



TRANSREPORT

The Newsletter of the Illinois Rural Transit Assistance Program
February 2003

2003 Driver Training Program Begins!

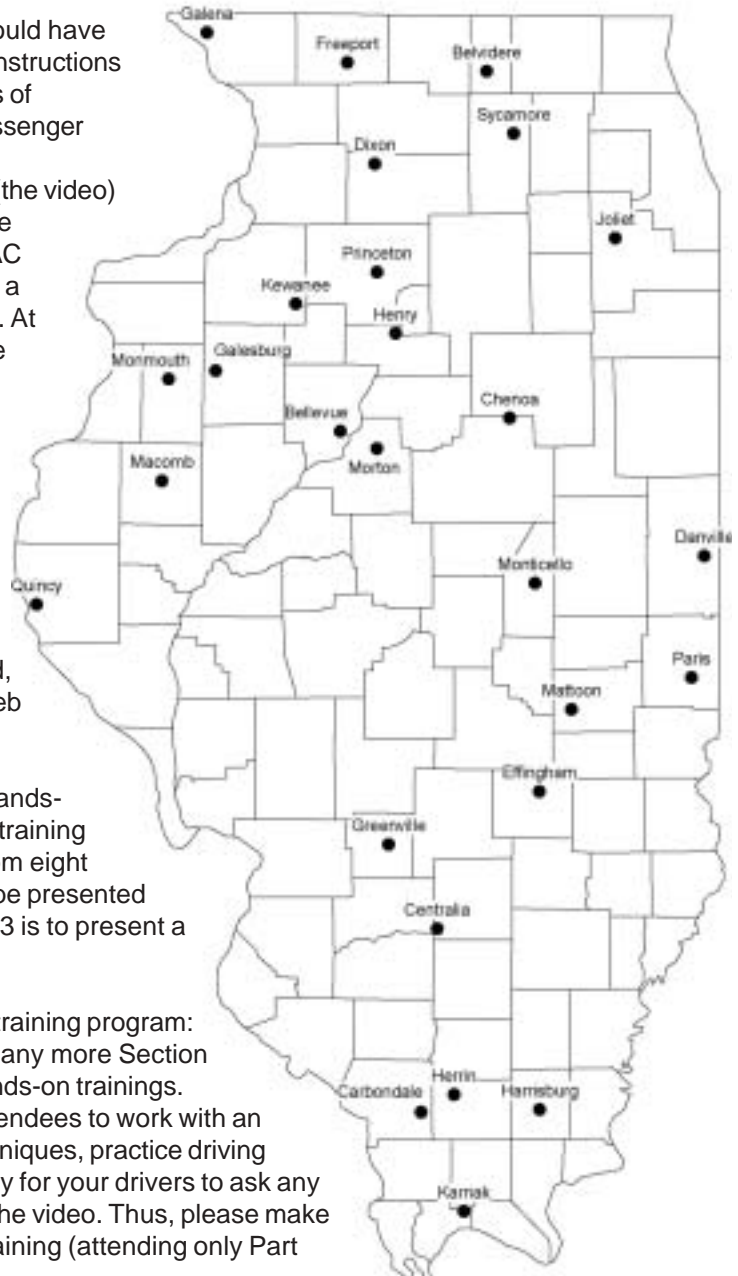
By the time you read this article, your agency should have received RTAC's driver training video, along with instructions concerning this year's program. The core courses of emergency procedures, defensive driving, and passenger assistance are all on one video, allowing you the convenience of presenting the classroom portion (the video) of those trainings at your own site(s) and at a time convenient for you and your drivers. In return, RTAC asks that you complete the attendance sheets in a timely fashion and return them immediately to us. At that point you will have completed Part One of the trainings.

As a prerequisite to your employees attending Part Two of the trainings, RTAC must have received your attendance sheet(s) for Part One. Approximately thirty days after you have received the video, the first of the hands-on trainings (Part Two) will begin. The schedule is yet to be determined, but RTAC will mail updates on a regular basis until all trainings are scheduled, along with posting the training schedule on our web site.

The big news is the enhanced availability of the hands-on trainings. Last year we expanded our regional training sites from six to eight. This year we expanded from eight to...twenty-seven! Each of the three courses will be presented separately at each site, meaning our goal for 2003 is to present a total of 81 hands-on trainings!

Key points to consider about RTAC's 2003 driver training program:

- With the added training sites, we hope many more Section 5310-funded agencies can attend the hands-on trainings.
- The hands-on training not only allows attendees to work with an actual vehicle (review escape routes/techniques, practice driving maneuvers) but is also a great opportunity for your drivers to ask any questions they formulated while viewing the video. Thus, please make every effort to access both parts of the training (attending only Part



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2003



Did you see the movie *A Few Good Men*? I want to tell you about a few good women! I'm talking about Jacqueline Waters and Amy Chambers, the extremely busy women of RTAC. We spent the first quarter of our fiscal year taping and producing a driver training video (see front page for complete story), and prior to mailing the video to you we wanted to make sure that it would reach the right hands. Jacqueline and Amy have been calling all of the providers on our training list (over 400 names) in order to verify contact information. With the re-vamping of our training program occurring simultaneously with the traditionally busy months of January through April (conference and roadeo prep work), it has been hectic. It underscores the importance of having competent and efficient co-workers. In that respect, I am truly blessed!

In addition to the upcoming spring conference (April 1-3) please mark your calendars for the RTAC 2nd Annual Paratransit Roadeo on April 12. All Section 5310- and Section 5311-funded transit providers and IPTA members are eligible to compete in the roadeo. A roadeo is an opportunity for drivers to test their individual limits, meet other drivers, and have a good time! There are cash awards and trophies for the top finishers, with the overall winner receiving a scholarship for a trip to compete at the CTAA national finals to be held in May in Philadelphia! We'll be mailing an announcement later, but please call us if you have questions beforehand. In addition, **we need judges, so please contact us as soon as possible if you are able to help. Being a judge is not difficult, for you will work in pairs and be provided instructions in advance of the event.**

Drivers earn points in the four categories of written test, driving, wheelchair securement, and pre-trip inspection. All participants will receive certificates and other tokens of appreciation. We're holding the event at a later date than last year to increase our chances for a warm day at the Illinois State Fairgrounds, so saddle on up and mosey on down to the RTAC corral on April 12!

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IPTA Notes

As we begin 2003 with a new administration, new Department staff, and a woeful deficit in the state of Illinois, IPTA will be focusing on a positive aspect of transportation, its benefits. Why is it that so much of discussion in communities and public transportation focuses exclusively on cost rather than what it can provide? I'm sure you've never heard someone say, "My tax dollars are paying for the fire department and last year I didn't have a fire, so the government is wasting my money!" Yet, such a comment about transit service is all too commonplace.

Apparently, elected officials and members of the media don't understand the real role of public transportation, but they most definitely understand costs and expenses. Sometimes the loudest voices speaking out about transit in our communities are the transportation "non-advocates." Ideas and concepts to improve local mobility are often countered with outrage at the cost of a simple project. Regardless the reasons, too often the primary focus on transportation is on price tags – the cost of buses and trains, the cost to operate the vehicles, construction costs, etc. And without question, costs do play an important role with any public transportation program. In fairness, the analyses should be more along the lines of cost **and** benefit.

As a group and as individuals, we need to advocate for public transportation. What does transportation do for our communities, how has it helped the economy, and what is its role in infrastructure? While funding dollars are extremely important, when

you speak with your peers, your legislators, and with your community leaders, concentrate on the benefits of public transportation in your community. Consequently, we must make the argument (and deliver on the promise) that public transportation is not only a critical element of our transportation infrastructure, but that it also delivers a high return on investment and offers value to the community.



This argument must counter the widely held view that public transportation is just another give away program. We are a necessary part of the framework throughout Illinois. Our common thread should be that public transportation is about access, freedom, and mobility for all people.

See you at the RTAC Spring Conference, April 1, 2 & 3.

Linda P

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March-August 2003
Hands-on driver trainings in three core courses
(on-site at the 27 statewide 5311 grantee agencies)

March 31, 2003
CCTM Exam, Springfield

April 1 - 3, 2003
14th Annual RTAC Spring Conference, Springfield

April 12, 2003
2nd Annual Paratransit Rodeo, Springfield

Best of the Rest: *Stir Up New Business With Co-Marketing*

RTAC introduces *Best of the Rest*, the re-printing of some of the best articles we've seen in newsletters that we receive from around the country. Our first *Best of the Rest* features co-marketing, for successful transit marketing very often is linked with the community's economic development efforts. Reprinted with permission from "Stir Up New Business With Co-Marketing," by Matthew Kaufman, Kansas Trans Reporter, April 2002.

If your organization has ever suffered from a lack of funding, volunteers or other resources, co-marketing with other nonprofit and for-profit organizations could help close the gap. Co-marketing occurs when two or more organizations work together to accomplish complementary goals.

Co-marketing examples

A Denver organization called Project Angel Heart, which provides meals for people living with HIV, AIDS, and other life threatening illnesses, works with local restaurants in an annual event called Dining Out for Life. Restaurants donate 25 percent of all food sales on the night of the event to Project Angel Heart. In return, Project Angel Heart advertises the event to help increase the number of diners at the restaurants. With over 40,000 diners participating restaurants stand to gain significantly.

In Cleveland, three museums located in the Wade Park Oval created an event called "Parade the Circle." The twelfth annual celebration included access to the museums, food, entertainment, and activities presented by 30 other Circle institutions. By working together, the museums were able to pool their resources for more effective advertising that improved their visibility within the community.

Co-marketing is relatively new to transit. Some groups have begun working with environmental organizations and "earth friendly" companies to market auto sharing. Such an arrangement improves the image of the "earth friendly" companies with their consumers while increasing the number of individuals willing to try auto sharing.

If you think that your agency may benefit from co-marketing, the first step is to decide with whom you would like to partner. This decision should not be made quickly. Take the time to brainstorm a list of businesses, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations. Choose organizations whose goals are compatible with yours.

Remember that some organizations may decide not to work with you. Of the 800 businesses that Project Angel Heart contacted for this year's Dining Out for Life, 176 decided to participate. This is why it is important to list more than one or two groups.

Sell your agency to others

To help you avoid rejection when approaching a possible partner, identify your organization's assets. Remember, you are selling the agency. Consider the following:

- Is your name recognition such that other businesses and groups would want to be associated with you?
- Are there other groups in town dealing with transportation issues?
- Do you have access to political or well-connected individuals whom other members of the community would like to know?
- Are the people you serve and your volunteers a target market for a potential partner?

When Project Angel Heart started its program, it was not able to offer restaurants increased business. Instead the organization relied on providing the restaurants with an opportunity to participate in a significant community service.

Your organizational skills and culture can also be used to sell the relationship. You can help companies learn how to organize volunteer efforts, manage educational programs, and teach them how to make more effective charitable donations. By working with your organization, other companies can also instill a sense of pride in their employees – helping them to make a difference in society.

Meet the RTAP Advisory Council Members!



Anna Oestreich, a transplant to the Midwest, was born and raised in Philadelphia. She has a degree in art education and has taught art at all levels, including teaching art education and supervising art student teachers at Greenville College, a small Christian liberal arts college located in Greenville.

After leaving the college in 1983, Anna accepted the position of executive director of Bond County Senior Center. At that time, the Center was renting an office, from which information was provided and a single vehicle was dispatched to transport adults aged 60 and older. The Board of Directors was committed to the expansion of senior programs and the acquisition of a building, a mission that became Anna's. Today the Center owns and is housed in a 7,000 square foot facility. Services include congregated meals cooked on site, home delivered meals and the production of frozen meals, education, recreation, health screening, and a variety of other services designed to help keep seniors independent.

In April of 1999, the Center received a grant from DHS to provide transportation to employment, Bond County Senior Center's first experience with general public transportation. In April of 2000, Bond County became a Section 5311 recipient and now is the contractor for public transportation in Bond County.

Anna has been a member of the Rural Transit Assistance Program Advisory Council, representing 5310 providers, since June 1990. "Being a member of the Advisory Council has been a wonderful experience for me. The advisory council members are all highly professional individuals with a wealth of training and experience. Working with them has inspired me personally to set higher goals for transportation in Bond County, and to promote training and information for transit systems throughout the States. It is exciting to be part of the growth and expansion of public transportation in Illinois, and challenging to help bring it to rural areas."

Anna is married to Milton, a biology teacher and farmer. She has two children, Victoria and Tobias; four step-children, Bryan, Rachel, David, Andrew; and two grandchildren, Braden and Kenan. She attends the First Christian Church of Greenville. In addition to art, her interests include basket making, flower gardening and raising orchids.



Rich Machala, originally from the Chicago area, and his wife Ellen moved to Galena 30 years ago. His background in wholesale and retail sales led to a marketing representative position with the Jo Daviess Workshop in 1984. He hadn't even heard of rural public transportation until 1988, when he attended a meeting with IDOT where he learned that money was available for new public transportation projects. By 1989 public transportation was being provided in Jo Daviess County, starting with two medium duty vehicles and growing to today's total of 14. Rich understates, "We've grown a little. We have three full time and 11 part time employees."

Over the years Rich has served on several committees and boards, including the advisory committee to DPT that started the Rural Transit Assistance Program in Illinois and the Illinois Paratransit Association board, where he served one term as president. Tom Zucker, executive director of the Voluntary Action Center and current RTAP Advisory Board president, says Rich will always be remembered as the one who finally got the name of the Illinois Association for Community Transportation changed to the Illinois Public Transportation Association.

Rich has been a member of the RTAP Advisory Committee since its beginning, recently serving as president. He believes that the program makes a significant contribution to the providers of rural transportation in Illinois, and says, "I've always been an advocate for sharing knowledge and training, whether for transit managers, mechanics, or drivers, and am very pleased with the way RTAC's programs have progressed to where they are today. I'm convinced rural transit is much more professional and safer because of the training programs conducted by the RTAC and strongly encourage all providers in the state to take advantage of the services offered."

Rich adds, "I always wanted to be a bus driver. My older brother drove for CTA in the late 40's, and I thought wearing his uniform was 'really cool'." Also, Rich is the proud father of six children, with the eldest 38 and youngest 13 years of age.

Crashcourse

An expert witness shares some of the common causes of accidents

By Dennis Meehan

The following article has been condensed and reprinted by permission from the July 2002 issue of Bus Ride magazine / Power Trade Media LLC. www.busrider.com

Accidents happen. Sometimes it's the other guy's fault, and sometimes it is your own. It's absolutely crucial to examine and analyze policies and procedures following collisions in order to protect the integrity – and future – of the company.

Many factors are common in regard to vehicle accidents and breakdowns. Driver training is one of the primary areas that, if lacking, can directly contribute to accidents or vehicular failure.

We find that in many of our reviews, some of the various elements that contribute to accidents are not commonly covered in most driver training. While most training programs stress hours of practice time gaining familiarity with bus equipment, controls, gears, and yes, the brakes, an area that often cannot be learned until actually taking to the roadway concerns driver perception, depth perception and reaction time.

Some drivers do not realize the amount of time their vehicle will continue to travel from the time they have applied the brakes to make a panic stop or an evasive maneuver. Sometimes, speeding and driving too close to the vehicle ahead is a result of poor perception. At 60 mph, a bus travels at more than 85 feet per second. A driver takes one second to realize a situation before he takes action, another second to react, and a third second to apply the brakes. In those three seconds, at 60 mph a bus has traveled 255 feet before the brakes begin to apply.

Typical causes of accidents

Drivers should be aware that in most heavy-vehicle accidents, an automobile is responsible over 60 percent of the time. It's crucial that drivers be fully aware of all automobiles in all lanes. Here are some other reasons that accidents occur:

Speed and perception-related

- Following too close at a high speed
- Not allowing enough time and space for emergency stops or evasive maneuvers
- Slow traffic ahead begins to move, and vehicles do not have working brake lights; bus rear-ends slow-moving vehicles

Maintenance-related

- Untorqued wheels
- Loose or unsecured air lines and connections, causing brake failure
- Leaking wheel seals, leading to possible brake failure and wheel separation
- Unsecured water, hydraulic and oil lines that can lead to smoke and/or fire
- Loose or unsecured electrical wiring, causing bus fires.

Source: Commercial Vehicle Consultants, Inc. www.comvehicle.com.

While they may be excellent drivers in every other sense, drivers with poor perception of distances and slow reaction times are inevitably involved in an accident when panic stops or defensive, evasive maneuvers are needed.

Train them to take a closer look

Occasionally, we see very well-trained technicians and mechanics, but in many of the major systems, the bus technicians/mechanics have had little or no proper training on how to conduct a quality preventive maintenance inspection. In bus accidents, the accident is often caused by an unrecognized minor component failure that should have been picked up during the last inspection.

Some mechanics tend to think that it is when the major components fail that most accidents occur. However, we have found that it is often attributed to minor components that exhibit poorly detected wear, looseness, cracks, and misalignment; all of which lead to highly unsafe conditions.

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When seeking to co-market with for-profit companies a transit agency can be at a disadvantage. Many companies will be looking for tax write-offs which you generally cannot offer. Speak with your legal counsel or tax advisor to determine if you can provide this option. It may be a matter of creating a nonprofit foundation through which charitable contributions can be funneled to your organization.

Once you have found groups interested in co-marketing with you, you should exchange purpose statements indicating what you both hope to achieve through the relationship. A successful collaboration is likely if both parties know why the other is involved.

Cooking up a successful agreement

An effective co-marketing agreement has both short and long-term goals for the alliance. While your purpose statement is general, your goals should be specific. Your goals allow you to measure the success of your co-marketing agreement. Both parties should work to make sure that the other's goals are being met. If they aren't, changes need to be made, or ultimately it's likely the partnership was not meant to be.

Responsibilities need to be identified in addition to goals. Who will recruit volunteers? Who will provide advertising funds? Who will host any activities? Who will be responsible for logistics? These are all issues that should be addressed in writing.

Don't expect each party to contribute equally. You are working together to take advantage of each other's resources, not to split resources 50-50.

You also need to determine how you will resolve any conflicts that may arise. If you do not agree on how to proceed at a certain point, what will be done? A strategy should be developed before a problem occurs. The most effective way to address conflicts is to form a committee with members from each organization that can address problems.

Starting a successful relationship means also planning for its end. While you may intend for the relationship to be ongoing, each partner should know what steps it can take to withdraw from the agreement. If you are working together on a small project, make it clear that the relationship will end once the project is complete. If you would later like to continue the relationship, you can make the decision together.

Special issues when working with for-profit business

Working with a for-profit company adds additional considerations. Erin Pulling with Project Angel Heart noted that many times her organization's hours differed from those of the businesses they were working with. At times it may also be difficult to get businesses to return your calls or to reply to your letters. Persistence and understanding are important. Your cultures and often language will differ. Take the time to get to know one another. It will help you understand each other's goals.

If you decide to pursue working with other organizations you must be patient and not expect success overnight. When Project Angel Heart started Dining Out for Life, 22 restaurants participated and \$14,000 was raised. With consistency and many hours of work the project has become the \$220,000 event it is today.

Sources

Fifth Annual Innovations in Social Marketing Conference, Montreal Canada; ism2000.cba.Hawaii.edu/ism-drum.htm

"Pool Resources for Success," *Nonprofit World*, Volume 10, Number 5, September/October 1998.

Spotlight

Williamson County Programs on Aging: *Come Ride With Us!*

Williamson County Programs on Aging (WCPA), created in 1976, is a private, not-for-profit corporation. Incorporated exclusively for charitable, educational, cultural, and recreational purposes, it was established to provide services that enable elderly adults to remain independent.

WCPA, the system operator for Section 5311 grantee Williamson County, has administrative offices located in the Herrin Senior Center. WCPA administers a number of federal and state grants and contracts and is funded by both public and private agencies as well as individual contributions. Most grants or contracts must be matched with local contributions.

The extensive program offerings include: Nutrition, Information and Assistance, Outreach, Homemaker, Adult Education Courses, Adult Day Care, Health Education, Legal Services, Home Health Care and Transportation.

The Nutrition program provides participants with hot, nutritious meals in a group setting, meals that are available to any individual age 60 and older and their spouse (regardless of age).

The Information and Assistance and Outreach programs are also available to any individual age 60 and older, and provide a link between the client and the needed service. Upon request, trained staff provides information to individuals on a variety of program and services. Additionally, WCPA assists with completing various forms. The Outreach services include search and find activities, informing individuals of benefits, encouraging them to participate in community activities and assisting them in obtaining needed services.

The Homemaker program provides light housework, shopping, and errands for frail elderly people in Williamson and Franklin Counties. Dependent upon income, a fee may be charged.

Adult Education courses are offered through Logan Community College.

Adult Day Care activities and classes are provided to individuals of any age. This service provides an opportunity to gather for social, recreational, and medical supervision during weekdays.

Health Education services promotes health information and consultation to seniors by a registered nurse. Additionally, this program offers blood pressure and blood sugar screenings, health education and cholesterol screenings, vision testing, hearing testing, arthritis support and flu shots. WCPA established Medicare certified home health services in 1988 with one registered nurse and one home health aide, and was Medicaid certified in 1991. Initially, intermittent skilled nursing, physical therapy, and home health aide services were offered to Williamson and Southern Franklin County residents, and over a period of time was expanded to include residents in Williamson, Franklin, Johnson and Saline Counties. Currently, intermittent home health services include skilled nursing services (on-call 24 hour service), physical therapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy, medical social services and home health aide services. Skilled nursing care and home health aide services are available 365 days a year.

The Williamson County Transit System (WCTS) provides services to county residents of all ages and for any purpose (except medical emergencies). The mission of



Kaime Cullum, Dispatcher; Valerie Hottana, Transportation Director; Tracy Drew, Administrative Assistant; and Robert Childers, Executive Director



WCTS Bus



Thelma Brassel, daily passenger of WCTS

WCTS “is to provide safe, reliable and cost effective public transportation to the citizens of the communities we serve. We are committed to enhancing economic development and quality of life through affordable accessible transportation services. Our Williamson County Transportation team pledges to provide courteous service to our customers and aggressively meet the changing needs of our region.”

Senior Citizen Thelma Brassel is a daily passenger of WCTS and has been a passenger for over 18 years. WCTS takes her to the doctor, hairdresser and the senior center. Every day WCTS picks her up and takes her somewhere. Ms. Brassel comments that she could not survive without the

WCTS and that she will continue to ride with WCTS until she no longer can.

Buses are designated to be in each community on regularly scheduled days. Rides are “first come, first serve,” so reservations are encouraged to be made one or two days in advance. The transportation service operates Monday 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Tuesday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Round trip door to door fares for seniors are \$1.50. The in town round trip fare for the general public is \$1.50, and out of town round trip is \$2.00. Medical transportation to Carbondale is offered twice each month for a round trip fare of \$7.00. A six-ride discount pass is also available for \$7.50. Recent marketing campaigns for WCTS include new brochures and television advertisements.

The five full time and three part time WCTS drivers are properly trained and licensed in accordance with state and federal laws. Annual training includes emergency procedures, seat belt and wheelchair tie-down procedures, evacuation procedures and defensive driving.

As the Williamson County Transit brochure proclaims, “Come ride with us!”

New Material Available From RTAC Library

CD-ROM

CTAA Medical Transportation Toolkit

This toolkit is designed to assist medical organizations and institutions to better serve their clients’ medical transportation needs. The document outlines how community transportation can assist health organizations, explains Medicaid’s role in medical transportation, inventories non-Medicaid funding possibilities and describes how to make use of existing transit first. Adobe Acrobat Reader is needed to view the pdf file (free download at www.adobe.com). 2001.

Remember; please call 309-298-2417 to borrow any of our library items!

IDOT DPT Receives Outstanding Achievement Award

National RTAP presented awards at the 15th National Rural Public and Intercity Bus Transportation Conference October 29 in Huron, Ohio. The Illinois Department of Transportation Division of Public Transportation (IDOT DPT) received an Outstanding Achievement award for an RTAP Product or Service for its Regional Maintenance Center program. Illinois representative David Spacek accepted the award from National RTAP Director Beth Denniston, in recognition of a cost effective, innovative, timely, useful and replicable product or service.



David Spacek and Beth Denniston



TRANSIT MOVERS



Transit Movers recognizes people in Illinois transit who have been promoted, changed responsibilities, moved to a different transit agency, etc. If there are people within your agency who fall into these categories, contact TRANSREPORT at 800/526-9943, e-mail rtac@wiu.edu or fax (309) 298-2162. Please include pictures!

Gary DeLeo, Acting Section 5311 Section Chief, has been with the Illinois Department of Transportation Division of Public Transportation since 1979, working in the Administrative Unit as the Financial Services Manager. He and his wife Danette have four Children: Jaclyn (8), Michaela (7), and Christopher (4).

Gary and his wife also operate a mobile disc jockey business providing music, karaoke, and video presentations, for any and all your party needs.



Johnny M. Lanctot is the new director of Alternative Transportation Systems (ATS), a public agency providing curb-to-curb paratransit service to older persons and to ADA-qualified individuals. The service area encompasses several townships and municipalities in St. Clair County, Illinois.

Lanctot's employment background includes nine years in the United States Air Force as a C-130 aircraft navigator, operations officer, and as a staff officer at a Major Command Head Quarters. Duty locations have included California, Arkansas, Texas, Illinois and the Far East, but Johnny says, "The most rewarding stint has been the six years as a stay at home dad to my two sons."

Lanctot grew up in Albuquerque, New Mexico, where he received a Bachelor of University Studies from the University of New Mexico in 1981. He received a Master of Science Degree in Systems Management from the University of Southern California, Los Angeles in 1989. In 1995 he completed a Master of Science Degree in Environmental Studies at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville. Lanctot is a Registered Environmental Manager, a member of the Fairview Heights Planning Commission and a First Degree Black Belt, Tae Kwon Do, World Martial Arts Federation. Lanctot says, "I'm looking forward to using my air transportation knowledge in this great public service agency. The learning curve here is pretty steep, but I have an excellent group to work with, and they are all most helpful."

Lanctot lives in Fairview Heights with Theresa, his wife of 23 years, and their two sons, Jonathan, age 15, and Thomas, age 7. Theresa is Director of Environmental Management for the Sara Lee Baking Group.

Danville Mass Transit Celebrates 25th Anniversary. Danville Mass Transit (DMT) has come a long way and seen many changes over the past quarter century, including new funding, new buses, a new facility, a new transfer point, and even a new name.

Changes in funding have been major ones. The City of Danville, as a result of the 1990 Census figures, changed in status from an urbanized to non-urbanized area. A decade later, the 2000 Census figures resulted in Danville gaining back urbanized area status.

The DMT facility, completed in 1988, features an attached garage that holds all nine buses, plus a maintenance area and bus washer. Administrative personnel enjoy front office space that includes large windows.

In 1992 seven buses were replaced through federal and state funding, and soon three new low floor buses will arrive, beginning a replacement cycle contingent upon available funding.

In the early years the system was known as the "Runaround" and with the name came many negative jokes. The arrival of new buses was a great opportunity to create a name that would move the system toward a more positive image in the community.

DMT continues to seek improvements in the routes and schedules. The ten current city routes sufficiently cover the city limits, but DMT is looking at the possibility of service expansion.

DMT employs three drivers who recently received the prestigious 1,000,000 Mile Club awards from the National Safety Council. The award signifies that they have driven 1,000,000 miles or 25,000 hours accident-free. Ralph Servis (25 years experience), Mike Randle (22 years), and Sue Lawhorn (18 years) are rightfully proud of their accomplishment.

DMT celebrated its 25th anniversary on November 29, and offered free rides all day, with each rider receiving a token of appreciation for their continued support for the system.



Artist is creating replica of the 1901 - 1952 Illinois Traction System

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One is better than having no training, but attending Part Two allows your drivers to build upon the concepts introduced in Part One).

- IDOT asked RTAC to track trainings in 2003, keeping agency lists of attendees. This will help us determine training trends and plan for future years' programs, as well as know which agencies are having problems in accessing trainings.
- Our defensive driving instructor (Gerry Stodgel of Uptown Driver Training) and passenger assistance instructor (Lisa Beith, a manager with Danville Mass Transit) have many years of experience and have consistently received high evaluation marks. We are presently recruiting an emergency procedures instructor, and the several prospective applicants being considered all have years of driving and transit managerial experience. We are positive that we will soon be hiring yet another high-quality trainer, and are proud of the team that will be training at our twenty-seven sites.

We look forward to seeing you at the trainings. As always, if you have questions please call Edward Heflin or Jacqueline Waters at 800-526-9943 or e-mail rtac@wiu.edu.

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Training employees to do thorough maintenance checks can help in eliminating those conditions.

We also find that mechanics or garage management may tend to change bus components and improvise by buying unproven aftermarket products. At times garage management and mechanics are not even aware of the quality of the garage shop supplies, nuts, bolts, and even wheel nuts and lugs.

In conclusion, today's buses use high technology computers for numerous applications throughout the bus and are outfitted with a variety of materials and products. Bus owners and operators must understand how crucial it is to develop proper bus specifications, proper bus life cycles and upgrade their management and mechanics training to the highest quality in order to keep up and stay safe.

It's up to management to ensure that drivers receive the best possible training available. The ultimate goal is to always strive to reduce preventable bus accidents, while increasing the life expectancy of buses and perhaps even reduce overall maintenance costs.

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