

Nebraska Transit Trends

20TH ANNUAL NATP DRIVERS TRAINING AND ROADEO HELD IN KEARNEY

NATP held the Annual Statewide Rodeo and Drivers Training at the Nebraska Safety Center in Kearney on September 18th and 19th. A total of 20 drivers from across the state registered and competed in the Rodeo. 32 volunteers, made up of transit managers & staff, NDOR staff and others stepped in to judge the event. Laura Lindgren of Saunders County Transit and Jeff Baker of Seward County Transit were co-chairs for the Rodeo. Laura was unable to attend the event but had contributed many planning hours and offered advice and insights to the new NATP staff. She will be missed at future events since she is retiring this year. NATP appreciates her years of service to the Rodeo Committee and to the association.



Carol Maxson, Frank Faughn & George Gallardo judge at the Rodeo

Everyone who participated in the Rodeo, either as a judge or a contestant, was invited to an awards luncheon. All Rodeo contestants were announced and presented with a certificate and a Rodeo lapel pin. Drivers who had been accident free for the past 12 months were awarded a Safe Driver Award window sticker to place in their vehicle. Rodeo Committee members were asked to stand and were thanked for their

hard work in putting together this event. Committee members present included Jeff Baker, Scott Bartels, Wayne Masek, Cindy Sanders, Denise Smith and Corrina Duckworth, who did a great job stepping in for Laura Lindgren. Judges were then announced and were presented with a tube of candy and a poem that gave thanks for their hard work. The event could not have taken place without the help of everyone.

The Rodeo competition consists of a written test, pre-trip inspection and wheelchair securement segments, and a driving skills course. The top two winners from each division and their managers are eligible to attend and compete in the CTAA National Rodeo in Albuquerque, New Mexico, in June of 2013.

First place winners of both divisions won \$300 and an engraved clock. The 2nd place winners received a \$200 check along with an engraved keyring that features the state seal. 3rd place winners took home a check for \$100.

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CONGRATULATIONS!!

Driver of the Year

Larry Vortherms

Spirit Award Winner

Diane Clark

Van Division

1st - Larry Vortherms

2nd - Fred Krenk

3rd - Cindy Collins

Bus Division

1st - Mildred Crable

2nd - Ardis Niederklein

3rd - Brenda Guilliams

Thanks to the Rodeo Committee, NDOR, Nebraska Safety Center Staff, Judges and Drivers for a great Rodeo!

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TRANSIT FACILITY UPDATES

RYDE Transit held the ground breaking for their new RYDE Transit Transportation Facility on July 31, 2012. In attendance were: Rick Sheehy – Lieutenant Governor, Moktee Ahmad – FTA Regional Administrator FTA Region VII, Jerry Wray – NDOR, Dick Pierce – Buffalo County, Stan Close – Mayor, City of Kearney. A large group of community



Groundbreaking photo provided by RYDE Transit.

individuals, public transit professionals and government officials attended the ceremony. More importantly, there were 24 construction workers on site the day of the ground breaking. This is an important figure because funding for this project is provided by the U.S. Department of Transportation - TIGER (Transit Investment Generating Economic Recovery) portion of the Economic Stimulus program otherwise known as ARRA (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act) signed by President Obama in February of 2009, designed for shovel ready projects which put individuals back to work, and create new job opportunities.

Phelps County Public Transit held a ribbon cutting ceremony and open house on July 31. Ice cream



Ribbon cutting photo provided by RYDE Transit.

sundaes were served following the ceremony to help celebrate the official opening of the new bus facility.

The Phelps County Public Transit System would like to thank FTA and NDOR for giving them the opportunity to build this new bus facility. Everyone is truly grateful and excited about it.

NEBRASKA JOINS MISSOURI, KANSAS & IOWA FOR 2013 CONFERENCE

NATP will see some changes to the usual Managers Workshop next year. Instead of having the annual Managers Workshop in June, NATP will join Missouri, Kansas and Iowa for a joint Public Transit Education & Training Forum. The dates are set for August 4-6, 2013, and will be held at the Intercontinental Hotel, Kansas City at the Plaza in Kansas City, Missouri.

NATP was approached by Missouri and Kansas a few months ago about the possibility of this joint venture. They indicated that Iowa was also interested in joining.

After speaking with NDOR and getting their input, Board members were able to cast their votes on whether NATP should join the other states, or continue to have the regular managers workshop in Nebraska in 2013. The Board voted unanimously to

participate in the joint conference in 2013.

Treasurer Sue Chipman said, "I think it is important to explore new ideas and network with others in our field."

This joint conference will be held every four years. In the other years, NATP will continue to have the Managers Workshop at rotating locations in Nebraska.

The plan is to have a charter bus pick up managers at designated locations along I-80 and drive everyone to the conference. This will help keep travel costs down.

The program, speakers, social events, and exhibit hall are currently being discussed by the executive directors of each state's association. Several teleconferences have been held to get the planning process started.

NATP will notify managers as soon as promotional materials, website and other registration information are available.

This is an exciting opportunity for managers in Nebraska to network with managers from other states, listen to a wide variety of speakers, view a larger exhibit hall and also participate in activities in the Kansas City area.



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

It's hard to believe that it is November already! Summer is now behind us and fall has treated us fairly well - so far. With winter just around the corner, it's time that we remember to review our winter driving skills. Take your time, plan accordingly and make sure your vehicles are prepared for the unpredictable weather that we sometimes face in Nebraska. Sometimes it's just watching out for the other drivers!

I just wanted to give a big THANK YOU to everyone who helped with the ROADeo in September. Tiffany and I weren't sure how it would go but with a great NDOR staff and amazing volunteers, everything went smoothly. I can now say "this isn't our first roadeo!"

We had a large group of drivers who participated and it was great to see how encouraging everyone was toward each other. I was even cheered on as I reluctantly drove through the course in one of the vans. I don't think I hit too many

cones but I know I would need a lot more practice before taking on any passengers! It's great knowing that the NATP drivers are so prepared and continue to improve their driving skills so they can offer superior service to their riders. You are all to be commended for your efforts!

In October I attended the National Conference on Rural Public and Intercity Bus Transportation Conference along with Jeff Baker, Vicki Goeken and Jonnie Kusek. Coletta Clouse was also able to attend. It was great attending the different sessions that were offered and I definitely appreciated the large exhibit hall. I made numerous contacts with vendors and made sure that they knew about our upcoming joint conference in August 2013.

We are looking forward to working with Iowa, Missouri and Kansas on this joint venture and hope that our managers are able to make the trip. We'll soon have more information

to share.

Be sure to join us for Legislative Day this year. We're working on information packets and a display board for the senators. We'd like to include some "rider testimonials" so if you could get some of your passengers to write something, turn it in to us as soon as you can. I'm sure the senators would love to hear about how NATP transit systems serve their constituents.

As most of you know, Jerry Wray will be retiring at the end of the year. I want to extend a personal thank you to Jerry - he was instrumental in supporting me and my staff during the past year. We hope he stops in to visit us. Best wishes Jerry!

If you ever have any questions, suggestions or concerns, do not hesitate to call the office! Have a great holiday season!

Kathi Schildt
NATP Executive Director

NATP'S 2012-2013 PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We have had beautiful (warmer and drier than usual) fall weather and are grateful for safe traveling during the harvest season. Farmers can be hurried, fatigued, and stressed this time of year and that can cause driving hazards. That is why it is imperative that we all use our defensive driving skills and show a little extra patience and courtesy on the road. This strategy applies in the cities as well as on the highways and county roads.

Also with fall comes the annual NATP Roadeo. And once again, the Roadeo Committee, NDOR staff, and all of the volunteers who assisted in making this year's driver training and Roadeo a success deserve a big "THANK YOU!" Especially considering we have so many people working in

areas they are not yet accustomed to.

Thank you also to all the drivers who were brave enough to compete. Congratulations to those who will represent Nebraska at Nationals in Albuquerque, New Mexico, in June 2013. I always emphasize to my drivers that the Roadeo provides a great learning and networking opportunity. As a transit director, I believe nothing is more important than the safety of our passengers and drivers. It is important that all transits emphasize safety and recognize the value of NATP training events that help us reach high safety standards.

It would be terrific to host an even larger number of participants next year. To that end, the

Roadeo Committee is reviewing participant feedback and will strive to continue to improve this training opportunity.

Those who attended the TRB Rural Conference in Salt Lake City, Utah, returned October 17 and I am sure they brought back new ideas, knowledge, and inspiration to advocate for rural public transit. We will look forward to having them report on their experience.

Now, as fall changes to winter, remember to "winterize" your driving habits as well as your vehicles.

Scott Bartels
NATP President

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Larry Vortherms won 1st place in the van division.



Scott Bartels with Fred Krenk, 2nd place in van division.



Rodeo Committee Co-Chair Jeff Baker sets up the driving course.

Winners for the small bus division were 1st place, Mildred Crable of Webster County Public Transit, 2nd place, Ardis Niederklein of Saline County Area Transit, and 3rd place, Brenda Guilliams of Richardson County Transit.

The van division winners include 1st place, Larry Vortherms of Avera Creighton Hospital, 2nd place, Fred Krenk of Wayne Public Transit, and 3rd place, Cindy Collins of RYDE Transit.

The driver of the year award went to Larry Vortherms who had the highest score of 885 out of a possible 1000 points. Larry received a \$50 Visa gift card as his prize and also took home the traveling trophy for winning the van division. Mildred Crable took home the traveling trophy for the small bus division.



Ardis Niederklein was 2nd and Mildred Crable was 1st in the bus division.

For the second year, the Rodeo Committee honored a driver who exemplified good sportsmanship during the event. Diane Clark of McCook Public Transit took home this award, which consisted of a Husker cooler filled with popcorn and candy.

On Tuesday, nearly 60 drivers and managers attended a free drivers training held at the Holiday Inn Convention Center. Brandon Benitz, a motivational speaker from the Kearney area, gave a presentation on leadership. Benitz informed the audience that although not everyone may always be in a defined leadership role, leadership skills can be used in all aspects of daily life. After the training, attendees were treated to a lunch and then moved to the Nebraska Safety Center. Dennis Holtz, program manager at the safety center, held a refresher course on driving skills. Outside, Eric Pearson of the Braun Corporation demonstrated how to use the Braun wheelchair lift.



Kathi Schildt presents Diane Clark with the Spirit Award.

Everyone who attended received a certificate from the Safety Center, drawstring bag, clipboard and bottle koosie all featuring the NATP logo.



A bus driver correctly maneuvers a left hand reverse.



(Above) Kelly Durbin makes sure there are no speeders. (Left) Attendees listen to speaker Brandon Benitz during Tuesday's training.



Legislative Day
Wednesday, January 30, 2013
 State Capitol
 1445 K Street, Lincoln, NE

Meet at the Information Desk
 on the 1st Floor at 11:30 a.m.
 Dutch Treat Lunch in the Cafeteria

Distribution of materials
 will be at 1:00 p.m.

We're looking for
 some rider testimonials
 to include in our handouts to
 the Senators. Do you have people
 who rave about your services? We
 want to hear about it! Have them
 write down a short statement &
 send it to our office.



----- (Clip and mail, or email to) -----

Please RSVP by Wednesday, January 23, 2013, to: NATP Office by emailing tfougeron@youraam.com or fax to 402.489.0336 or mail your registrations to NATP, 6201 South 58th Street, Suite B, Lincoln, NE 68516.

Transit System Name: _____

Attendee Names: _____

Address: _____

Phone and/or email: _____

District # and Senator's name: _____

I will be attending the Legislative Dutch Lunch at 11:30 a.m. the Capitol. ____ Yes ____ No

I will be assisting in Distribution of Materials to the Senators at 1:00 p.m. ____ Yes ____ No

Below, please provide indicate the best method to contact you, in case of Snow Day on February 6, 2013.

20th Annual National Conference on Rural Public and Intercity Bus Transportation

Salt Lake City, Utah, was the setting for this year's 20th Annual National Conference on Rural Public and Intercity Bus Transportation, held October 14-17. This year's theme was "Connecting Communities: Sharing Solutions." NATP Executive Director Kathi Schildt attended the conference along

Jonnie Kusek - Scholarship Recipient

Attending the 20th National Conference for Rural Public & Intercity Bus Transportation was quite enlightening for me and for my team (even though they may not know it yet, as information is still being

Once again, I would like to thank the Nebraska Department of Roads and NATP for the opportunity to attend this conference. It was truly fulfilling, educational and an honor to represent those from "The Good Life". Thank you.

Jeff Baker - Scholarship Recipient

The TRB Conference was a great opportunity for the Nebraska delegation to learn from other transportation systems throughout the country. Through this excellent training and peer networking, I feel confident that the future of Public Transportation in Nebraska will continue to be successful.

I would recommend this training to everyone and thank the Nebraska Department of Roads and NATP for this opportunity.

Connecting Communities: Sharing Solutions



Picture here are Coletta Clouse, Vicki Goeken, Jonnie Kusek, Jeff Baker and Kathi Schildt. Photos courtesy of Jeff Baker.

with scholarship award winners Jonnie Kusek of Box Butte County Public Transit, Jeff Baker of Seward County Public Transit, and Vicki Goeken of Community Concern of Norfolk. Coletta Clouse of Ogallala Public Transit also attended the conference.

The conference consisted of many workshops, breakout sessions, time with exhibitors and different entertainment options and meals. There was a scavenger hunt for first-time attendees and NATP is proud to announce that Jonnie and Coletta worked together to win first place. The prize for winning the competition was a free registration to the next TRB Conference in 2014, tentatively scheduled to take place in California. Congratulations on your accomplishment ladies; you did a great job representing NATP!

disseminated and implemented). This year's conference theme was "Connecting Communities, Sharing Solutions". I discovered that this is what I personally came away with. The information and tools that were shared are priceless when it comes to the cost of an education, for I feel that this is what I received. I have always found that by listening to those around you, those that have had more experience, have suffered or been blessed by the trials and tribulations that most of us face each day, have so much to bring to the table. From FTA regulations, to alternative financial resources, volunteer programs to those that made you feel rejuvenated and wanting to rush home to get back to work (I know it's a sickness), were just a few of the items that I was able to take away from the table.



Jonnie Kusek and Coletta Clouse won first place in the scavenger hunt.

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**Next newsletter deadline is
February 8, 2013**

Please send your articles and pictures for the Nebraska Transit Trends newsletter to the NATP office by **February 8, 2013**.

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 info@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 appear in the next newsletter.

Visit Us On The Web!
www.neatp.org

*Dates To Remember***December 2012**

12-13 NACO Conference
Kearney - Younes
Conference Center

January 30, 2013

NATP Legislative Day
Lincoln

February 6, 2013

NATP Legislative Snow Day
Lincoln

March 2013 - Proposed

NATP Drivers Training
Norfolk, Grand Island,
Beatrice, Kearney

April 2013 - Proposed

NATP Drivers Training
Gering, Ogallala

June 2-7, 2013

CTAA National
Rodeo/EXPO
Albuquerque, NM

August 4-6, 2013

Joint Public Transit
Education & Training Forum
for Managers
Kansas City, MO

September 17-18, 2013

21st Annual Drivers Training
and Rodeo
Kearney



Carol Maxson celebrated her retirement from the Ogallala Public Transit system (and NATP) on Friday, September 28th. Carol said, "I appreciated the kind expressions from all who were at the Rodeo luncheon and it was great to see everyone who was able to come to the send off that the City of Ogallala gave me. It is always so much fun to get together with people who know the biz and can empathize with you." We will

miss Carol's knowledge, expertise, and passion for the transit industry and NATP. Pictured here are Cindy Sanders, Marilee Hyde, Carol Maxson, Sue Chipman, Georgia Janssen, Denise Smith and Charles McGraw.



The NATP office will be closed November 22-23 and December 24-25. Enjoy the holidays with your friends and families!

What's Happening in Nebraska transit

Number of rural vehicles - 208

Miles Traveled

- 2.6 million (rural)
- 8.3 million (urban)

Passenger Boarding

- 722,514 (rural)
- 6.7 million (urban)



Congratulations Jerry Wray on your retirement.

Thank you for 15 years of service and dedication in the Rail and Public Transportation Division at Nebraska Department of Roads.

**Best wishes,
Rail and Public Transportation
NDOR**



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