



Transit Tidbits

2014 DTA Transit Awards

After much discussion it was agreed upon to reinstate our slate of Transit Awards for the 2014 Conference which will be held in Sioux Falls, SD on September 22, 23 and 24, 2014.

These awards will be e-mailed to each transit office in ND/SD the last week of April. The deadline for receiving these nominations is July 18, 2014. All nomination forms are to be sent to Yankton Transit, Attention Lynette Hansen, 901 East 7th Street, Yankton, SD 57078 or e-mail yanktontransit@iw.net.

Please respect the deadline date as the Board will be having a meeting on July 29th and 30th to review the nominations. Remember, you all have someone in your organization that is deserving of recognition. Don't let your chance go by....you have the opportunity to make someone's day.



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BATA's Pot O' Gold Fundraiser

Travis Bortnem
Revenue Development Manager
Brookings Area Transit Authority
Brookings, SD

Brookings Area Transit Authority just finished up a fabulous Pot O' Gold fundraising event. This event was the dream child of Assistant Director Mike Mullaney. He brought it up last November, and was faced with much opposition. We were so used to doing the annual Radio-a-thon, that we were so unsure that his reverse raffle idea would even work here in Brookings. Besides, he wanted to give away \$5,000 in the process. Were we trying to raise funds, not give them away?

Fast forward three months, into February, and we just started



getting into the swing of raising funds for our operation. We decided that St. Paddy's Day would be a great time to let some lucky winner find his/her Pot O' Gold. We were going to do reverse raffle in lieu of our annual Radio-a-thon. A reverse raffle you ask. That was my thoughts exactly. Mike explained to us that in a reverse raffle, the first person drawn is essentially the first loser, and so on until you get to the final person drawn. He explained to us that the big draw is not just winning the grand

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prize (even though that is a big draw), but the “party” that we would have for our ticket buyers. We were starting to buy into his idea, and decided to give it a whirl. What did we have to lose? Nothing, but \$5,000 cash.

If we were going to do it, we had to all get on board. After all, we were only giving ourselves about 5-6 weeks to get our tickets sold. We had a mission to sell 100 tickets at \$100 apiece. This was going to allow us to bring in \$10,000, with a raffle prize of \$5000 to the last ticket drawn. We could net, \$5,000 in a short amount of time.

We rented the local American Legion for the evening of festivities, and got our local Papa Johns to give us a great deal on some pizzas. We had the makings of our first reverse raffle fundraiser all lined up; except selling all those tickets. We were sure to have success; it was our mindset from the beginning.



Our staff did a great job selling all the tickets, with just a couple days to spare. One thing we did do is ask that our guests pay \$10 for each additional person that came to the event to cover food/beverage costs. We also came up with a great idea to raffle off one ticket that we held back for the day of the event, as well as door prizes we had donated from local businesses.

With the raffle of the remaining ticket/door prizes and the \$10 guest charge, we brought in an additional \$720.

We had a great time at our event, and are looking forward to doing it again. As long as our little leprechaun has it in him for another go round...I'm sure he does. We had a very successful event; we raised just over \$5,200 after expenses. It proved to be less stressful and time consuming than our previous Radio-a-thons, and in the end we had a great evening to enjoy with our co-workers and friends. We have plans of perhaps increasing ticket sales and offering 2-3 winners next year. Only time will tell what we will come up with next.



CTAA Testifies Before Senate Banking Committee

Barb Cline
Director, Prairie Hills Transit
Spearfish, SD

At the request of South Dakota Senator Tim Johnson, Chairman of the Senate Banking Committee I had an opportunity on March 6, 2014 to testify before the Senate Banking Committee. I was representing both the Community Transportation Association of America as its Board President and prairie Hills Transit as its Executive Director.

Scott Bogren and Rich Sampson of the CTAA staff were invaluable in their help in preparing the written and verbal testimony. I also want to thank all of you for your help in sending data and some great rider stories.

Testifying with me were Michael Melaniphy; APTA and Larry Handley; Amalgamated Transit Union. I was able to bring the perspective of both CTAA and systems that are rural and small urban to the Committee.

Primarily we want Congress to reauthorize surface transportation legislation-on-time and with the resources we all rely on. Passengers will be the hardest hit if there is no new legislation. Late arrivals to jobs, missed healthcare appointments, and a myriad of other problems. The basic independence of many rural residents will be threatened.

We don't feel that this is just a need for increased capital dollars but also the need for increased operating dollars. This is a need for federal investment paired with support from state, county and local governments as well as private-sector partnerships.

The question was asked about how the loss of Medicaid would affect our own system and others. When we rely heavily on both FTA funding and Medicaid reimbursement it would be devastating for PHT and others just like us.

When the ATU responded to a question from Senator Warren he indicated that many of his drivers were making \$12.00 per hour I was able to respond that many of the nations drivers (including some in our region) are making minimum wage and have not received salary increases in several years.

Just a few FYI's you might find interesting: 24 hours in advance:

The written statement was submitted in electronic format and typed double spaced.

Two Original copies of the statement were included for the printers.

73 copies for the use of Committee members and staff were delivered.

My verbal statement was 5 minutes (the timer ticks down while you speak).

Each Senator had 5 minutes to ask questions although most spoke longer before they asked the questions.

In conclusion you will find the written information CTAA prepared in advance. This was a year long process and accumulated information from the State Delegate meeting in Albuquerque as well as meetings with 15 states including ours. At our CTAA Board meeting the last week we were also given the opportunity to make the document stronger. Please go to the CTAA website and review CTAA's MAP-21 Reauthorization & Surface Transportation Policy.

Grand Forks Herald

Brandi Jewett

Grand Forks Herald

March 17, 2014

Growing up in Sacramento, California, Bobby Gaultney said he was accustomed to taking a bus. Now a graduate student at UND, he takes the bus to the university most days while his wife drives the family car to work.

"My experience is that people my age are buying fewer cars and are more comfortable with mass transit," said the 26 year old. "There are times when the bus is a little late, and it gets a little chilly waiting, but the bus system in this town is easy to learn." One of just four riders on a route during the noon hour Saturday, he expressed "disappointment" that more aren't using the service here. "If you want to be a city, you need to have an active and functional bus service."

Actually, more people in Grand Forks and East Grand Forks are taking the bus over-all, part of a national trend that some say is connected to the growing interest in public transportation among young people, especially millennials like Gaultney.

Cities Area Transit, which serves the two cities, saw ridership increase by more than 50 percent from 2006 to 2013, the span of available records provide to the Herald.

During that time, trips on all types of public transportation in the United States increased by 6 percent, according to the American Public Transportation Association, or APTA.

To build on its momentum, CAT is investing in technology such as smartphone apps and credit card readers to make riding the bus easier, especially for those new to the service.

College Riders

Local ridership growth was fueled in part by a larger number of college students making trips through the bus system. Students represent around 15 percent of the total rider population but have seen the largest increase in riders since CAT started tracking four years ago.

Between 2010 and 2012, there was a 19 percent increase in UND student ridership, a gain of about 8,200 trips.

"Students coming from larger cities are used to taking public transportation and having it available to them," CAT Superintend Dale Bergman.

Numbers for Northland Community and Technical College remained steady at just under 7,000 in 2010 and 2012 but did spike to more than 9,000 trips in 2011.

Changes to class locations and consolidation between the college's East Grand Forks, and Thief River Falls campuses is Bergman's best guess for the drop back to less than 7,000 trips.

In total, local residents took more than 367,000 trips on CAT buses in 2013 compared to 242,500 trips in 2006 – through last year's total ridership was down by about 1 percent from 2012.

Millennial Push

National reports indicated that millennials – people born between the early 1980s and the early 2000s---overall are more open to non-drivable modes of transportation and are driving less than their older peers.

It's through these younger riders could be behind a jump in public transportation use in the United States, which grew 19 percent from 1990 to 2013, according to APTA. Last year saw the highest use of public transportation use since 1956 with 10.7 billion trips, the organization announced this past week.

Millennials, because they are not as enamored with driving, are leading the trend, APTA said. For them, driving is just one of many options and they'll pick the best one depending on their destination. A 2013 APTA survey of 1,000 millennials in six major cities found that many millennials say convenience and cost drive their decisions. Many also said they just enjoy the exercise.

Gaultney, for example, said he often rides his bicycle to UND in the summer in lieu of taking the bus. But while millennials must be making the biggest push,

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they're not the only ones using public transit. Their older peers continue to do so and for many of the same reasons. Sheila Dalgliesh, 37, an art teacher with the Grand Forks School District, said Saturday that she uses the bus "just about every day for work, especially in the winter."

She also uses the bus to take her downtown to shop and to do volunteer work because of its convenience. "It picks me up close to my home and drops me off at work pretty much at the front door."

That's especially convenient for her trips downtown which "has a parking issue". Saving money is another reason. The \$37 monthly pass is a lot less than what she'd pay for gas, she said.

"There's a stigma that bus riders are sketchy, scary or handicapped," she said. "Some people have a preconceived notion that only weird people ride the bus. That's not true at all."

Attracting Riders

Trying the latest technology to the bus system is one way Cities Area Transit is hoping to attract more riders.

The 2013 APTA survey also found that a majority want more reliable transit systems and more real-time updates from those systems.

The results align with what Bergman has heard from local bus riders.

"They want public transportation to be easy and convenient," he said. "And it should be".

A mobile app detailing CAT bus schedules has been running since this past summer. In the future, the agency wants riders to be able to see real-time updates of where the buses are on the road.

The way people can buy a bus pass also was upgraded. Instead of accepting only cash or checks for bus passes, the agency's downtown transit center added a debit and credit card reader recently.

"We need to get into the 21st century," Bergman said.

Sales for tickets purchased with plastic started at \$400 the first month but have since jumped to around \$1,800 per month. Bergman adds the next step is getting a bus pass vending machine and smaller smart passes that can be clipped to items such as key chains.

More accessible bus information both on the Internet and in print has contributed to increased bus users knowledge and comfort, which could have increased ridership according to Bergman.

"There's been that paranoid that you'll get dumped off somewhere and don't know where to go or when the next bus is coming," he said.

Also in its fledgling state is the agency's new designated-stop system, which rolled out late last year with the goal of reducing late buses. City buses no longer stop on any safe corner along a route to pick up passengers.

With this change and the installation of new bus stop signs along each route, Bergman said he hopes to see ridership continue to grow.



Training Sessions

Linda Freeman

We have two training classes scheduled and we're FAIRLY certain the snow will be gone by then!!

June 23-25, 2014

Session in Bismarck, ND at West River Transit

Registration deadline is June 6 for rooms and June 13 for classes.

PASS – June 23 & 24 from 8:00am to 5:00pm both days

PASS Recertification – June 24 from 8:00am to 5:00pm

Maltreatment Awareness – June 25 from 8:00am to noon

Defensive Driving – June 25 from 1:00pm to 5:00pm

A block of rooms has been set up at the Comfort Inn in Bismarck under Dakota Transit Association. You'll need to make your own room reservations by calling 701-223-1911 and specify this block when you call. We have several registered for this class already so go to the DTA website soon and make your registrations.

June 30-July 1, 2014

Session in Mitchell, SD at the James Valley Community Center

Registration deadline for both rooms and classes is June 23.

PASS – June 30 & July 1 from 9:00am to 5:00pm

PASS Recertification – July 1 from 8:00am to 5:00pm

A block of rooms for June 29 & 30 has been set up by SD DOT at the Quality Inn in Mitchell and will be direct billed to SD DOT. You MUST call 1-605-996-1333 and make your own reservations by specifying this block. PLEASE NOTE: ***This session is limited to 20 participants so please make your reservations early. I will let you know when class is full.***

Just for clarification, when you go to the training page on the web site you will see the event dates on the right hand side of the page. If you click on the date of the session, you will get to a page that lists all the details with clickable maps for you to give to your drivers.

Go Forth & Transport!!

CTAA Expo

June 8-14, 2014

St. Paul, Minnesota

Host Hotel - Crowne Plaza Hotel

St. Paul Riverfront

Please mark this date on your calendar. It would be nice to have a large turnout at CTAA since St. Paul is right in our backyard.

DTA Annual Conference

Sioux Falls, SD

Roadeo - September 20 and 21

Conference - September 22, 23 and 24



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Thanks to all!

- Jacque