

# RTAP

## BULLETIN

FLORIDA RURAL TRANSIT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

SUMMER—VOL. 13, No. 2

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PROFESSIONALS  
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## 2015 Florida Triple Crown Roadeo

In early April, Florida's best bus drivers and technicians participated in the 2015 Florida Triple Crown Bus Roadeo in St. Petersburg, Florida. The 2015 Florida Triple Crown Roadeo combined the FPTA and RTAP roadeos into a single, colossal weekend honoring all of Florida's maintenance technicians, paratransit and fixed route operators.

The year's event was 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 the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA).

There were training opportunities for the participants. Then the bus operator participant's skills were tested with a written test and the on-course competition. The maintenance technicians faced similar challenges with a written test and a series of diagnostic tests.

As always, the event concluded with an Awards Banquet that crowned and recognized the 2015 champions in the paratransit van and cutaway divisions, the fixed route bus division, and the maintenance technician's team competition.

JTrans' Tommy Griffis and LeeTran's Dante Marinell repeated as the van and cutaway category champions respectfully. Both represented Florida at the Community Transportation Association

of America (CTAA) national roadeo on May 31<sup>st</sup> in Tampa, Florida.

**Small Bus Category:** 1<sup>st</sup> place Dante Marinell, LeeTran; 2<sup>nd</sup> place Ryan Boyer, Manatee County Area Transit; and 3<sup>rd</sup> place Timothy Smith, Calhoun County Transit

**Van Category:** 1<sup>st</sup> place Tommy Griffis, JTrans; 2<sup>nd</sup> place Deandre Moore, LYNX; and 3<sup>rd</sup> place Peggy Shiver, Liberty County Transit

**Overall Champion:** The Overall Paratransit Champion (combined van and cutaway scores) was Calhoun County Transit with team members Michael Wimberly, Van Operator; and Timothy Smith, Cutaway Operator.

### Van Division Drivers



### Small Bus Division Drivers



## Paratransit Rodeo Winners

Grand Champions - Calhoun County Transit



L-R: Michael Wimberly, Van Operator; Timothy Smith, Cutaway Operator; and Bob Westbrook, FDOT

### Cutaway Division Winner



L-R: Karen Deigl, FPTA Board Chair; 1<sup>st</sup> Place: Dante Marinell, LeeTran; and Liz Stutts, FDOT

### Van Division Winner



L-R: Karen Deigl, FPTA Board Chair; 1<sup>st</sup> Place: Tommy Griffis, JTrans; and Liz Stutts, FDOT

## Griffis Finishes Second at CTAA Nationals!

Congratulations are due to JTrans' Tommy Griffis, Florida's top 2015 rodeo van driver, for his second place at the 2015 Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) national rodeo in Tampa, Florida on May 31<sup>st</sup>.

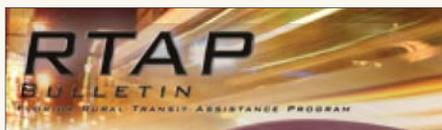


## Combined FPTA-CTD Conference and EXPO

Daytona Beach, Florida  
October 25-28, 2015



Save the date for the upcoming joint Florida Public Transportation Association and the Commission of the Transportation Disadvantaged Annual Conference and EXPO. For the first time, this 2015 event will combine the FPTA and CTD annual conferences into a single event. This event will be hosted by Votran at the Daytona Beach Hilton and Ocean Center on October 25-28, 2015. Registration will open in late June or early July.



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### RTAP BULLETIN

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### 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.

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# SPOTLIGHT— John Paul Irvine, Jr., Project Manager, Area 6, Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged

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 John Paul Irvine, Jr., Project Manager, Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged.



**Name:** John Paul Irvine, Jr.

**Title:** Project Manager, Area 6, Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged

**Birthplace:** DeFuniak Springs, FL

**Education:** Graduated from Walton Senior High School in DeFuniak Springs, FL, Received my AA from Tallahassee Community College & Bachelors of Science from Florida State University.

**Professional History:** Began my career in the private industry by working in my Dad's floor covering business and then I continued this line of work for another 10 years. I was a floor covering sales person, then Sales Manager, and eventually I became General Manager of L & M Carpet & Supply Co. in Tallahassee, FL. I began my government career with the Florida Department of Revenue where I worked for approximately 3 years before I came to the Transportation Disadvantaged Commission. Since being at the Commission, I have served in several capacities. I began as a Quality Assurance and Performance Evaluation Specialist (QAPE), then as the Public Relations Manager, and currently as a Project Manager. I have also worked part time as a subcontracted Support Coordinator for the Agency for Persons with Disabilities.

**Years Working with Current Agency:** As of August 2015, I will have been staff with the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged for 20 years!

**Years Working in Transit Industry:** 20 years

**Biggest Surprise in Paratransit:** How important paratransit service is to so many people, but also how so few people are aware of it.

**Biggest Challenge in Paratransit:** Adapting to and changing with different political environments.

**Personal Benefit of Working in Paratransit:** Having the opportunity to hear someone speak to

how much this service has benefited them or a loved one. When my own Grandfather and Mother were not able to drive, it was so gratifying to me for them to benefit from this service. Another major benefit to me are the many friendships I have made throughout the state that are involved with the TD Program. It is truly a group of people who are dedicated to their work and to the people who they serve.

**Community Involvement:** Through working with the Commission I have become involved in assisting with several groups. I have been actively involved for the past 12 years with the Able Trust's Youth Leadership Forum, the Florida Disabled Outdoors Association (FDOA), and an active member of the Safe Mobility for Life Coalition. I annually attend and present at the Governor's Family Café.

**Personal Background:** I have two wonderful daughters, Alex who is 8 & Maya who is 14. We have a 3 year old mini dachshund named Chili who is a lovable character & full of personality. I love spending time at my beach cottage in Seagrove Beach in South Walton County Florida (SOWAL) along Florida's Scenic 30-A. After growing up in the area, I never grow tired of traveling there to spend my free time. I still get excited to go there, even after all these years! I also enjoy being involved with real estate, buying, selling and managing rental properties. Over the years I have moved and fixed up three houses. I maintain an active Florida's Realtor License. I really enjoy classic cars and owning a 1959 Lincoln Premier. In my spare time I officiated weddings too.

**Childhood Ambition:** I always felt that I wanted to work in a field where I helped people. At the end of high school we took tests to help us determine what type of career path we should take; my test results stated Nursing Home Administrator as #1. Although I did not follow that path, once I discovered and began working with the TD program I have always felt that I was helping people, especially Florida's most vulnerable population.

**Inspiration:** What inspires me is putting my effort into something and being able to see or experience the difference my efforts made. It can be as simple as mowing the lawn or as complex as achieving a degree/certification. One thing I have learned over the years is that the people who get what they want are not afraid to ask for it. If the worst thing that can happen is that

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## 2015 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](http://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 Lisa Staes at [staes@cutr.usf.edu](mailto:staes@cutr.usf.edu).

### August 25-26, 2015

Managing For Performance – Safety, Customer Service, Conflict and Work Ethic: A Guide for Transit Operator Trainers<sup>1</sup>—Tampa, FL

### October 25-28, 2015

FPTA/CTD Annual Conference and EXPO—Daytona Beach, FL

<sup>1</sup> Required course for the Florida Transit Operator Trainer Training Certification

## Florida Transit Professionals Converge on Tampa

Close to 230 transit professionals gathered in Tampa at the USF Embassy Suites on June 1-3, 2015 for the 2015 FPTA/FDOT/CUTR Professional Development Workshop and Transit Safety Summit. The workshop and summit were jointly sponsored by the Florida Public Transportation Association, Florida Department of Transportation, and the USF Center for Urban Transportation Research. The workshop theme was “Transit Workforce Development—Your Ladder of Opportunity.”

The two-day workshop offered a unique professional development opportunity for Florida's public transportation supervisors, front-line employees, and other key staff in operations, maintenance, marketing, planning and administration. The one-stop workshop provided public transit professionals with an excellent opportunity to learn from industry experts, attend professional development training, learn about research updates, and network with their peers. Workshop attendees participated in educational training classes and general session discussions that stimulated new ideas and identified creative solutions to problem solving and strategic planning.

### Spotlight—cont'd from pg 3

you are told “no”, then reach down inside yourself and ask for what you want. You may just get a “yes”. I firmly believe that if you make a good effort you may get what you want, but if you make no or little effort, then you generally receive back what you put into it.

This year's event was kicked off on Monday with a keynote address by Martha Bryan on the topic of “Creating Excellence for Yourself and Your Organization.” The workshop sessions bridged the connection between the functional layers within transit agencies, including those related to planning, operations, maintenance, safety, and marketing. There were many professional development offerings that included: Understanding ADA, Communication Strategies for Managers, How to Make My Day – Or Not (best practices in transit dispatching), Preparing for Triennial Reviews, and the State Management Plan. A variety of human behavior focused, and organizational and career development-related sessions were also provided.

The third annual Florida Transit Safety Summit, hosted by the FDOT Florida Transit Safety Network (FTSN), was held Wednesday and attracted close to 100 transit professionals. State and national safety experts provided informative presentations on a wide variety of topics related to transit safety.

**My Motto:** My motto stems from my favorite quote “I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” Maya Angelou