

RTAP

BULLETIN

FLORIDA RURAL TRANSIT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

FALL—VOL. 11, No. 3

2 RTAP ROLE AT THE TD CONFERENCE

PRMPT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

3 SPOTLIGHT—MARILYN RUSSELL

TRANSIT PROFESSIONALS
CONVERGE ON TAMPA

4 2013 & 2014
UPCOMING EVENTS

CITRUS COUNTY
TRANSIT EXPANDS

2013 TD Conference a Success

The 21st Annual Transportation Disadvantaged Best Practices and Training Workshop was held at the Ocean Center and the Hilton Daytona Beach Ocean Resort in Daytona Beach, Florida on August 6 and 7, 2013, and was a huge success!

Conference attendees participated in several informative breakout and general sessions throughout the two day event. The traditional display of products and services by the transit industry vendors provided conference attendees with the latest in equipment, technology and services.

The highlight of the conference was the annual Awards Banquet. The 2013 award winners included:

Legislator of the Year: Doug Conkey, Clay County Commissioner

Legislator of the Year: Donna Fiala, Collier County Commissioner

Volunteer of the Year Award: Mary Link-Bennett, Lake County LCB

Innovation of the Year Award: Jacksonville Transportation Authority

Operator of the Year Award: MMG Transportation Inc.

Dispatcher/Scheduler of the Year Award: StarMetro Call Center

Driver of the Year Award: Stewart Wood, Votran

Driver of the Year Award: Patricia Adams, Manatee County Area Transit

Outstanding Local Coordinating Board of the Year: Miami-Dade County Metropolitan Planning Organization

Designated Official Planning Agency of the Year: Lake-Sumter Metropolitan Planning Organization

Rural CTC of the Year Award: Citrus County Transit

Urban CTC of the Year Award: Hillsborough County Sunshine Line

Sheila Winitzer Shining Star of the Year Award: Jim Van Pelt

William G. & Budd Bell Lifetime Achievement Award: Cathy Brown

The 2013 Annual TD Conference proved to be fun, informative, and educational. Thanks to all the attendees, speakers, exhibitors, and staff for making this year's event a success!

For more information regarding the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged please contact Steven Holmes, CTD Director at (850) 410-5700 or steven.holmes@dot.state.fl.us



2013 TD Conference Award Recipients

Florida RTAP Plays Active Role in 2013 TD Conference

To maximize the program outreach, the Florida RTAP program leveraged the annual TD workshop to help inform and educate Florida's rural transit professionals through its sponsorship of several of the keynote and breakout sessions, including:

- Florida RTAP Roundtable breakout session was held to inform conference attendees of the RTAP efforts and to solicit input for future outreach and training efforts.
- The National RTAP training module on "Customer Driven Service" was highlighted in the RTAP Roundtable session, providing attendees with an example of no cost training resources available to all Florida transit operators.

- Florida RTAP sponsored associated costs for speakers from the Community Transportation Association of America and Eastern Seals Project Action.

- Meredith Highsmith from Texas A&M was sponsored by Florida RTAP for her two presentations on "Developing Relative Performance Measures for Mobility Management" and "Communicating the Value of Services You Provide."



PrMPT Program Overview

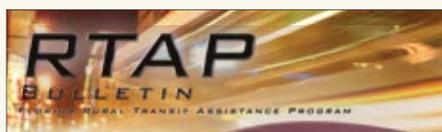
The Preventative Maintenance Planning Training and Technical Assistance program (PrMPT) was established by FDOT to assist transit agencies with their preventive maintenance programs. The goal is to provide technical assistance to enhance the safety and efficiency of maintenance programs and to provide resources to transportation service providers that assist with maintenance oversight.

The PrMPT program provides maintenance reviews in which transit agency maintenance programs are assessed to ensure compliance with Rule 14-90. Maintenance reviews examine the agency's maintenance procedures and practices to determine if additional technical resources can be provided that will enhance program oversight and efficiency. The PrMPT program provides assistance with developing or customizing transit agency maintenance plans to reflect the specific maintenance policies, procedures and practices at each agency. An online maintenance database has been created to assist agencies with tracking and monitoring maintenance activities.

Other program resources include the Paratransit Maintenance Consortium which offers a forum for technicians, maintenance managers and program directors to discuss and provide resolution to current or potential maintenance issues. In addition, the Paratransit Maintenance Forum online provides a resource for maintenance managers around the state to network with others about current maintenance practices and offer resolution to vehicle and maintenance technical issues. The Paratransit Maintenance Forum can be accessed at <http://forum.prmpt.org>.

These services are provided at NO COST to the agency. All work is performed on site at the agency's convenience in the order that requests are received.

For more information about the Preventative Maintenance Planning, Training & Technical Assistance Program visit our website at www.PrMPT.org.



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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—Marilyn Russell, Executive Director

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 Marilyn Russell the Executive Director for Calhoun County Senior Citizens Association, Inc.



I am the Executive Director for Calhoun County Senior Citizens Association, Inc. and Calhoun County Transit. I was born in Blountstown, Florida... across the street in a very small clinic from where I work at now. I graduated from high school in 1976 in the top 5 of my class. I took several college courses but did not obtain a degree. My experience was obtained from hands-on training. I started my job in June 1982 with the Senior Center, and then later started the Coordinated Transportation Program in July 1985 with just 2 vehicles. Over the years when the funding was 'plentiful' the Agency had 24 vehicles to provide paratransit services. Because of the budget cuts to date we have only 14 vehicles. The biggest surprise in paratransit is the different services that we now offer in this field (i.e. stretcher, wheelchair). When paratransit first started for years all we could provide was ambulatory. Look at what almost 30 years has brought – we are no longer in the good ole days! The personal benefit of working with paratransit is that we know that we are

providing a much needed service to those clients who have no other way to get to the doctor and life-essential services unless paratransit takes them. We do meet some very interesting people also and we know that we are making a difference!

I am very involved in the community in which I grew up. I am a member of the Rotary Club, a member of the Hospital Board, a member of the Chamber of Commerce, and I am also a licensed Travel Agent! I started the Travel Agency as part of my job at the Senior Center because of all of the budget cuts; this is the only way to keep our doors open! The Calhoun County Senior Citizens Association, Inc. has to raise over \$ 60,000 in order to match federal and state grants... our Agency is a 501 C 3 private non-profit.

I am married to a wonderful man of 33 years, John Russell. We have 5 children, 11 grandchildren and 1 grandson arriving in October. My hobbies include cooking, sewing, riding motorcycles, traveling and other things. I also drive a motor coach on the weekends because I enjoy meeting new people, and as my husband says "This is how you can get your mad money!"

My childhood ambition was to be an Airline Stewardess. My favorite book would be "The Notebook," favorite color is blue, favorite candy would be "anything chocolate". My motto in life is "Always treat others just as you would like to be treated!"

The workshop sessions focused on topics such as transit planning, operations, maintenance and marketing. Additionally, there were many other professional development topics including, substance abuse management, customer service, workplace generational issues and conflict resolution, communication, as well as business and computer skills, just to name a few. The FDOT Florida Transit Safety Network (FTSN) held their inaugural meeting and discussed pressing industry safety issues and ideas. Last but not least, the workshop featured a partnership with the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged who hosted two training sessions on mobility management and coordinated transportation.

Public Transit Professionals Converge on Tampa

Close to 200 transit professionals gathered in Tampa at the USF Embassy Suites on June 18-19, 2013 for the 2013 FPTA/FDOT/CUTR Professional Development Workshop. The workshop was jointly sponsored by the Florida Public Transportation Association (FPTA), Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), and the USF Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR).

This statewide 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.

The workshop sessions focused on topics such as transit planning, operations, maintenance and marketing. Additionally, there were many other professional development topics including, substance abuse management, customer service, workplace generational issues and conflict resolution, communication, as well as business and computer skills, just to name a few. The FDOT Florida Transit Safety Network (FTSN) held their inaugural meeting and discussed pressing industry safety issues and ideas. Last but not least, the workshop featured a partnership with the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged who hosted two training sessions on mobility management and coordinated transportation.

2013 & 2014 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 Lisa Staes at staes@cutr.usf.edu.

October 23-24, 2013

Transit Dispatch and Supervisor Training—
Tampa, FL

December 2-6, 2013

Transit Bus System Safety (FT00533)—
Tampa, FL

October 27-29, 2013

2013 FPTA Annual Conference—Clearwater, FL

March 10-14, 2014

Instructor's Course in Bus/Paratransit Operator
Training (FT00562-A)—Tampa, FL

Citrus County Transit Expands

Citrus County Transit in conjunction with the Citrus County Board of County Commissioners and Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has expanded its Orange Line Deviated Fixed-Route system from one deviated fixed route serving three municipalities to four deviated fixed routes serving nine municipalities within Citrus County—a rural population of about 140,000 citizens. The project goal was to give more passengers from paratransit service a more efficient, affordable, and reliable option that does not require a reservation.

This option will also deliver more passengers transportation services with the existing funding.

The Orange Line Deviated Fixed-Route service operates from 6:00 AM to 7:00 PM Monday through Friday taking passengers to work, college, technical school as well as medical appointments and shopping needs without a reservation. Citrus County Transit has been able to implement their ten-year transit plan in less than three years.

Citrus County recently opened the new Citrus County Transit Center, an FDOT funded project, to be used as both a transfer facility and an administrative office for both present and future transportation needs.

As highlighted in the CTD annual award article, Citrus County Transit was bestowed with the “Outstanding Rural Transit” award from the Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged for 2013-2014. CONGRATULATIONS!

Registration is Open
October 27-29, 2013

**39th Florida Public
Transportation Association
Annual Conference**



2013 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Public Transportation... We're All About People

**Hilton Clearwater Beach
Clearwater Beach, Florida**