

# Nebraska Transit Trends

## Federal Grant to Help Coordinate Public Transportation

Federal grant to help coordinate public transportation across Nebraska, especially for military service families.

A \$933,000 grant from the U.S. Dept of Transportation will help public transit agencies across Nebraska better serve public transportation with improved technology and coordination.

U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood announced \$34.6 million for 55 projects in 32 states on November 9, 2011, to enhance access to local, affordable transportation services for military families and spouses,

and wounded warriors. Nebraska's application from the Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA) in Omaha was one of the awardees.

*One of the aims of the awards will be for military families and veterans to be able to take full advantage of the transportation resources in their communities.*

MAPA's application for a "Midlands One-Call Transportation Center" will expand and upgrade an existing computer aided scheduling and dispatching system, adding automated customer phone scheduling. Veterans will be added to

the coordination planning and trip routing process and Medicaid transportation will be incorporated into the one-call/one-click system.

Veterans across Nebraska and western Iowa will have more options for travel to a Veterans Health facility.

The computer aided scheduling and dispatching system under the grant will be able to tie to newly available computer software available to rural transit agencies across Nebraska.

## ATTITUDE

*by Charles Swindoll*

The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude, to me, is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness or skill. It will make or break a company...a church...a home...a team! The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past... we cannot change the fact that people will act a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude... I am convinced that life is 10% of what happens to me and 90% how I react to it. And so it is with you.... we are in charge of our Attitudes.

## From Georgia's Desk

As you all know this is my last column for the Nebraska Association of Transportation Providers. This has been the most exceptional thirteen years of my life. I have had the opportunity to work with outstanding managers, dedicated drivers, the Department of Roads staff, and other unforgettable transit professionals. Together we have accomplished a tremendous giant step forward in public transit. I am so very proud to have you all as my transit friends. You are the best!

I would like to commend the

NATP Board for their confidence given to me over the years. Together, I believe we have built a stronger foundation for public transit here in Nebraska. Our state has weathered its way through the recent economic turmoil. We do continue to see population and job growth numbers that exceed the national average. Thus, we will always see the increased need for public transit.

Finally, I do want to encourage all of you to continue attending the NATP events during the year (NATP Managers' Workshops, Drivers'

Trainings, the Rodeo, and the Legislative Day). You all have many opportunities for exceptional leadership skills. Please take advantage of the great training NATP and the DOR provides. I wish you all continued success for your public transit systems.

TRANSIT ~ Moving Nebraskans  
to the Good Life

Georgia Janssen  
NATP Executive Director

Georgia Janssen  
NATP Executive Director

## 4 Scholarships Available for Salt Lake Rural Conference

Carol Maxson  
NATP President

**TRB Rural Conference,  
Salt Lake City, Utah  
October 14-17, 2012**

TRB (Transportation Research Bureau) is sponsoring the 20th National Rural Public and Intercity Bus Transportation Conference, October 14-17, 2012 in Salt Lake City. This conference is designed to address key rural public and intercity bus transportation themes including accessibility,

operations, safety, security, and tribal transportation, plus many more great sessions.

NATP will sponsor four scholarships to the 20th National Conference on Rural Public and Intercity Bus Transportation. Please write three or four paragraphs stating why you are interested in attending the Rural Conference. Jerry Wray, DOR Transit Liaison Manager and the new executive director will choose

the four winners. Announcements will be made at the June 12-14 NATP Managers' Conference. These scholarships are funded by the RTAP (Rural Transportation Assistance Program) funds. All applications must be received no later than May 1st, 2012.

Please send all requests to: Carol Maxson, NATP President via email:

[carol.maxson@ogallala-ne.gov](mailto:carol.maxson@ogallala-ne.gov)

## 2011 NATP Roadeo Results

Twenty eight drivers competed in the 19th Annual Statewide NATP Roadeo. A total of thirty judges (managers and drivers) volunteered for the event. The winners in the van division were (1st) Jim Eggerling, Norfolk Public Transit, (2nd) Larry Vortherms, Avera Creighton Hospital, and (3rd) Stanley Halbmaier, RYDE Transit. Jim Eggerling was also the driver of the year with the most accumulated points.

The small bus winners were (1st) Carol Graham, Blue Rivers AAA, Kelly Durbin (2nd), Kimball County Shuttle, and (3rd) Ardis Niederklein, SCAT. The first place winners received \$300 and an engraved clock. The second place winners received \$200 and an engraved (state seal) key ring. The third place winners won \$100.

The first ever "Spirit Award" was presented to Ardis Niederklein. This award is presented to the driver competing that exemplifies good sportsmanship.

The 1st and 2nd place drivers have won a scholarship to the CTAA National Roadeo to be held in Baltimore, Maryland, May 20-25, 2012. The four managers also will win a full scholarship to the CTAA EXPO/ Roadeo. Congratulation to all of the winners! Next year the NATP Driver Training and Roadeo will be held in Kearney, September 18 & 19, 2012.



*Mark Intermill, Associate State Director-Advocacy at AARP, is shown accepting the "Friend of Transit Award." Carol Maxson, NATP President presented the award at the last meeting of the Nebraska Coordinated Public Transportation coalition meeting, October 27.*

**Transit Takes Us**  
to work...  
to school...  
to medical care...  
to shops...  
to family and friends...  
to sports events...  
to movies and other fun...  
to beautiful scenery...  
and much, much more...



**Transit Also Helps Us**  
**Reduce:**  
air pollution...  
traffic jams...  
driver frustration  
or boredom



# Nebraska Public Transit

Moving Nebraskans to the Good Life.

## Nebraska Association of Transportation Providers

### NATP ~ Membership Information

Our goal is to provide adequate, safe and affordable transportation that is essential to the economic health and vitality of our communities, large or small. Public transportation is a major key to maintaining an independent and productive life for all members of our communities.

It is clearly in our State's interest to encourage the development and continuation of a balanced public transit system. It must be responsive to the needs and limitations of individual riders and each community. All human and financial resources must be used efficiently to do this.

Nebraska Association of Transportation Providers was formed to promote effective, efficient public transportation throughout Nebraska. NATP supports public transportation that is accessible to all, particularly the aged, handicapped and anyone who would otherwise be without transportation.

Access to medical, business employment, social and supporting services is fundamental to all of us. Public transportation is a key element in allowing Nebraska citizens to maintain their independence, dignity and self-respect.

### As a member of NATP you will:

- Become a vital link in a statewide information exchange

- Actively promote the development and continuation of public transportation systems.
- Actively promote information sharing and coordination among Nebraska's transit systems.
- Assist in the development of a statewide platform to address transportation issues/needs.
- Professionalize the transportation industry in Nebraska.
- Actively promotes communication/cooperation among all persons, professions, and organizations concerned with public transportation.
- Actively promotes better understanding and interest in the field of public transportation.
- Actively promotes and encourages professionalism in public transportation operators through research, training and educational opportunities.

### Our Objectives:

- Maximize Federal/State resources in the development and expansion of public and specialized transportation systems in Nebraska.
- Promote the development and coordination of these systems to ensure maximum use of all resources.
- Educate the public about the importance of public transportation systems.
- Encourage local support, diversity and innovation in the delivery of transportation services.



Winners from the 2011 NATP Rodeo small bus division competition were: Left to right: 1st place - Carol Graham, Blue Rivers AAA; 2nd place - Kelly Durbin, Kimball County Shuttle; and 3rd place - Ardis Niederklein, SCAT, Western NE



Ardis Niederklein (Saline County Area Transit) won the first NATP "Spirit Award". This award is given for the driver competing that displays extraordinary encouragement, good sportsmanship, and professionalism to the other drivers competing.

# Securement: What to Seek and Avoid

by Anne Lowder

*Some things to think about when securing a mobility device to your vehicle.*

How safe is the mobility device you just secured? Did you secure it so it will not break apart or tip over during a crash?

The purpose of securing of a mobility device is to limit movement of the device and to protect its occupant (and other passengers) during a sudden stop or crash. It is accomplished by using securement straps to attach stable parts of the mobility device to stable attachment points on your vehicle. Basic “best practices” for securement promoted by the National Transit Institute (NTI) are:

- 1) The mobility device should be centered on the floor in the track/attachment area.
- 2) Wheel locks should be on and the power off.
- 3) Secure the wheelchair with a 4-point strap tie-down system using all four straps.
- 4) Secure the straps at a 30 to 45 degree angle, and
- 5) Make sure the mobility device cannot move more than two inches in any direction when secured.

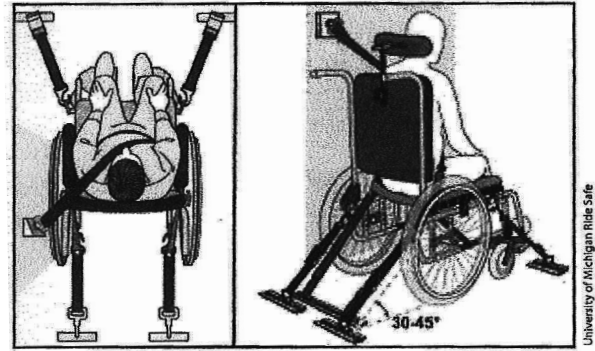
The above steps present an example of the perfect securement of a mobility device by best practices standards, but you should know that perfection is almost impossible with the range of designs for mobility devices in today’s market. The American Disabilities Act (ADA) requires you to do the best you can (see sidebar). The help guide you in achieving the best possible securement for each type of mobility device it is helpful to ask these two questions: 1) *What potentially fragile parts of the mobility device should I **avoid** when attempting to secure it?*, and 2) *What parts should I **seek** in safely securing the device?*

## **What to AVOID when attaching securement strap tie-downs to a mobility device.**

**Avoid wheels and wheel brackets.** The wheel bracket is attached to the device using two bearings and a small metal shaft, and is not designed to withstand the forces exerted on it during a crash.

**Avoid springs or suspension components.** The springs or suspension components connect frame parts together and are not part of the base or seat frame. The components are not built or tested to withstand the forces placed on a mobility device during a sudden stop, hard turn, or impact.

**Avoid arm and foot rests:** Arm and foot rest are



*These images show proper securement using tethering straps. At left, the device is shown from above with the four straps clearly visible. The image at right shows the rear straps attached at a 30 to 45 degree angle.*

designed to lift or move out of the way. They attach with small pins or bolts to the frame member. If too much force is applied to these pieces, they will break or snap.

**Avoid the post for removable seats.** A post for a removable seat is unsafe for securement because the post can dislodge during a crash. While difficult to access on some mobility devices, securement must be to the base or seat frame and not to the seat post.

**Avoid swivel seats.** Swivel seats aid a passenger in getting in and out of the device. The seat can be rotated by using a knob or lever usually located near the side of the seat. A swivel seat can be unsafe because it is not a solid piece of the frame. When encountering a device with a swivel seat, see if the passenger will transfer to a bus seat. The passenger can refuse, though; if that is the case, continue to secure the device and the passenger as best you can.

## **What to SEEK when attaching securement strap tie-downs to a mobility device**

When looking for securement points, which is better—the base frame or the seat frame? The answer is: It depends. Refer to NTI’s general best practices guidelines and apply the steps to the particular mobility device. Try to obtain a 30 to 45 degree angle on the securement of the tie-down and consider center of gravity, which will be higher if the passenger transfers to a seat. The most important thing is to find the securement location that provides the safest securement for the particular mobility device.

**Seek base frames.** There are a variety of base frames, and each may require different securement locations. There isn’t “a one size fits all” securement location. Sometimes the front base frame will have ideal securement points, but the back base frame will

not. Some base frames are protected by plastic shields that hide securement locations.

The best tip for determining the best frame securement location is to go online and search for "owner's manual" and the name of the powered wheelchair. The manual will deconstruct and identify parts of the wheelchair and is usually a great resource. This tip won't help you with a new rider with a mobility device unfamiliar to you, but may be useful if you have someone with a difficult-to-secure chair who rides frequently.

Once the frame characteristics are identified, you can place webbing loops or tie-down straps on the frame and determine if those locations will allow you to follow securement best practice guidelines. For example, there may be an exposed base frame area, but when the tie-down straps are attached, the angle may be less than recommended 30 to 45 degrees.

Note: The use of straps with webbing loops (rather than S-hooks) helps prevent damage of the plastic shroud around mobility devices. A mobility device frame that is covered with fiberglass may easily get scratched or cracked by an S-hook, and the mobility device owner may then file a damage claim. The use of webbing loops or straps that tighten with D-rings can reduce the chance of damage and help make the mobility device easier to secure.

**Seek seat frames.** Each mobility device has a seat frame in addition to the base frame. The seat consists of the seat back, arm rests and the seat cushion, which is attached to a metal frame. The seat frame is most likely constructed using welded joints or hardened bolts and it is attached to the base frame with posts. The posts are usually removable and not considered securement locations. The seat frame is often difficult to access, but it can provide a good securement location. Permanent webbing loops added to a seat frame can make the securement process safer and quicker.

**Seek welded joints.** Welded joints are common on both base frames and seat frames. They can be identified by a weld with a slightly raised irregular surface and often attached frame cross pieces. Welded joint are considered effective securement locations. Look to attach the tie-down to the welded junction where the arm or foot rest attaches to the frame.

**Seek hardened bolts.** Some mobility devices are assembled using hardened steel bolts. Hardened steel bolts are identified by three or six raised lines or bumps on the bolt. They can be found anywhere on a mobility device. Joints with hardened bolts are actually stronger than welded joints. If accessible, these bolted joints can achieve the recommended securement.

**Seek an alternative front frame securement, if needed.** Three- or four-wheeled scooters are

**D**o you always have to secure a mobility device? If you possibly can, then yes. This decision should be guided by NTI best practices guidance, the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 49 CFR 373.165 and 49 CFR37 Appendix D, and by your agency's policies.

An unsecured mobility device can result in tips, flips or a projectile hazard within the vehicle. Thus for the safety of the individual using the mobility device, and the safety of other vehicle occupants, it is best to have the mobility device secured. However, the ADA states that an agency may not deny transportation to a passenger using a "common wheelchair" if the wheelchair cannot be secured by a vehicle's securement system. (Common wheelchairs have 3-4 wheels, are up to 30" wide and 48" long, and fit on lifts.) It is up to the agency to secure the mobility device to the best of the agency's ability, but if the wheelchair cannot be secured, and the passenger will not move to a seat you must transport the passenger in the unsecured device.

What about the person? Are you required to secure the *occupant*? The ADA looks at the overall policy of the agency. If you require all passengers to buckle up, then you can require individuals seated in mobility units to do so as well. If your agency does not have a seat belt policy for all passengers, then the ADA says you cannot require securement of the person just because he or she has a disability.

challenging because they often do not have exposed frame members or identifiable welded joints in the front area. Scooters also have safety issues such as a high center of gravity so they are easy to tip over in a crash, even if the passenger is secured with a seat belt and shoulder belt. If you are unable to secure a scooter using frame components, an alternative securement strategy to consider is to connect the two tie-down straps across the foot plate (a solid frame member running front to back). This is an alternative method only. If possible, try to have the passenger transfer to a seat, if they are willing.

### What's Popping In Transit FY 2012!!

206 Vehicles

Rural

Miles Traveled

2.6 Million  
8.2 Million

Rural  
Urban

Passenger Boarding

753,104  
6.4 Million

Rural  
Urban

**TRANSIT-  
Moving Nebraskans to the  
Good Life!!!!**



*Shown in competition of the wheelchair securement is RoseMarie Edgar, volunteer; Wayne Masek, DOR, Road Committee; Mari-Ann Pesek, SCAT; and Brenda Guilliams, Richardson County Transit volunteer.*



*All of the van drivers competing during the recent NATP Roadeo.*



*Winners from the NATP Roadeo van division competition were: Right to left: 1st place - Jim Eggerling, Norfolk Transit; 2nd place - Larry Vortherms, Avera Creighton Hospital; and 3rd place - Stan Halbmaier, RYDE Transit, Kearney*



*Brenda Guilliams, Richardson County Transit (left), presenting Carol Graham, Blue Rivers AAA with the NATP small bus Traveling Trophy.*



*Carol Graham, Blue Rivers AAA, presenting the van NATP Traveling Trophy to Jim Eggerling, Norfolk Public Transit. Jim was the driver of the year with the most point accumulated (855).*



*Drivers using the traffic simulators at the Nebraska Safety Center, Kearney.*

# BLAST FROM THE PAST



*Drivers stretching at a recent spring drivers' training.*



*NATP managers that attended the Lincoln Legislative Day.*

*Last scholarship winners for the 2010 TRB Rural Conference.*



*Drivers during an interactive training session discussing ways to improve passenger assistance.*



*Drivers are ready for the NATP Rodeo competition!*



*All of the small bus drivers competing . A total of 28 drivers competed during the recent competition.*

## NATP Calendar Of Events 2011 & 2012

December	<b>NACO</b> (Nebraska Association of County Officials), Kearney - Younes Conference Center
January 25, <b>2012</b>	<b>NATP Legislative Day</b> - Meet at the state Capitol for Dutch Lunch
February 1	Snow Date for NATP Legislative Day
March/April	<b>NATP Driver Trainings</b> (6 sites across the state) Dates and locations to be announced.
May 20-25	<b>CTAA National Rodeo/ EXPO</b> , Baltimore, MD
June 12,13 & 14	<b>NATP Managers' Workshop</b> , Kearney Hampton Inn and Younes Conference Center
September 18-19	<b>Drivers' Training/Rodeo</b> , Kearney Holiday Inn & Nebraska Safety Center
October	<b>Rural Bus and Intercity Conference</b> , Salt Lake, Utah

## Nebraska Association of Transportation Providers

### BOARD MEMBERS:

#### **Western Region**

Carol Maxson  
PRESIDENT  
411 East 2nd  
Ogallala, NE 69143

#### **West Central Region**

Charles McGraw  
PO Box 2288  
Kearney, NE 68848-2288

#### **East Central Region**

Vicki Goeken  
PO Box 302  
Norfolk, NE 68702

#### **Eastern Region**

Scott Bartels  
Box 412  
Western, NE 68464

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Georgia Janssen  
56726 Hwy 98  
Winside, NE 68790-5062  
Telephone/FAX (402) 585-4606  
e-mail: georgia@abbnebraska.com  
www.neatp.org

### MEMBERS AT LARGE:

Larry Ossowski  
1901 Court Street  
Beatrice, NE 68310

Sue Chipman, Treasurer  
1312 W. 5th  
McCook, NE

Curt Simon, Secretary  
2222 Cuming St.  
Omaha, NE 68102

City of Lincoln - STARTRAN  
Larry Worth  
710 "J" Street  
Lincoln, NE 68508