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Mark Your Calendar

IPTA Annual Meeting & Rodeo

June 18-21, 2014
Radisson Hotel
Davenport, IA

Substance Abuse Seminar

Hosted by HIRTA
August 27, 2014
9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Urbandale, IA

CTAA Conference

June 8-13, 2014
St. Paul, MN

APTA Expo

October 13-15, 2014
Houston, TX

From the President's Desk



The last few months, the IPTA Board, Legislative and Image Committees have met several times discussing and developing our legislative requests, facts and figures. Also, a good majority of our members sent letters to the Governor in response to the IDOT Transportation Concepts Plan (thank you!) A lot of work and time from a good group of people on behalf of our organizations and transit agencies state-wide has taken place.

We have all of the figures, buses beyond their useful life, cost to replace these buses, operating challenges by operating outdated fleets.

How about the comments or requests for additional or new service? I'm sure most of us have heard "we need bus service" maybe from business owners, elderly residential facilities, schools, medical facilities, city leaders, members of the Board of Supervisors or maybe just some of our citizens in our community? Although it is extremely important that we listen to these requests, it is equally important that our legislators hear these requests too! I believe most of the time we do a pretty good job of making our representatives aware of our challenges, but I'm not convinced we do an equally good job of getting our consumers, and the groups that represent them, to tell their story to their state legislators.

Every year, when IPTA hosts the Legislative Breakfast at the Capital, I sometimes wonder if our representatives are stopping by to really listen to us or just grab a cup of coffee and one of those delicious sausage sandwiches. Or maybe, they felt they were invited and they should at least make an appearance. Although this event is extremely important, it is extremely predictable. They know before they enter the room exactly what we are going to say, "here is our list of old buses, a study that proves the need and we need more money to replace these buses"! Yes, that is our basic message but every group has a study and wants more money.

A few weeks ago, Mark Joyce who represents IPTA in Des Moines, sent out an email with a link. It simply said "We need folks attending these asking for bus replacement capitol... At this link <http://www.senate.iowa.gov/democrats/forum-schedule/>". Did you notice that Mark said "folks"? Folks, do you think he was referring to us transit managers? Probably, but I'm sure he was also referring to anyone else that depends on our service, such as the riders, groups or organizations that use our services. The story is simple, we need partners that

are willing to tell the same story that we have been telling for years and what impact it has, or will have, on their organization and the quality of life of their consumers. This is where we are lacking in our efforts in gaining support for transit; somebody else needs to tell our story with us! They need to be heard and our legislators need to hear them! Although we have done a very good job on emphasizing our needs and working closely with our legislators, we need to take this a step further. The link that Mark supplied is a list of forums that are scheduled around the state. Anybody who uses and/or has a need for public transit should attend and let them know how important our service is. Or, contact the agencies that depend on your services and ask them to send a letter. It may have a little more of an impact than us telling our same old story.

IPTA Members Participate in DOT Reception at the Capitol January 29



Left to Right:
Doug Roelfs
Mark Little
Randy Zobrist



Left to Right:
Mark Joyce
Mark Little

The Silver Lining In The Cloud

By Kristy Korpi

You may recall from my March 2013 rambling in the IPTA newsletter that the City of Muscatine received a clean diesel grant from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. The timeline follows:

In June 2012, Iowa Department of Natural Resources approached the City of Muscatine regarding an opportunity to participate in a Diesel Emission Reduction Agreement. The City of Muscatine was asked to identify vehicles that would benefit from diesel emission reduction equipment and to select diesel emission reduction equipment. Priority was given to the oldest and most frequently driven vehicles. The City was also responsible for verifying the selected strategy with the Environmental Protection Agency to assure the technology was suitable and effective.

Specifications were sent out to six equipment vendors, three responded. In February, 2013, InterState Power Systems in Davenport, Iowa was awarded the bid for supply and installation of diesel emission reduction equipment for six Transit buses and five Street Department vehicles. When InterState Power Systems conducted the required pre-testing, it was discovered the Transit bus engines did not require the diesel emission reduction equipment due to the engine age. Although, the six buses were vintage 2006, only two buses retained their original engines.



The Street Department vehicles were fitted with Diesel Oxidation Catalysts, and Crankcase Ventilation Systems. The City was allowed to apply money appropriated for Transit vehicle equipment towards the purchase of two new diesel buses. These buses will replace two existing diesel buses that have met their useful life. The amount awarded to the City of Muscatine will be \$194,159.08 when the contract is completed. \$37,843.40 has been used to pay for pre-testing for all City vehicles, and the purchase and installation of diesel emission reduction equipment on Street Department vehicles. The remaining \$174,387.38 will be applied to the purchase of two light duty Transit buses to replace our 2006 buses with their original engines.

NTS Celebrates Twenty Year Anniversary

By Kay Fisk, Development Director, NTS

This year Neighborhood Transportation Service, Inc. (NTS) will mark the twentieth year of transportation service to the Cedar Rapids metropolitan area. From 566 rides and one seven passenger van in 1994, to 5 vans and 4 buses and 54,786 rides in 2013, NTS have proven its value. The concept of nighttime transportation started as a result of a town hall meeting. Residents of a neighborhood that experienced a high crime rate were left without nighttime transportation because



taxi were reluctant to visit the area after dark. City bus service ends at 6:00 PM and resumes at 6:00 AM so other than a taxi which is financially impossible for many, it created a great barrier for those who didn't have transportation. Through the partnership of United Way of East Central Iowa, The City of Cedar Rapids Five Seasons Transportation and Parking and the Wellington Heights Neighborhood Association, funding was made possible to serve this area. As the success became clear, service was extended to all of Cedar Rapids and Hiawatha and Marion. The target population for NTS is low- to moderate-income individuals and

families living in Cedar Rapids, Marion, and Hiawatha who do not have access to safe, reliable transportation to work and school. Of the clients that used NTS in FY 2013, 66% reported earning under \$12,000 and 85% earned under \$18,000. Many of the individuals within this target population experience transportation as a barrier to employment. Many work the second and third shifts in food service, health care, maintenance and manufacturing. NTS is the only night service in the community other than a taxi after the city buses stop at 6:00 PM. Food, shelter and clothing are defined as basic needs but without transportation, many individuals cannot get access to work and employment opportunities. NTS takes pride in providing a service that allows individuals to become independent and improve their lives. The ability to hold a full time job restores dignity to an individual and reduces the burden of the taxpayer to provide social services. As full time employment occurs, health care and other benefits are made possible.



Although the core service is getting people to work and night classes, NTS collaborates with many of the other nonprofits in the area. Transportation for young parents is provided to Young Parents Network so they can attend classes to prepare them for parenthood. The Arc of East Central Iowa depends on NTS for their summer camps and the Jane Boyd Community Center uses NTS for their after school and summer programs. A Downtown Shuttle was established three years ago as the result of many of the parking ramps being demolished after the flood in 2008. NTS picks workers up at an outlying parking lot and transports them to the downtown area where offices are located. This year's harsh winter has made the service very popular. For the past 15 years, the Hinzman and Nelson Correctional Center has depended on NTS to transport the clients that are housed in the facility to work. The clients are coming out of prison and are preparing for their return to society. They are expected to have employment yet they do not have driver's licenses or cars. NTS is the perfect solution to their transportation issue.

NTS is contacted by many in the community to fill gaps in transportation. When a viable need can be met, all effort is made to meet the need. NTS strongly believes transportation should not be a barrier to employment.

NTS Pushes for Employment Transportation Bill

An attempt to secure transportation funding failed in the 2013 Legislative Session. Providers across the state like NTS were reeling from the funding loss resulting from MAP-21 federal legislation and there were numerous discussions surrounding the issue. As result, when the bill was introduced, it was viewed as using state dollars to back-fill federal cuts; that was not popular.

After seeing a 17% increase in ridership at NTS for work related rides (a 31 % increase in one month!), it was clear the economy was on the rebound. What better way to request funding than to illustrate job growth! The next strategy was to

NTS Celebrates

build a coalition. Starting in May of 2013, I started traveling around Iowa to see what other providers were experiencing. I've lived in Iowa all of my life and I love it, winter and all. After my travels, I knew the reason why I love it. It's the people. I met with so many groups and individuals and everyone was so warm and friendly and excited about the prospect of a bill that could provide needed funding. Some providers have the same issue as NTS; the inability to accommodate increase in ridership. Others need to start new services while others are on the cusp of seeing programs fold from diminished funding. The other thing I learned about transit providers; we are a passionate, determined bunch that won't give up our services without a fight! We all know MAP-21 did our state a total injustice but it is time to move on and get over it. We need to be innovative and I think the *Iowa Employment Rides Imitative* SF-2076 bill might be a first step. The bill has been assigned to a subcommittee in the Senate and I foresee the Senate sending the bill to the House in the next couple of weeks. This year I registered to lobby and have spent the better part of each week in Des Moines. I'm working closely with Representatives in the House and with Speaker Paulsen. It will be very important for everyone to reach out to your respective legislators and urge them to support SF-2076. A companion bill has been introduced in the House so they will be familiar with it. When the bill process started, the NTS funding was selfishly my main interest. After working with people from all over the state, I realized we are all suffering and I want this to work so we will all benefit. No one can say getting people to work is a bad thing. This is a very bipartisan issue; democrats and republican both need to work. This is about Iowans. Best of all, what do people who are working do? THEY PAY TAXES!!



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Davenport, IA

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and plan
to attend*



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IPTA Washington DC Legislative Meeting

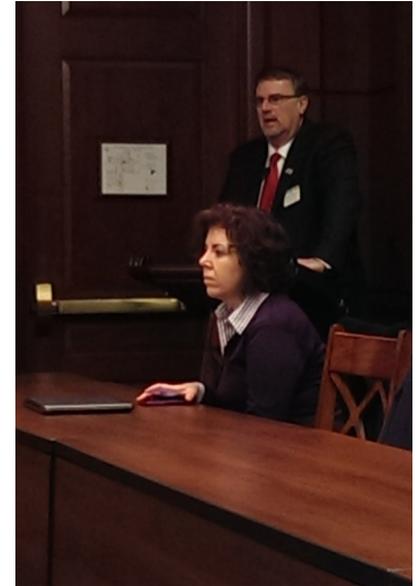
February 18 - 19, 2014

A number of IPTA members traveled to Washington for a meeting with the Iowa congressional delegation staff members. This annual trip allows the IPTA members to educate the staff of the Congressional Members on the issues that are facing the transit systems in Iowa.

At a meeting prior to the one with the Congressional staff members the IPTA members met with Bryan Tynan, APTA Director of Government Affairs and Scott Bogren of CTAA who had a training session and legislative update for the group prior to the meeting with the Congressional delegation staff members.



During the meetings the group heard an update on what is being considered for this years reauthorization bill and what to expect. Both the House and Senate Authorization Committees are talking about working on a bill that they would like to have ready before the August recess, but the bill may not happen this year because of lack of funding options.



Earlier this year the congress passed a two year budget. Now the appropriations committee is working on this years appropriations and hope to have them in place so there won't be any continuing resolutions as we have seen for the past few years.

They do have do something this year on the authorization side, so we will see something being passed. We won't see a full reauthorization bill for a 5 to 6 year program based on the fact of not having a way to pay for it. So we could see an extension of the current programs.

If legislation does start to move, we will need to continue to let our Members know what we feel about the issues that turn up in the bill. It would help if you would contact your Members of Congress and invite them to your systems yet this year, and the sooner the better, so we can educate them about your needs. If you want bus money to return this is the only way to get that done. The squeaky wheel gets the grease. So it's up to you to make sure they know of our needs. We should again try to set up meeting with all the managers of the transit systems in the congressman's district to have them hear from all you concerning issues. The investments of time and effort on your part will help pay off for your system down the road.

Get the Most Out of Your Facebook Marketing

By Terry Green
ArticleBiz.com

Getting the best results with social media takes time and effort. It also takes a lot of trial and error, as sometimes things work well with certain audiences, yet not so great with others. And sometimes, even with your best efforts, you don't see the results you had hoped for. It can seem like a lot of work, but is it worth it? You bet it is. In fact Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg announced recently that Facebook currently has one billion active monthly users. Now, your social media reach obviously won't see anything near these numbers (don't we wish!). But this should be a wake-up call about just how many people there are out there that you COULD reach. If you aren't actively engaging on Facebook, you should be, and pronto!

Now just having a presence on Facebook is not all it takes. You need to work it, and work it the right way. Here's how:

Engagement - It's all about engagement and getting people to respond to you. Yes, you can post tip after tip, but real success happens when you start communicating and talking with your audience. Remember, the more you talk with your fans the more activity you'll get on your page; which means the more exposure you'll get. It's that simple.

How many of you post a tip or comment on Facebook, then just leave and come back hours later? Next time, try sticking around for a bit; comment on other postings, and truly share with others. When you comment on someone else's post, you'll get on their radar and they are more likely to post on your page, plus your comment is now in the newsfeed of their friends. That's how you get real communication going and that's when the magic happens.

Devote a day of the week to connect with a unique idea. Recently we added a new feature on our Facebook page called Ask BizEase, where every Wednesday we encourage you to ask any question you want about business. If we don't know the answer, we'll do our best to find someone who does. So if you have a shopping cart question, or a question about WordPress or Wishlist Member, whatever...ask you question and we'll answer it. Not only is this a great way to get people engaged and talking, but it's a great way to showcase our talents and services, all while helping people at the same time. Try something like this on your own page to see if you can get people talking and engaged.

Use Visual - People are visual and often connect more with images, so add some fun images from time to time or consider adding some pictures with motivating captions. We love to get inspired. You can also have some fun by posting a photo and then asking for a caption or thought about it. That can really get the conversations going. Sometimes adding visuals are a little easier to do on your personal page, but it really can be beneficial on your business page as well.

Have fun - Yes, you can be serious, but also realize that most people come to Facebook to chill a bit. If you're always business as usual, you lose out on the magic that happens when we have fun together. So make sure you take time to have a little fun and enjoyment while you're at it.

The Facebook numbers speak for themselves, and success happens when you are in front of the right people and actively engaging them. Hopefully these tips will provide an incentive to do just that.



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