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TRANSIT TIDBITS

Issue 124

May 2022

**THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH OF
MAY 2022**

**“Self-belief and hard work will always
earn success”**

TRAINING UPDATE

Contact Information

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Thanks to Rod for doing a class in Valley City. We appreciate all the trainers do for DTA.

We have a set of classes set for June 7th through the 9th at Aberdeen Ride Line 205 N. 4th Street in Aberdeen, SD as follows:

First set of classes:

PASS: June 7—9am start and June 8—8am start.

PASS Recertification: June 8—8am start

Defensive Driving: June 8, 1pm start

Second set of classes:

PASS Recertification: June 9—8am start

Defensive Driving: June 9—1p start

TO REGISTER: Please email Linda Freeman at her email address with names of those attending and which classes each will be coming to. Deadline for registration is extended to May 20th.

Have a good one!

**Dakota Transit Association
Conference**

Jacque Senger, Executive

The Dakota Transit Board of Directors is actively working on the 2022 DTA Conference. The date of the conference is September 17, 2022, through September 20, 2022. We are at the Best Western Ramkota Hotel & Convention Center, 1400 8th Avenue NW, Aberdeen, SD. Phone number is 605-229-4040. When making reservations, please refer to the Dakota Transit Association Conference rate. The price is \$96.00 plus tax, total amount \$106.64 and cutoff date for all reservations is August 15, 2022.

Our TENTATIVE agenda will be placed on the website along with the conference registration forms very shortly. Your Board of Director's are very pleased with the line-up.

Remember – get your 2022 DTA Award Nominations in the sooner the better.....

One Man's Thoughts on CTAA In Louisville, KY

Terry Hoffman, Co-Director
Community Transit of Watertown-Sisseton
Inc.

Enjoying the long but satisfying trip home to South Dakota from Louisville, KY on Sunday, I took the time to reflect on the week that was the 2022 CTAA Conference and Roadeo.

The Louisville conference was my fifth and will certainly be remembered for many things. Outstanding educational pieces, a very well organized and informative trade show, great food, entertainment, a first-class hotel and staff and the friendly and accommodating people of Louisville. All played significant factors in making this one of my favorite conferences.

Among my many negative traits is the ability to form opinions without possessing the information necessary to make those judgements. Preparing for the trip to the bluegrass state, I asked myself on more than one occasion – do you really want to spend a week in Kentucky? What ever will I do for fun there? Fortunately, I talked myself into keeping my plans intact.

Having attended conferences now in Portland, Detroit Pittsburgh, Palm Springs and Louisville. I would have to say Pittsburgh and Palm Springs have been my favorite events. Shuffling through my thoughts and memories of the week, Louisville has fallen in behind Pittsburgh as my new number two favorite event. Pretty lofty setting considering the low expectations I had prior to the event.

Louisville is a beautiful city with the southern hospitality we often hear so much about always on display. No matter the event or the venue, the people of the city were cordial, happy to see you and very proud to show off their home. The Omni – the host hotel was elegant, but a place where I certainly felt at home. I was always greeted with a smile and a hello, good morning or good night by hosts, bartenders, valets, maids and maintenance staff alike.

The Kentucky International Convention Center staff was friendly, attentive and very patient with the visitor from South Dakota who took the same wrong turn three days running while searching for the correct workshop. Many of the conference goers concentrated their activities within walking distance of the Omni and the KICC and I don't believe many were disappointed. The restaurants, museums, gift shops, bars and nightclubs were always quick to welcome the throng of people walking through their doors.

Being the sports-geek I am, my favorite stop was the legendary Louisville Slugger Museum, Factory and Gift Store. I made three trips to the history laden building, spending time shopping, learning more about the history of the game I hold dear to my heart and finally participating in the guided tour of

the factory that produces the vast majority of bats for Major League Baseball.

The CTAA board and constructed a solid package of educational pieces for the week ranging from discussions involving policy building exercises to procurement to alternative fuels and Low and No Emission vehicles, challenges facing providers now and in the future.

CTAA Executive Director Scott Bogren and Caryn Souza provided their always enlightening information on the state of the association and the changes we have seen and what the future holds for public transportation. The challenges of providing transportation will always be significant.

The trade show took on even more importance to those of us from South Dakota as providers are seeking to improve and better coordinate communications with one another. The subject of alternative fuels and low and no emission vehicles is at a peak in our state and Dakota Transit Association reps attending the conference along with members of the South Dakota Department of Transportation staff attended numerous demonstrations with vendors offering solutions to both topics.

The discussion on holding the Bus Roadeo after the conference as opposed to the traditional pre-conference schedule was a hot-topic of debate. From my own talks with drivers and fellow administrators, I don't feel there was a clear-cut winner. Spending the week with the staff and drivers from River Cities Public Transit, I know the drivers were able to take advantage of the conference, attending a wide variety of discussions and workshops. They felt having the Roadeo at

the end afforded them an opportunity they may not have otherwise had.

My experience at the Roadeo on the final day of the week-long event was certainly positive. I've been a judge at many DTA Conference Roadeo's, but this was my first national event and I enjoyed it from beginning to end. The DTA was well represented by the drivers from Pierre and a contingent from the Standing Rock Reservation. Although none placed in the top five, the experience and the feelings of accomplishment were shared by all.

As I was careening up Interstate 29 Sunday night, anticipating my homecoming with family after 15 hours on the road, my thoughts shifted briefly to the 2023 event to be held in Oklahoma City. Do I really want to spend a week in Oklahoma, away from friends and family and the comforts of home? I'll let you know how that plays out next year.



SD Contingent at Churchill Downs



Kentucky International Convention Center



Caryn Souza speaks on opening day

2022 CTAA EXPO

Karrie Mikkelsen

Cavalier County Transit

Cavalier County Senior Meals & Services

**CONGRATULATIONS TO BRYCE
LAMBERT!**

Bryce Lambert from River Cities Public
Transit was the winner of the CTAA **Rodeo**

Driver Spirit Award.

Hats off to Bryce!



Bryce Lambert – Pierre, SD, poses with Jackie Robinson at Louisville Slugger Museum



DTA Drivers

Terry Hoffman, Co-Director
Community Transit of Watertown-Sisseton

Fear of the unknown, anxiety brought on by long waiting periods, self-confidence and the satisfaction of knowing they belong and can compete at a national level.

This mixed bag of emotions was shared by River Cities Public Transit employees Bryce Lambert and Wambli Meeter before during and following the conclusion of the 2022 Community Transportation Association of America's bus roadeo. The duo participated in the Body on Chassis portion of the competition on Saturday, May 14 in Louisville, KY. Sixty-five men and women comprised the field competing in rider securement, pre-trip inspection and driving a difficult obstacle course. The Dakota Transit Association was well represented at the competition. In addition to the duo from RCPT, a handful of drivers from Standing Rock Transit displayed their driving talents. The written test portion of the event took place on Friday.

"I really didn't know what to expect coming here, I just knew the competition would be tough," said Meeter, a driver and trainer for RCPT at its' Eagle Butte location. "After competing here, I feel we belong here. I won't be satisfied just placing in the future."

Lambert, a driver and trainer has also dabbled in dispatch at RCPT's Pierre office. He arrived on the scene five years ago and continues to make his way up the company ladder. Both men earned the right to compete by placing first (Lambert) and second

(Meeter) in the 2021 Dakota Transit Association Roadeo last fall in Fargo, ND. Competing the national event was first and foremost for both, but they also took full advantage of the conference workshops while in Louisville.

"I know I benefitted from the conference – taking away knowledge I can use on my daily duties in Eagle Butte," said Meeter. "I want to increase my value to management, to show them I can do anything they ask of me."

Both men credited current management at RCPT for providing them a solid base to work from and for continually providing them opportunities like CTAA and DTA to grow as employees. They feel they not only have unfinished business at the national level, but still have something to prove to themselves back home in South Dakota.

"There were a lot of options for me as far as classes, so I took the ones I felt were most beneficial to me in my career," said Lambert. "On the driving side, my goal was to be in the top 10 and learn from the others who had been in this position. "I think we belong, but we can do better."

Meter and Lambert talked of giving back to the communities where they work and the RCPT family which they feel has been very supportive. When not on duty, Meter lends his talents to the youth in Eagle Butte by coaching basketball. "Giving back to the citizens and the community of Eagle Butte is very important to me," said Meter.

"Basketball is big in my family and I want to give the kids here a chance to learn and play the game."

After waiting for approximately four hours, the pair finally reached to obstacle course. With their anxiety levels peaking at a new high, both men performed admirably if not perfect on the difficult course. Their exact finish was unknown at the time this edition was published, but both were already talking about Oklahoma City in 2023.

“We waited all day to showcase our skills and the nerves became a factor,” said Lambert. “I still feel good about it overall. I learned a few tricks today too that will help in the future.” “I think we did ok, but no way I’m satisfied,” said Meeter. “I want to be number one in the state and number one in the nation. Next time I want to knock it out of the park.”

Bryce Lambert



Wambli Meeter



2022 CTAA EXPO

Karrie Mikkelsen

Cavalier County Transit

Cavalier County Senior Meals & Service

HI HO HI HO OFF TO THE RACES WE GO!

We are all dressed up and ready to go to Churchill Downs.

Thanks again CTAA for the opportunity to judge in your rodeo and take part in your conference.

The 2023 CTAA EXPO will be held in Oklahoma City, OK May 21 - May 25.

Tidbit Articles

Please contact me with articles for your agency.

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Please share your Transit Tidbit with your staff and any interested person.

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 Senger, Executive Director, DTA

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