

Nebraska Transit Trends

2017 NATP MANAGERS WORKSHOP

The Hampton Inn & Conference Center in Scottsbluff, Nebraska, was the setting for the 2017 NATP Managers Workshop. Nearly 60 managers, exhibitors and speakers gathered to learn and network. Managers had the opportunity to visit exhibitors in the exhibit hall.



Bill Troe, SRF Consulting, provided an update on the Mobility Management Project.

Educational session presenters included Kari Ruse (NDOT); Mark Bechtel, Logan Daniels, Beth Held, John Lynch and Kevin Osborn (FTA); Jennie Nixon (University of Nebraska Extension); Cheryl Burkhardt-Kriesel (University of Nebraska Extension); Al Garrison (TSA); and Rob Lynch (Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute).



The Annual Meeting was held at the Tangled Tumbleweed Restaurant.

On the first night of the workshop, attendees enjoyed a tappas meal at the Tangled Tumbleweed. After the meal, President Scott Bartels called the Annual Meeting to order. The agenda was reviewed and Scott thanked everyone for their continued support of the association. The membership then ratified the vote from the March 7, 2017, special meeting to adopt an amended version of the bylaws.



Jeff Baker presented Cindy Sanders with the Manager of the Year Award.

Brenda Halstead was re-elected to serve as an At-Large Member of the board. Beth Siegfried was elected to serve as the West Central Region representative. Jeff Baker was re-elected to serve as the East Central Region representative.

Following the election of the board, a few NATP members were honored for their service and commitment to public transportation. Congratulations to all recipients:

- Rookie of the Year: Mitch Sump, Lancaster County Public Rural Transit
- Manager of the Year: Cindy Sanders, Guide Rock Public Transit
- Appreciation of Service: Carol Prince, Scotts Bluff County Public Transit



Mitch Sump received the Rookie of the Year Award.

Tuesday afternoon began with an update on the Mobility Management project with Bill Troe. Kari Ruse with the Nebraska Department of Transportation provided general updates and information. Following a break, FTA speakers provided the latest information and updates on legal issues, civil rights and grants and funding.



Carol Prince received an Appreciation Award from Coletta Clouse.

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NATP PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Greetings to all,

Since you are reading this issue of Transit Trends, you must have viewed the solar eclipse in a safe manner...or perhaps not at all. Saline County was right in the path of totality so we expected a good show. Although we continued providing transit service as usual, I took a late lunch in order to view the spectacle. With cloudy conditions and a rain cloud to the south of us most of the morning, we often couldn't view the partial eclipse leading up to totality. But when 1:01 p.m. came the clouds had parted, and we could enjoy the magnificence of nature! What a beautiful creation!

Now back to work. The Managers Workshop held in Scottsbluff was a great success. Kari Ruse and NDOT staff were on hand to give updates. FTA staff presented information and performance awards. TSI Al Garrison explained the importance of preparing security plans and how to develop and implement them. Bill Troe reviewed the Mobility Management Project and many other topics were presented and discussed, right to the very end when we closed with roundtable discussions. Thank you to the vendors who came in to show their products and support NATP and to all those who assisted with the program. A special thank you to Tiffany Fougeron for planning and organizing the event.

Meanwhile, the NATP Roadeo committee has been preparing for the drivers training and Roadeo event to be held this month. They are striving to provide another practical, usable program of classroom and hands-on training that will improve safety and driving skills. Tuesday, September 26 will be a day filled with continuing education courses and a written test for those choosing to compete in the Roadeo. Wednesday activities will include pre-trip inspections, wheelchair securement and the driver's course. Activities will culminate with a catered lunch and the revealing the winners of the Roadeo who have earned a trip to Pennsylvania to compete nationally. If you haven't already, register now to attend and participate – whether you compete or not. It will be another great opportunity to expand your knowledge and network with others. So please bring your smiles, your excitement to meet new people, your determination to learn, and your views to share. That will make it a good time.

Managers, another opportunity is coming your way in October. The National RTAP Technical Assistance Conference is being held in Omaha October 29 through November 1. As stated on their website, nationalrtap.org/conference2017, "The conference will continue the great momentum that we started in Denver in 2015 with content from FTA's Technical Assistance Centers, workshops, round-tables, and a focus on practical solutions for rural and tribal transportation." Take advantage of its proximity and wealth of resources and get registered.

I hope to see each of you in September and October. Until then, safe travels everyone.

Scott Bartels
NATP President

WEBSTER COUNTY DRIVER BIDS FAREWELL

After just over eight years driving for public transportation, Kily Gortmaker will say her goodbyes to the Webster County Public Transit system and Nebraska. Gortmaker will be moving to Kansas where she has accepted a teaching position.

"I will miss my fellow drivers and passengers tremendously, but it is time for my son and I to move closer to family. Good luck to everyone at the Roadeo."

We will miss Kily and her bubbly personality at NATP events. She was a competitor at the CTAAs Roadeo in 2015 and 2016. We wish Kily the best of luck!



NATP MANAGERS WORKSHOP (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

The second day of training started off with Rob Lynch who presented on Ethics in the Workplace and Working with Local Governments. During the lunch buffet, FTA staff presented several awards to NATP members: Diane Bertrand (Wayne Public Transit); Charles McGraw (RYDE Transit); Carol Prince (Scotts Bluff County Public Transit); Coletta Clouse (Ogallala Public Transit); and Louanna Gawith (Kimball County Transit).

Following lunch, Jennie Nixon discussed strategies that members can use to enhance their online marketing strategies.

Rob Lynch returned to present on strategic planning: how to develop agency mission, goals and objectives; core values; challenges and opportunities; long- and short-range goals; business decision making; and performance measures.



Rob Lynch provided three sessions during the workshop.



Cliff Lindell "presents his case" in a group activity during the "Working with Local Governments" session.

Attendees then moved into the exhibit hall to visit with industry representatives from Altro Transflor, Nebraska/Central Equipment, Inc., MORryde, Masters Transportation, RouteMatch, Advance, and Zonar. Representatives were on hand to answer questions and provide more information on the services they provide. NATP appreciates the support of these companies. Many graciously provided giveaway items during the drawing.

Winners of prizes included: Beth Siegfried, Jeanne Doerneman, Corrina Duckworth, Larry Vortherms, Cliff Lindell and Denise Smith.

Attendees then enjoyed an evening on their own to socialize and explore the area.

The final day started off with an eye-opening session with Al Garrison of the TSA. He provided insight on possible

safety scenarios including an active shooter at the workplace or on a bus. TSI Garrison is willing to work with transit systems to develop security plans. NDOT is working with Garrison to develop plans. Security packets and other information are available at the NATP office. If you were unable to attend and would like a packet, please contact the NATP office.



TSI Garrison provided information on developing safety plans.

Following a break, Cheryl Burkhardt-Kriesel provided information on Marketing Hometown America, an educational program focused on recruiting and retaining new residents. She discussed how important it is for transportation agencies to be involved in the process.

The last session of the day was a roundtable discussion. Throughout the workshop, attendees were asked to provide topic suggestions. The top five were chosen on the last day. The topics included railroad crossings, charter definition and more.

Attendees then grabbed a boxed lunch to go when the last session concluded.

Thank you to everyone who presented, exhibited, sponsored and attended the workshop. If you have suggestions for future workshops, please contact the NATP office.



NATP COLORING BOOKS AVAILABLE

The NATP Board is excited to offer coloring books to members to distribute to kids in their local communities to inform them about public transportation.

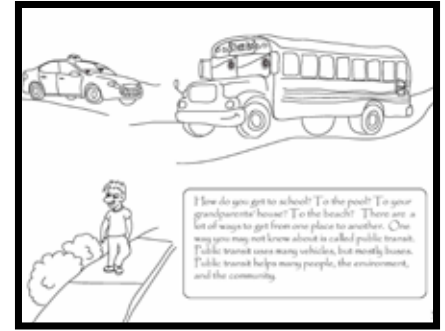


The 16-page coloring book includes information on all forms of public transportation, mainly bus transportation, and includes fun games and activities.

The coloring books come in packages of 25 and members can order up to two packets at this time. The only cost to members is shipping or they can pick up the books at the NATP office or upcoming event.

Order forms are available on the website. Books are available on a first come, first served basis.

This is a great opportunity for members to promote public transportation to the next generation of passengers!



OLDER NEBRASKANS DAY

The NATP hosted a booth at the Nebraska State Fair during Older Nebraskans Day on Wednesday, August 30.

Over 600 people walked and viewed the booth. Nearly 100 registered for the giveaway prize. There was a lot of interest in public transportation. Contact information for transit agencies in attendees' areas was provided.

NATP giveaway items and brochures were handed out as promotion.

This was a great event for NATP as it reaches a targeted demographic and made people aware that public transit is available to everyone.

On hand to assist with the booth was Beth Siegfried (McCook Public Transit), Denise Smith (Phelps County Public Transit) and Tiffany Fougeron (NATP).



NATIONAL RTAP CONFERENCE

The National Rural Transit Assistance Program is excited to host the third biennial Technical Assistance Conference: Transportation at the Center. The conference will continue the great momentum that was started in Denver in 2015 with content from FTA's Technical Assistance Centers, workshops, round-tables, and a focus on practical solutions for rural and tribal transportation.

Participating and cooperating organizations include the Federal Transit Administration,

Nebraska Department of Transportation, Nebraska Association of Transportation Providers, University of Nebraska, the National Aging and Disability Transportation Center, and the National Center for Mobility Management.

The event will take place October 29 - November 1 in Omaha.

There is a room block available for attendees at the Hilton Omaha. You can reserve a room online or call 1-800-HILTONS

and use group code "RTA" to make your reservation. There will be pre-conference events on Sunday so NATP members are invited to make a reservation for Saturday evening as well.

The early registration deadline is September 8. Check www.nationalrtap.org/conference2017 for updates and agenda.

We look forward to seeing you in Omaha!

CTAA EXPO & ROADEO

Ron Linke

I would like to thank the NDOT for providing the scholarship funds to send me to Detroit to represent our state at the 2017 CTAA Roadeo and Expo.

It was a very memorable experience having the opportunity to get acquainted with other drivers across our country and communicate with some of them about their ways of transporting people.

The Roadeo Competition, I mean the whole day, including the awards banquet, was a very well-organized event. We even enjoyed the people of Detroit who were very hospitable.

Thank you again to the NDOR for all you do!



Tiffany Fougeron

I had a great time getting to know Jeanne, Sharon, Ron and Chuck during the CTAA Roadeo and Expo. The weather was warm for the Roadeo on Sunday, but everyone pushed on! The awards ceremony was a welcome reprieve and a great opportunity to show appreciation to all of the amazing drivers across the country. This is a great reminder for our Nebraska managers: your drivers are the backbone of public transit. Be sure to show them how much you appreciate them!

On Monday I was asked to attend the CTAA State Delegate meeting to represent Nebraska. It was a great opportunity to meet the delegates from across the country and hear what changes CTAA has recently made.

CTAA strategically advocates on behalf of its members; offers key communication efforts; provides discounted training and certification programs; offers product and service discounts; delivers technical assistance; and much more. To learn more about becoming a member of the CTAA, visit www.ctaa.org.

I also attended the State Transit Association meeting. Throughout the year, CTAA's Executive Director, Scott Bogren, leads conference calls with state association executive directors to discuss

pertinent issues relating to transit. It is a great opportunity to network and share ideas with other executive directors. The meeting at the CTAA Expo was a great way to meet others in person and put a face to a name.

On Tuesday evening, attendees were invited offsite to a local brewery for Pecha Kucha - Quick, Clever Ideas. Presenters had just under four minutes to present 20 slides. It was a great way to catch new ideas in a different, relaxed environment. Who's ready to sign up if NATP offers this at the next Managers Workshop??

On Wednesday and Thursday, numerous tracts and sessions were available to attend. It was hard to decide which sessions I attended were "Reaching Out to Your Community," "Making the Business Case for Transit" and "Service Design for Rural and Small Urban Areas." I have presentations and notes available for these and a few other classes if you are interested in viewing.

Some of the great keynotes from the event included Matthew Welbes, Acting Administrator of the FTA, and Scott Bogren, Executive Director of the CTAA.

The 2018 CTAA Roadeo and Expo will take place in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Want to win a scholarship to attend? Register for the NATP Roadeo, taking place September 27 in Kearney for a chance to win.



Sharon Penner

I would like to thank NDOT for letting me experience the Roadeo events and the Expo.

The Roadeo was a great way for the drivers to show off their skills on maneuvering buses. I was quite impressed as it was not an easy course but some of the drivers were able to pull it off.

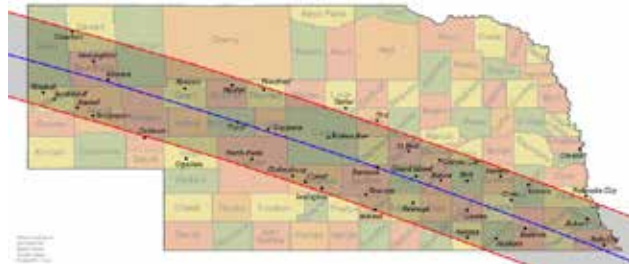
Wow! The Expo event/vendors was also a great opportunity to see all the different equipment are services that are available.



NEBRASKA VIEWS RARE ECLIPSE

On August 21, a coast-to-coast solar eclipse was viewed by millions across the country. Nebraska was one of the lucky states that was able to view the total eclipse. "State tourism officials estimate that hundreds of thousands of visitors viewed the eclipse in Nebraska." Angela Sears of the Nebraska Tourism Commission said, "media coverage promoting Nebraska as a prime location to view the eclipse provided millions of dollars in free publicity for the state. The Tourism Commission estimates the advertising value at more than \$133 million."

Events took place across the state at locations such as Scotts Bluff National Monument and Homestead National Monument. Cliff Lindell, transit manager at Blue Rivers Public Transit, indicated that their transit agency carried folks from Beatrice to NASA eclipse events at Homestead National Monument. Bill Nye the Science Guy and The Voice's Hannah Huston were among the celebrities at the event.



NDOT VANPOOL PROGRAM

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) Transit Section has contracted with Enterprise Rideshare to bring a statewide vanpool program to Nebraska. A vanpool is a mode of public transportation comprised of a group of commuters who agree to share their ride to work in a vehicle large enough to accommodate at least six people plus the driver. The driver for each vanpool is a volunteer within the commuter group.



A vanpool working team began researching the feasibility of supporting vanpools over two years ago. The team members included representatives from the Lincoln Lancaster County Metropolitan Planning Organization, Omaha's Metropolitan Area Planning Agency, University of Nebraska and NDOT's Transit Section. A request for proposal for a turnkey vanpool operator was released in October 2016, and the contract with Enterprise was signed in April 2017.

For each vanpool, Enterprise Rideshare will provide vans equipped with Wi-Fi, satellite radios, 24 hour roadside assistance, auto liability insurance and scheduled maintenance to ensure safety. Vanpoolers will also have access to a guaranteed ride home program, which ensures they can leave work at unscheduled times worry-free.

The cost savings for employees participating in vanpools can be significant. In addition to saving on gas and vehicle maintenance some insurance companies offer discounts to drivers who designate their vehicle as "recreation only" which means using the vehicle for everything but driving to work. NDOT has also received federal funds from the U.S. Department of Transportation to subsidize eligible vanpools in both the rural and urban areas of the state. The subsidy will further reduce the cost of commuting.

The vanpool program will provide a valuable option in rural areas where public transportation is often limited, as well as in urban areas where traffic congestion is a problem and parking is limited. Both employees and employers will share the benefit of this safe, reliable, cost-effective transportation alternative.

For more information about who can benefit from this important program contact Kari Ruse, NDOT Transit Manager, at 402-479-4694. To form a vanpool in your area, contact Cynthia Kinning, Enterprise Sales Manager, at 402-659-6027.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

The member spotlight for this issue is Box Butte County Transit. Janine Iossi is the manager at this transit facility and graciously answered questions about their system for the NATP newsletter.



History of Box Butte County Transit

The City of Alliance took over the Box Butte County Transit in July 2015. The city was lucky to have four of the original drivers stay on when the city took over. We pulled from their expertise and participated in training sessions when they were offered. The Managers Workshops are always very helpful. Kari Ruse and the NDOT staff were invaluable resources. Today, our current fleet of buses consists of three 12-passenger buses and three vans. On staff, we currently have 12 driver/dispatchers and one manager.

How Long Have You Served as Manager?

I have served as manager for two years when the city acquired the transit system in 2015.

How Does Your Transit System Serve the Local Community?

Box Butte County Transit is an incredible asset to the communities of Alliance and Hemingford. For a very reasonable fee, we provide transportation to get riders to work, school, grocery stores, airport, doctor appointments and food banks. We provide avenues for riders to get to destinations across the city. In the village of Hemingford, we partner with the nutrition center and deliver meals.

What are Some Highlights of Serving Your Community?

I believe I speak for all of the staff who would agree that many of our days are filled with rewarding experiences in simply helping people get to their destinations. One highlight is providing transportation for assisted living patrons. With their activities director, we take them to the local arts center, museum, shopping and ice cream. When given the chance, we give them a "drive by" of our famous city fountain. They love that! Another highlight is taking groups to the local fair so they can participate in county fair activities.

What are Some Challenges You See Facing Both Your Transit System and the Industry as a Whole?

I see funding as a potential future challenge. Keeping senators and congressmen aware of the importance of public transportation is a high priority. In order to run effective systems, funding has to be available. The other constant challenge is making the public aware that transportation is available to everyone.

How Does Being a Member of the NATP Benefit Your System?

The NATP has been a great networking system to be involved with. It's been a pleasure getting to know other managers from across the state. Tiffany is a pleasure to work with and does a great job! I always learn so much when we have meetings, and it helps to be able to ask questions and get feedback from other managers.

What do Your Riders Think of Your Transit System?

They embrace the fact that the City of Alliance offers such a beneficial transportation system. I would describe our riders as "thankful." This service provides a great way for people to get rides to places and maintain their independent living. We are extremely lucky to have public transportation available in Alliance!



A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held in July 2015.

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**Next newsletter deadline is
November 23, 2017**

Please send your articles and pictures for the Nebraska Transit Trends newsletter to the NATP office by **November 23, 2017**

We want to know what all of our members are doing throughout the state. Also, if you see something newsworthy, be sure to let the office know. Submit your typed articles via email (as a word document) to the NATP office at **tfougerson@youraam.com**. You may include pictures if you like, but be sure to save them as a .jpeg file or they may not be included in the newsletter. Documents received after the deadline will appear in the next newsletter.

Visit Us On The Web!
www.neatp.org

*Dates To Remember***September**

21-22 League of Nebraska Municipalities Conference
Lincoln

26 NATP Board Meeting

26-27 Drivers Training & Rodeo
Kearney

October

29 - Nov. 1 - Nat'l RTAP Technology Conf.