



TRANSIT TIDBITS

Issue 107

November 2020

Ask The Experts

Brian Horinka, Minot City Transit - Minot, ND

Closing out the sessions portion of our conference this year we brought together a panel of national and local transit experts so that we could keep up with the ever changing world of transit that we find ourselves in today. Cindy Terwilliger, Scott Bogren, Sallie Doty, and Becky Hanson joined us in this new “virtual world” to give us all the latest and greatest news and answer our questions.

As to be expected a lot of the discussion revolved around funding and operating in our current COVID-19 atmosphere. Although things started out a little slow I think that the information provided gave us great insight in what is currently happening and what to expect in the near future.

During this session we also recognized Barb Cline from Spearfish, South Dakota for her induction into the South Dakota Transportation Hall of Fame, and congratulated Randy Hartman from Sioux Falls, South Dakota on his retirement after over three decades of service to the transit industry.

Inside this issue

Training	2
Trafficking.....	3
Board.....	5
Communication.....	6

Be sure to check out next month’s Tidbit for the last few articles covering the DTA Conference!

Training Update

Linda Freeman (701) 848-6480

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Devils Lake – Devils Lake has requested a class there. The plan is to wait until COVID in ND settles down some before we schedule this class.

Please go to the DTA website to make reservations for the following classes:

Aberdeen – Monday, December 28 through Tuesday, December 29, 2020 with full PASS and PASS Recertification offered.

PASS—December 28 & 29 from 9am to 5pm

PASS Recertification—December 29 from 9am to 5pm

A block of rooms for the nights of December 27 & 28 has been set up at the Towne Place Suites by Marriott, 402 Norwood St. South in Aberdeen. You will need to call make your reservations under the DTA PASS block. Attendees will need to pay for your rooms and request reimbursement later. The number is 605-725-3500. The block will be held until November 27th.

WATERTOWN – Monday, January 18, 2021 and Tuesday, January 19, 2021 with full PASS and PASS Recertification offered.

PASS—January 18 & 19 from 9am to 5pm

PASS Recertification—January 19 from 9am to 5pm

Classes will be held at the Ramkota Convention Center in Watertown.

We are working on setting up a block of rooms at the Ramkota so watch the web for more information on the block.

Other classes besides those scheduled and proposed can be arranged by contacting Linda by phone or e-mail.

Keep up the great work you all do so well!

Human Trafficking

Presented by

Kristen Joyner, President - KJ Backpack, LLC

Kathy Holman - Sisseton, SD

Kristin Joyner is Founder and President of KJ Backpack, LLC. Her expertise includes transit association work as Executive Director for the South West Transit Association and administrative public transportation experience for Rock Region Metro, Little Rock, Arkansas. Ms. Joyner is a member of the U.S. Secretary of Transportation's Advisory Council on Human Trafficking.

Human trafficking—or modern-day slavery—is a global problem in which people are illegally bought and sold for forced labor or commercial sex.

Through the use of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception or the abuse of power, traffickers' prey upon their victims' vulnerabilities—such as their youth, condition of poverty, migration status or dreams of love and opportunity—while profiting off of their exploitation. There are an estimated 40 million victims of human trafficking globally, including thousands of children and adults in the United States and Canada. Human trafficking has been reported in all 50 states and 10 provinces in Canada.

These sobering facts and others were presented in two parts by Kristen Joyner to the membership at the 2020 Dakota Transit Association's Annual Fall Conference in September in Watertown. She made her presentation to drivers as a part of the Bus Rodeo on Saturday and again on Monday for conference attendees. Her segments provided eye-opening information for those in attendance.

"You hear about this and you know its an issue, but her presentation really opened my eyes to the problem, especially since it's in our backyard," said driver Sheila Syverson (Community Transit of Watertown/Sisseton, Inc) of Peever, SD. "Being located along I-29 and between Fargo, Sioux Falls and Minneapolis it makes sense. This will make me more aware of my surroundings and what I am seeing."

"Human trafficking is certainly nothing new, but through awareness and new developing programs, we are better equipped to battle the issue," said Joyner. You in the Dakotas are certainly in rural settings, but this is a prime target for traffickers and their work."

Transit employees—including bus drivers, maintenance staff, ticket counter personnel, janitorial staff, security guards, etc.—are uniquely positioned to observe traffickers lurking around bus stations or transit centers as they look for potential victims. They may notice red flags among passengers which suggest they are under the control of a trafficker or pimp. In other situations, transit employees may find themselves approached by victims who view the transit center or bus as a safe place to seek help.

See TRAFFICKING, page 4

TRAFFICKING

Continued from Page 3

Transit employees should never discount how meaningful small acts of kindness can be for victims. As traffickers systematically break down their victims, an interaction with a caring person can make an extraordinary difference.

Transit agencies can prepare for possible encounters with human trafficking by training their staff, establishing internal reporting policies, connecting with their local anti-human trafficking task force, or allocating some of their advertising space to victim-centered awareness campaigns.

There are *Red Flags* transit providers need to be aware of. Look for signs of control, vulnerability, recruitment, or any indication that a person is involved in commercial sex.

Examples include:

- Not being allowed to speak for themselves or make eye contact
- Tickets, money, ID, or phone controlled by another person
- Offers to exchange sex for anything of value
- Minors traveling without adult supervision
- People who seem confused, panicked, or afraid
- Bruising, branding, or other physical trauma
- Individuals in the transit center approaching people who look vulnerable
- Having a pimp or needing to make a quota

Human trafficking affects an estimated 24.9 million men, women and children globally encompassing all ages, races, backgrounds and citizenship. USDOT notes that some are trafficked within their own communities on various forms of transportation, while others are transported to new locations.

Traffickers can be anyone— adults or children, male or female— some are strangers, while others are peers, friends, or romantic partners. Traffickers may meet victims in person or online. Sometimes family members traffic their own relatives for money or drugs. In one case, a woman sold youth under her care for sex to construction workers in exchange for gas, food, and beer.

“Some of her information, especially about who can actually be active in trafficking gave me an eerie feeling,” said Deb Stuchl of CTWSI. “It’s horrible to think family members could be involved, but why not.”

Traffickers work hard to stop victims from leaving. They may use physical force (rape, kidnapping, violence) or threaten to hurt the victim or someone the victim cares about. Traffickers may control through blackmail, such as threatening to share personal information or explicit photos with the victim’s family or friends.

See TRAFFICKING, page 5



Pictured (L-R): Kathy Holman (Community Transit of Watertown-Sisseton), Kerrie Mikkelsen (Cavalier County Transit), Randy Hartman (Sioux Area Metro), Jacque Senger (DTA Executive Director), Brian Horinka (Minot City Transit), Tom Wanttie (Aberdeen Ride Line), Terry Hoffman (Community Transit of Watertown-Sisseton)

Thank you to the 2019-2020 Dakota Transit Association board members and staff for all your leadership and hard work this past year. We greatly appreciate your service to the DTA organization.

TRAFFICKING

Continued from Page 4

Traffickers take time to build trust and an emotional connection. They may manipulate victims to believe that they are the only person who loves them. Traffickers separate victims from their friends and family, making them depend on the trafficker for their basic needs (love, money, or a place to stay).

“You as transit workers are in position to make a difference by being alert to what you see while you are doing your work,” said Joyner. “If you see something, say something.”

For additional information or if you have questions, please contact
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Communication Strategies for Managers

Presented by

Martha Bryan - Bryan & Bryan Associates

Terry Hoffman - Watertown, SD

Communication skills, whether we're discussing oral or written, should be considered extremely important by those of us who are charged with leading transit projects. I have always considered myself a solid communicator, especially when expressing that information verbally. After attending Martha Bryan's seminar on communication strategies for managers, my humble meter took a dive on this topic.

Bryan, a management consultant, author, and seminar leader, spoke to the members of the Dakota Transit Association at the Annual Fall Conference in Watertown in September. The energetic college and high school educator stressed the importance of quality communication skills for those who are involved in management. "Confident communicators are credible, intelligent, informative, knows the facts, is in control, displays passion and has an understanding of what turns and audience off and on," said Bryan. "It also helps to understand what interests' people."

Communicating your message to your employees may require a bit of listening on our part as well. Another topic I found myself questioning my abilities. As I checked off the areas, I felt I was excelling at, it became apparent there were more items unchecked.

"How do you feel when people listen to you speak, how do you feel when they don't listen," said Bryan. "Angry, small, insignificant are a few feelings I get when people don't listen. Energized, stimulated and important are my feelings when I have their attention." Prepare yourself to listen, fight off distractions and create a positive listening environment were among the active listening guidelines listed by Bryan. Maintaining eye contact, using positive body language and remain open and neutral were also on her list of listening skills. "When interacting with employees, use their first name repeatedly during and exchange," said Bryan. "Be sure to let them deliver the message they want, even if it's blowing off steam. Offer sympathy for their situation."

Emotional intelligence and emotional maturity were two areas Bryan defined as vital. Emotional experience being the ability to recognize and manage your own emotions to motivate oneself and restrain impulses. Emotional maturity is the ability to use your emotions in a positive and constructive way in relationships with others. "Emotional intelligence helps you relate well and cooperate with others in the workplace," said Bryan. "You are better equipped to understand others' emotions and motives."

Other advantages include the ability to resolve conflict easier, enhances the ability to achieve your goals through cooperation with others and allows you use your emotions in a more creative way. "If you want communication success, just be caring, confident, considerate, creative, consistent, professional and positive," said Bryan.

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

Thought for the month of November 2020

***Failure we can do alone.
Success always takes help.***



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