

RTAP BULLETIN

FLORIDA RURAL TRANSIT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

SPRING—VOL. 16, No. 1

2 HISTORY OF NATIONAL RTAP

3 SPOTLIGHT—MIKE HAYS

4 FLORIDA TRANSIT SAFETY
AND OPERATIONS
NETWORK (FTSON)

5 2018
UPCOMING
EVENTS

FPTA/FDOT/CUTR
PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT
WORKSHOP AND
SUMMIT

2018 Florida Triple Crown Bus Roadeo

On April 27-28, 2018, Florida's best bus drivers and technicians will gather in Daytona Beach to participate in the 2018 Annual Florida Triple Crown Bus Roadeo. The event combines the FPTA and RTAP roadeos into a single, colossal weekend honoring all of Florida's bus maintenance technicians, paratransit and fixed route operators.

The year's event is a joint effort of the Florida Public Transportation Association (FPTA), the Florida Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP), the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), and the Florida Association of Coordinated Transit Systems (FACTS), and hosted by Votran.

There will be training opportunities available. The bus operator participant's skills will be tested with a written test and the on-course competition. The

maintenance technicians will face similar challenges with a written test and a series of diagnostic tests.



As always, the event concluded will conclude with the Awards Banquet that crowns and recognizes the 2018 champions in the paratransit van and cutaway divisions, the fixed route bus division, and the maintenance technician's team competition.

Registration for the 2018 Annual Florida Triple Crown Bus Roadeo is now open at www.floridartap.org/roadeo and closes on March 30, 2018!

Annual Legislative Day A Success!

On February 14, 2018, the Florida Public Transportation Association (FPTA), the Florida Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD), the Florida Developmental Disability Council and the ARC of Florida, Inc. joined together to hold our Annual Legislative Day at the Capitol Building in Tallahassee. It was a mild weather day, with not much wind, which made the day one of the best we have had!

Everyone wore red scarves that had our logos embroidered on each side, this helped



cont'd on page 2



CUTR



to identify the vast number of people who were here in Tallahassee to join in the fun. We had pre-registered 150 individuals for the event, gave away 400 scarves, and fed 700 people. Three hundred and fifty cups of coffee were served in the morning, provided by a local Tallahassee coffee shop called Lucky Goat.

Advocates traveled from all over the state to participate and support us. Including groups from Palm Beach County, Duval and Volusia Counties.

Speakers included FDOT Secretary Mike Dew, FPTA Chair Brad Miller, and CTD Chair Marion Hart. Hundreds of people joined us during the speeches, visited the vehicles on display, and stopped by dozens of informational tables that were both inside and outside of the Capitol.

Many thanks to those advocates who participated and to the sponsors and exhibitors as well.

We're already beginning discussion to work together next year. Be on the lookout for a future Save the Date and be sure to make time to come to Tallahassee and join in the fun!

Submitted by Lisa Bacot, FPTA



L-R: Lisa Bacot, FPTA Executive Director; Mike Dew, FDOT Secretary; Brad Miller, FPTA Chair; and Ed Cover, FDOT State Transit Manager



Legislative Day Sponsors

History of National RTAP

Millions of rural and tribal citizens are unable to drive for health, economic or lifestyle reasons. Transit is a real solution to maintaining a high quality of life in rural areas—providing access to jobs, healthcare, education, shopping and numerous other activities utilizing public transportation. Since 1979, FTA has provided formula funding to states, under the Section 5311 Non-urbanized Transit Program, to establish and maintain transit systems in communities with populations under 50,000.

Soon after, program founders recognized that community transit drivers, dispatchers, maintenance workers, managers and board members needed special skills and knowledge

to provide quality service to their diverse customers across large service areas. As a result, the Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP) was created in 1987.

The Formula Program for Rural Areas (MAP-21's new name for the Section 5311 program) provides funding for the RTAP program. A portion of the funding is reserved for National RTAP; the remainder is distributed to the states by formula.

The goals of the RTAP program are to promote the safe and effective delivery of public transportation services in rural areas and to facilitate more efficient use of public transporta-

cont'd on page 3



Vol. 16 No.14, Spring 2018

The **RTAP BULLETIN** is produced by the USF Center for Urban Transportation Research.

Please direct all questions or comments to:

RTAP BULLETIN

Center for Urban Transportation Research
University of South Florida
4202 East Fowler Avenue, CUT100
Tampa, FL 33620-5375
(813) 974-3120, fax (813) 974-5168
email: jaygoodwill@cutr.usf.edu
website: www.floridartap.org

OUR MISSION

The Florida RTAP provides training, continuing education, and technical assistance to those who provide or assist in the provision of public transportation services in rural and small urban communities in order to promote the coordinated delivery of safe, efficient, and effective transit services.

Editor: Jay Goodwill Designer: Stephanie Lewis

SPOTLIGHT—Mike Hays, Transportation Director, Nassau County Council on Aging

Each SPOTLIGHT edition highlights one of our many energetic Florida RTAP transit professionals and allows these individuals to introduce themselves in their own words. In this issue, the SPOTLIGHT is on Mike Hays, Transportation Director, Nassau County Council on Aging.



Name: Mike Hays

Title: Transportation Director, Nassau County Council on Aging

Birthplace: Atlanta, Georgia (like everyone else in Nassau County who wasn't born here)

Education: BS in Finance, Georgia State University

Professional History: 1981-1990: Wells Fargo; 1990-1997: Pepsi; 1997-2000: Laporte Water Technologies; 2000-2011: The Weather Channel; and 2013-Present: Nassau County Council on Aging

Years Working with Current Agency: 4 ½ years

Years Working in Transit Industry: 4 ½ years

Biggest Surprise Working in Paratransit: Paratransit sounds so easy. Just pick-up the customer at this address and time. Then drop-off at this address and time. What could POSSIBLY go wrong? Answer: EVERYTHING!

Biggest Challenge Working in Paratransit: A day in paratransit is like keeping an assembly of interconnected gears,

National RTAP—cont'd from pg 2

tion resources. To meet those goals, the program focuses on the following objectives:

- Improving the quality of training and technical assistance resources available to the rural transit industry
- Encouraging and assisting state, local, and peer networks to address training and technical assistance needs
- Promoting the coordination of transportation services
- Building a national database of information about the rural transit industry

For more information on National RTAP go to: <http://nationalrtap.org>

each with a different size, each with its own peculiarities, and each with a mind and will of its own, all moving together somewhat efficiently and (for the most part) playing nice with each other. You start the day with a flawless plan to pull it off, then the phone rings and the plan is toast. Improvise, adapt, and overcome!

Personal Benefit Working in Paratransit: There's nothing like the feeling at the end of the day that you helped make a positive difference in someone's life that day.

Personal Background: Carol and I have five children in our "blended" family: hers, mine, and all ours. We have a Maltese named Bentley (aka Butch, Boo Boo, Mr. Bombastic... he's a little confused about his name, not sure why) and a cat who owns us all. We enjoy being on water, in water and around water...fortunately we live on an island.

Childhood Ambition: I wanted to play major league baseball and be an airline pilot in the offseason. It seemed perfectly reasonable at the time.

Favorite Book: Atlas Shrugged

Favorite Color: Navy blue

Favorite Candy: My idea of a three-course meal: Milk Duds, Snickers, and Skittles.

My Motto: No one cares how much you know until they know how much you care.

Save the Date

October 14–17, 2018

Daytona Beach, FL



**FPTA/CTD Annual
Training & EXPO**

Florida Transit Safety and Operations Network (FTSON)

The Florida Transit Safety and Operations Network (FTSON) is comprised of members representing each of Florida's public transit agencies and the Florida Department of Transportation. The purpose of the FTSON is to provide a platform for discussion of safety and operational challenges, opportunities, and initiatives impacting public transportation providers in Florida. This forum allows urban and rural member transit agencies to identify safety and operational issues and share leading practices that lead to better outcomes. The FTSON is a resource to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Public Transit Office and managed by the USF Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR). FTSON's goal is to bring forward transit safety and operational concerns which represent the greatest risks faced by local service providers.

Members of the FTSON and other interested parties are invited to attend quarterly sessions to discuss and share issues and opportunities to improve safety and operations.

Current FTSON Committees include:

Bus Operator and Passenger Safety: To examine multiple topics that impact the safety of bus operators and transit passengers including, assaults of bus operators and passengers, passenger injuries that occur during boarding/alighting and while on board, other topics to reduce injuries and prevent fatalities on transit buses and mitigate risk. Outcomes may include the development of policies, practices, or training.

Collisions: Examine rear-end, fixed object, and other transit bus collisions to reduce injuries and fatalities of transit employees and passengers and mitigate risk. Outcomes may include the development of recommended policies, practices, or training content.

Distracted Driving and Driver Fatigue: Examine driver fatigue and distracted driving issues on outside employment and on split shifts, driver hours and other related topics.

Emergency Management: To review and assess the State of Florida's emergency management process and coordination activities relative to public transportation services, share best practices and recommend processes and procedures to improve overall communication and coordination.

Performance and Compliance Management: Support the development and use of performance measurement and analysis processes for the comprehensive management of public transportation services. The data, analysis and benchmarks that may evolve from this committee will also promote reporting and monitoring necessary to address



various federal and state safety, operational and grant compliance requirements.

Training: Undertake a comprehensive examination of safety training for bus operators and will closely coordinate with the other subcommittees. Examination of current training standards for Florida's public transportation systems. The primary goals for this committee is the improvement of both training content and delivery.

Rural Transit Agencies: Examine multiple topics that impact the safety and security of rural and small urban public transit agencies. Outcomes may include the development of recommended policies and practices, targeted technical assistance and outreach, and/or training content.

Workforce Sustainability: To examine issues and trends encountered by public transportation agencies relative to a sustainable workforce to include recruitment, hiring, training, retention, succession planning, professional development, wellness and performance.

Seniors and Persons With Disabilities Mobility Services (5310 Grant Program and ADA): To establish a focus on senior and persons with disabilities mobility needs and services in the context of federal and state funding programs and related compliance requirements.

To get involved in the FTSON or to get more detailed program information this network, please contact John Lanham, FDOT Transit Safety Programs Manager at John.Lanham@dot.state.fl.us or CUTR Project Managers; Stephen Berry at stephenberry@cutr.usf.edu or Rob Gregg at gregg@cutr.usf.edu.

2018 UPCOMING EVENTS

The classes and conferences listed below are sponsored by the Florida Department of Transportation and the Center for Urban Transportation Research at the University of South Florida in Tampa. If you would like to attend any of the courses, you will find a course announcement and registration form for each course at www.floridartap.org in the Training Calendar section. Click on the course name to download or view training class details. If you have an idea for a training course or would like to host a course, please contact Jay Goodwill at jaygoodwill@cutr.usf.edu.

April 27-28, 2018

Registration is Open: 2018 Florida Triple Crown Bus Roadeo—Daytona Beach, FL

May 15-18, 2018

Effectively Managing Transit Emergencies (FT00456) —Tampa, FL

June 4-6, 2018

FPTA/FDOT/CUTR Professional Development Workshop and Transit Safety & Operations Summit—Tampa, FL

October 14-17, 2018

FPTA/CTD Annual Training & EXPO—Daytona, FL

Save the Date: 2018 FPTA/FDOT/CUTR Professional Development Workshop and Transit Safety & Operations Summit

Over 250 transit professionals are expected to be in attendance at the 2018 FPTA/FDOT/CUTR Professional Development Workshop and Transit Safety & Operations Summit, which will be held at the USF Embassy Suites in Tampa on June 4-6, 2018. This annual workshop and summit is jointly sponsored by the Florida Public Transportation Association (FPTA), Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), and the USF Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR).

The annual Florida Transit Safety & Operations Summit, hosted by the Florida Transit Safety and Operations Network, will be held Monday, June 4th. State and national transit safety and operations experts will provide informative presentations on a wide variety of topics.

The traditional two day 2018 Professional Development Workshop, which will be held on Tuesday and Wednesday, will offer unique professional development opportunities for Florida's public transportation supervisors, front-line employees, and other key staff in operations, maintenance, marketing, planning and administration. The one-stop workshop provides pub-

lic transit professionals with an excellent opportunity to learn from industry experts, attend professional development training, learn about research updates, and network with their peers.

Registration for this combined event will open in early April. Registration is FREE for FPTA members. There is a \$75 registration fee for ALL non-FPTA members, which will be invoiced following your registration.

