



## TRANSIT TIDBITS

Issue 131

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### THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY 2023

**\*\*80% of Success is showing up\*\***

**Happy New Year** to each one of you and your families. Your Dakota Transit Association Board of Directors wishes each of you a healthy, safe and thriving 2023.

### DTA MEMBERSHIP FORM

Jacque Senger, Executive Director

Your 2023 Dakota Transit Association Membership Form will be sent out around the 23th of January. If at all possible, typing in the information would be a great help.

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### THANK YOU ANDY & ERIC

Linda Freeman

A big THANK YOU to Andy Sharp and Eric Peterson from Pierre, SD, for teaching the classes at Watertown and Aberdeen. The classes were very big and they did a great job!

### TRAINING UPDATE

Contact Information

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“The only thing worse than training your employees and having them leave is not training them and having them stay” – Henry Ford

PASS and Defensive Driving classes were held in Watertown, SD in December 2022 and in Aberdeen January 2023 with over 50 attendees receiving training and recertification. Thanks to Andy Sharp and Eric Peterson for providing training and thank you to all who attended these classes.

There is a potential upcoming PASS and Defensive Driving class in the works for the Devils Lake, ND, area. We are still working out the details but if you'd like to make reservations, please contact me or visit the DTA website for details as they become available.



## UP TO THE CHALLENGE

Terry Hoffman

Co-Executive Director

Community Transit of Watertown/Sisseton,  
Inc.

Faith, family and a strong support system have long been the pillars of strength guiding Cody Seehafer in his life. The Watertown resident and Milbank native was recently tabbed as the *Outstanding Citizen with a Disability* by the Mayors Committee for People with Disabilities.

Seehafer was presented the award at a December Watertown City Council meeting by councilman Randy Tupper. Tupper is also the president of the Board of Directors for Community Transit of Watertown/Sisseton, Inc. Seehafer has been a regular rider with the transit system since he arrived in the city less than two years ago.

Admitting boundaries are few and challenges are always embraced, Seehafer is excited to continue his advocacy for people with disabilities as the newly appointed President of the *Mayors Committee for People with Disabilities*.

“Watertown has made great progress in how they provide basic necessities for people with disabilities,” said Seehafer. “There is still room for improvement

and the purpose of the committee is to bring awareness to the situation. I’m excited to be a part of it.”

The first meeting of the new year was slated for Tuesday. While Seehafer had few specifics for his inaugural meeting as president, he was excited to bring ideas to the table. Continuing to equip local parks with handicap accessible equipment is one avenue he would like to continue to explore. Making businesses more accessible and holding city wide events to advocate for people with disabilities is also on his agenda.

“The city is still lagging behind in some areas, especially when talking access to businesses,” said Seehafer. “Putting curb cuts in the proper locations and more accessible parking slots are two of the items needing improvement.”

Born with spina bifida, Seehafer was able to drive a car, play wheel-chair basketball and walk with the assistance of forearm crutches. Living with this uncurable condition is often difficult, but many individuals like Seehafer, can lead independent and fulfilling lives. His next challenge occurred in 2016 in the form of a cerebellar slump. A surgery was successful, but left him permanently confined to a wheelchair.

“I just get up every day and look at the world with a good attitude,” said Seehafer. “I enjoy all of the challenges and I don’t feel like I have any boundaries.”

Staying active is not an issue. He spends time working out at the Prairie Lakes Healthcare Wellness Center, enjoys working with youth and will soon be writing a weekly column on advocacy for people with disabilities for the Grant County Review, a weekly newspaper in Milbank.

“Staying active is very important and will allow me to remain independent for a much longer time,” said Seehafer. “I treat my visits to the gym as doctor appointments.”

CTWSI has played a key role in his life since moving to Watertown from Marshall, MN. He has not been shy about voicing his concerns, his praises of the system and his concerns when needed. Longer hours of service, consistency of how drivers secure him in the transit vehicles and how the drivers interact with people with disabilities have been questions raised by Seehafer.

“The transit is a good service and I enjoy the drivers, I just wished they stayed open later at night,” he said. “Anytime I have questions though, they listen and give me explanations and I appreciate that.



Cody Seehafer was named the Outstanding Citizen with a Disability by the Mayors Committee for People with Disabilities. Pictured L to R are Randy Tupper, City Council Member and CTWSI Board President, Seehafer, Parker and Avery Ammann (Seehafer's nephew and niece) Watertown Mayor, Reid Holien and Jamie Folk, outgoing President of the Mayors Committee for People with Disabilities.

## 2023 DAKOTA TRANSIT ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

Jacque Senger, Executive Director

Just a reminder----your Board of Directors are working on the 2023 DTA Conference which will be held in Minot, ND, September 15, 2023 through September 19, 2023. The Sleep Inn & Suites will be the host hotel, phone number 701-837-3100.

### Tidbit Articles:

Please contact me with articles for your agency.

### Recycle:

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

### 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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