and hope to get it back to North Dakota sometime. By speaking with the Transit Directors that had the time to go through it I know they are looking forward to its return.

MAKING YOUR CASE
By Linda Freeman
Kenmare Wheels & Meals

Carol Wright of SURTC gave us a very informative presentation on effective local government & funding presentations. "How to get your issues heard above the others is a challenge".

Focus on educating and influencing: Choose a message, coordinate your delivery, pick the appropriate venue to make your point. Prepare—be accurate & knowledgeable. Have clear objectives and clear results and ALWAYS be honest. Never exaggerate your needs.

Use others to help send your message, i.e community groups, riders, people from centers you transport to. Build layers of support which will have a domino effect. Remember, all politics is local.

Timing: Know the decision making process and who controls the decisions. Craft your approach with the opposition in mind. Keep local media informed and use them to do public "thank you" for support you have received. Keep your supporters in the loop at all times. Creating support before your need arises will pay off in the long run.

FTA, CTAA, and ND/SD DOT
REMARKS
By Barb Cline
Prairie Hills Transit

It's not often that we have an opportunity to hear from Region 8's Jennifer Stewart, Dale Marsico, the Executive Director of Community Transportation Association of America and both Paul Benning and Bruce Lindholm with the North and South Dakota Department's of Transportation.

Jennifer brought greetings from the new Region 8 Administrator Linda Gehrke who was unable to attend. Comments regarding the current transportation bill and work with tribal grants and efforts to continue the good work were given.

Dale Marsico strongly encouraged our DTA members to share the goals of their projects so that they are available to his office when the work on the new transportation bill begins. Dale shared that the statewide book South Dakota puts together each year is a document used by Secretary Rogoff and our Congressional delegates-simple but effective. Speaking briefly about the new Legislation, MAP-21, Lindholm welcomed all the attendees to the conference. With changes in the Transportation bill Bruce stated that agencies in SD would see increases in their grant requests.

ND's Paul Benning recognized the vital service providing mobility for people living in small rural communities and transit. It allows those people to continue living in their own homes when they can't drive any longer or chose not to drive. ND is currently working with two test regions in the state to help improve coordination and provide better public transit services statewide.

Both DOT's shared that while transit is important their jobs also include other responsibilities and they rely on great staff to carry on the day to day work. The efforts of agencies providing transit services was recognized and applauded and all were encouraged to do the good work they do each and every day.

PASS TRAINING

We are continuing to provide opportunities for training. PLEASE GO TO THE DTA WEB SITE: dakotatransit.org to register for classes. Detailed information about each class can be found by clicking on the individual classes. You can also pay using paypal from the Home Page. Training fees: PASS-\$125.00, PASS Recert-\$50, Defensive Driving-\$40, Maltreatment Awareness-\$40

For your information: Both South Dakota and North Dakota DOT's will accept on-line recertification without attending a hands-on class.

Upcoming trainings scheduled:

- Dickinson, ND: PASS Recertification Class – Saturday, November 10th. Details on Web Site soon.

- Dickinson, ND: November 15-Defensive Driving and Maltreatment Awareness Classes; November 16-17-PASS Class; November 17-PASS Recert Class. Details on Web Site soon.

- Plans are being made for a session in April or May at Grafton, ND. Watch tidbits for updates.

SOUTH DAKOTA REMINDER

**The FY 2012 Ridership is due by
October 31, 2012 for all vehicles.
Please keep this in mind.**

MAILING ADDRESS

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