



TRANSIT TIDBITS
Issue 96 December 2019

**THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH OF
DECEMBER 2019**

*Think Positive and Positive things
will happen.*

MERRY CHRISTMAS



**Linda Freeman, Training
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At present, the DTA Board is working on making changes to the training to help meet the needs of

transit providers in both states, so please watch the web site and the tidbit for updates.

I appreciate those of you who let me know that you have drivers needing training. Please be patient with us while we make the changes that will hopefully make it easier to get your drivers trained. Also, please let me know if you wish to host a training.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all!

***South Dakota Transit Providers
Have the Christmas Spirit!
Brenda Schweitzer/BATA
Brookings, SD***

The South Dakota Capitol building will again be hosting "Christmas at the Capitol". This event started in 1980. It has grown from just a few trees in the rotunda to over 90 decorated fir trees scattered throughout the building. The trees are open to the public from 8 am to 10 pm through Christmas Day. The committee plans a month-long event full of entertainment, decorations, volunteer opportunities and more. "Hometown Christmas" is the theme for 2019.

Last year, while in Pierre for DOT meetings, a few of us had the chance to see this magical display. Of course, always thinking of ways to promote transit, I requested more information, thinking this would be a great opportunity to support the event and continue to bring awareness of public transportation in our state. The other transit projects were very encouraged as well.

The greatest challenge was taking the time to make the plan and communicate it out. We're all busy. Like most things, the rewards are many after you step back and see what we can do together. It truly makes the investment of time worthwhile.

Creatively, each transit program decorated their own snow globe and we also had our individual communities represented on other ornaments. Using the public transit theme of blue that's been known was the inspiration for our tree color.

On a beautiful (we were fortunate) Sunday morning, three projects were represented for decorating, Brookings Area Transit (Brenda and decorating 'consultant' Dee Elwood, Rochester), Prairie Hills Transit (Barb & Lisa), and Community Transit Watertown/Sisseton (Deb & Diane). River Cities Transit is assisting with transporting our decorations, as well as the tear down at the end of the event. I hope your transits have an opportunity to send tours, or perhaps you have a chance to go personally. You cannot leave without the spirit of Christmas in your heart.

The South Dakota Transit Providers wish each of you a very blessed Christmas.

West River Transit and their Communities Carol Anderson, Director Bismarck, ND

West River Transit and the communities we serve have worked together to coordinate transportation for hundreds of individuals and their transit needs. But along with the everyday schedules and the rider needs, West River Transit is involved with many other community transportation events. Here is just several transit projects West River Transit embraces in their communities!!

Wounded Warriors Hunting Project



WRT drivers from Garrison, ND volunteer their time to assist in the transporting of Wounded Warrior veterans to the area for a couple days of hunting, for several years. They have a wonderful time in ND and appreciate the transportation options that are available to them while they are here. The photo is of several wounded warriors, organizer, Garrison's Mayor and WRT driver!

*The veterans where picked up from the Minot airport and transported for all their hunting needs along with a welcome escort by 2 McLean County Sheriff's Deputies through main street and past the Veteran's Memorial, then off to Hunter's Grill for a wonderful dinner. We provided additional transportation for 20-25 individuals for the local banquet/dance, where Senator Kevin Cramer presented, and all the attendees received pheasant quilts!
It was a moving experience for me!!!
Connie B. (WRT Driver)*

Dickens Village Festival

West River Transit drivers have participated in the many Dickens Village parades for over the past 25 years. Each year there is a total of 7 parades, for three weekends. The drivers decorate the bus interior and exterior, invite locals to ride along in the bus to greet the many excited parade viewers along the streets of Garrison. It's a magical festival, and if you haven't been to the Garrison Dickens Village Festival you are missing wonderful days of plays, live entertainment, parades, carriage rides, house tours, craft & food vendors, plus much more, along with the Queen Elizabeth, the English double-decker bus, all in traditional attire!!



Christmas Light Tours in Bismarck & Mandan



Each year West River Transit schedule several dates for the public to reserve their seat on WRT buses to travel thru the streets of Bismarck & Mandan viewing the beautiful Christmas lights on homes and businesses. This has become very popular with all ages, it's an evening of fun, with Christmas music on the bus, stopping for that amazing light display to get a photo or selfie, and lots of happy laughter and smiles!!!

Leroy Sleeping Bear Rosebud Sioux Tribe Transportation Director for 25 years Submitted by Tammy Wilcox

Leroy Sleeping Bear passed away on November 12, 2019. He worked with the Rosebud Sioux Tribe Transportation since 1984 being promoted to Director in 1994 position he held for 25 years up to his passing.

He was a great asset to the Rosebud Sioux Tribe in his vision of expanding the project. He was active in the first new build of the project that was completed in 2006. He had envisioned expanding the project again with hopes of that being complete before his retirement, unfortunately that did not get to happen.

His passing was sudden and very deeply felt among the transportation staff. He was always a great person filled with jokes and able to lighten up moral.

We will all miss him.

FTA GRANT

Lisa Donner

South Dakota Department of Transportation
Pierre, SD

Congratulations to the leadership at Community/Watertown Transit! They drafted a very good grant application that led to the award of funding to create a call and dispatch center that centralizes the communication activities of five transit agencies under one umbrella in Watertown. The remodeled facility and enhanced technology will increase communication, safety and reliability for Community/Watertown Transit and partner agencies in north eastern South Dakota.

Holiday Lights Parade Matthew Peterson, Assistant Transit Director, Fargo, ND



Annually MATBUS Staff and their families participated in the Holiday Lights Parade which travels through downtown Fargo, North Dakota and Moorhead, Minnesota.

Each year the staff comes up with a new design for how to decorate a 35-foot vehicle. This year they choose to wrap it as a present and include a few other fun details. Every inch of the bus was wrapped with holiday wrapping paper and all windows were outlined with Christmas lights. The front bike rack

was setup as a cozy fireplace with a working holiday train circling a stack of presents. Finally, the front roof hatch was converted into a chimney with Santa's legs sticking out.

Our staff has a blast every year coming up with new fun ideas for the Holiday Lights parade. We can't wait to see what they come up with next year!

**Bis-Man Transit Stuff the Bus event
Roy Rickert, Executive Director
Bis-Man Transit, Bismarck, ND**

The Bis-Man Transit Board sponsored it's second Stuff the Bus event which took place December 2nd - 7th this year. This event is used to help support Carrie's Kids which is a local volunteer ministry that works to provide meals and clothing for children and teens in need within our community. They also provide outreach, clubs, groups, events and programs to promote dignity, build social skills, nurture potential, and instill self-sufficiency to qualified children/teens. Services are available to those who enjoy a safe learning environment, are at risk, or even homeless in the Bismarck/Mandan area of North Dakota.

The first event took place during the 2018 holiday season and we were able to fill a 30' fixed route bus from floor to ceiling almost all the way up to the front entry. Items collected include but are not limited to:

- Food and snacks
- Water
- School Supplies
- Shoes and Clothing
- Disposable dishes/paper products
- Cleaning supplies
- Cash/Gift Card for fresh food

Not only does this event provide a great deal of resources for Carrie's Kids, we also receive a large amount of free publicity which has included television interviews and half page spotlights in the newspaper.